Implementing a Digital Asset Management System at the Met

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Anyone not familiar with the Met?

- Background Information:
  - The Museum:
    - 17 curatorial departments
    - > 12 libraries and study centers
    - > 2 million works of art from around the world and from all eras

Background

- Challenges:
  - Sheer volume of our objects and images
  - Diversity of our collections from various cultures and periods
  - The complexity of our institutional structure
    - E.g., > 21 TMS databases for 17 curatorial departments; a “Have-nots” TMS database for objects not found in corresponding curatorial TMS databases

Background

- The Image Library:
  - Formerly known as Photograph and Slide Library
  - Providing image services to the Museum and the public for almost 100 years.
  - The collections:
    - >850,000 35mm slides
    - >35,000 large-format color transparencies in the master files
    - >270,000 negatives for reproducing black-and-white photographs for study/publication purposes
    - >200,000 digital images produced by the Museum’s Photo Studio in the last decade

Background

- Roles of the Image Library:
  - Similar to other visual resources/image centers: providing images/visual resources in various formats for research and scholarly purposes
  - Serving as an archive for the photographic records of our objects
  - Licensing activities: e.g., publications, films, lectures, broadcast, various electronic and commercial uses.
  - Providing high-quality images for licensing purposes (e.g., large-format color transparencies and high-resolution image files)

Example of Our High-Resolution Image

Major Constituents of the Met Images Project

- Director's Office
- Information Systems and Technology
- Image Library
- Photo Studio
- Curatorial Departments

Other Users of the Met Images

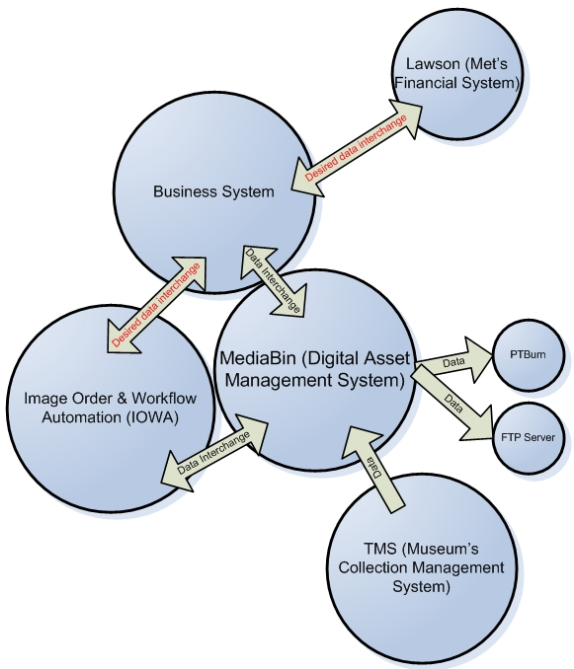
- In addition to the Image Library, Photo Studio and the curatorial departments:
  - Editorial
  - Education
  - Libraries and Study Centers
  - Website
  - Public

Other Uses/Functions of the Met Images Project

- Apart from building a central repository for our digital images/assets:
  - Support the Image Library's licensing activities
  - Control the Museum's image request and production workflow (i.e., integration with Photo Studio's activities)
  - Generate derivatives from the master image files for internal and external uses

Image Library Systems Diagram

As of February, 2007



Data Sources for Migration

- TMS
  - Provide object metadata to our image records (>330,000 TMS records have been loaded into MediaBin as placeholders for linking/matching; object metadata are also linked and copied to the ingested image records)
- PSDB
  - Provide records for our current black & white negatives (>270,000 records were loaded as placeholders)
- PSLWeb
  - Web-based database containing >21,000 records of our color transparency circulating files, also loaded as placeholder records in MediaBin

Data Sources for Migration

- Studio Workhorse
  - Photo Studio's current digital photography workflow system (estimated 7500 digital images)
- Digital images
  - Approximate 200,000 back files of Photo Studio's direct digital photography on hundreds of CDs/DVDs
  - Scanning of >25,000 large-format transparencies from the Image Library's collection

MediaBin

- A Digital Asset Management (DAM) system designed and provided by Interwoven.
- Interwoven specializes in Enterprise Content Management solutions for business; MediaBin is the DAM module of Interwoven's content management system suite.
- Its customers are mainly financial and commercial corporations, e.g., Deutsche Bank, Coca-Cola, General Motors, Reebok and some advertising and media companies.
- They use MediaBin "to manage the thousands of digital assets and marketing content used to promote their products and brands."

MediaBin

- Their original metadata structure and nomenclature are quite different from the standards of the art/visual resources community.
- Flat-file structure of the database, different from the relational structure of work, image & collection records recommended by VRA Core 4.0 and CCO.

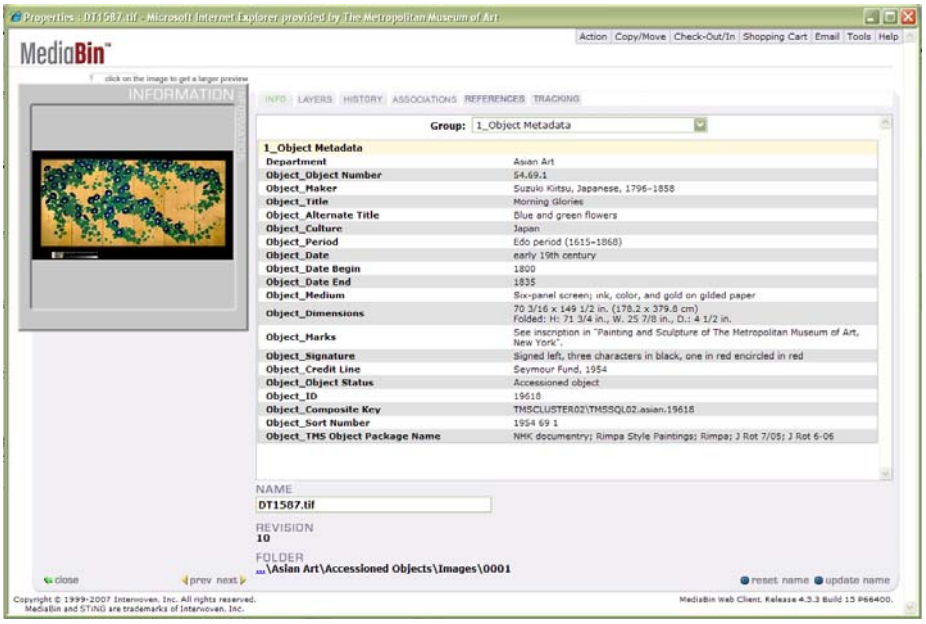
Customization of MediaBin's Metadata Structure

- During the initial implementation, attempts were made to map MediaBin's metadata structure to CDWA Lite.
- At that time, the XML standard of VRA Core 4.0 was not fully established.
- Subsequent reviews and revisions of MediaBin's metadata structure have made the system slightly closer to the VRA Core 4.0 and CCO standards.

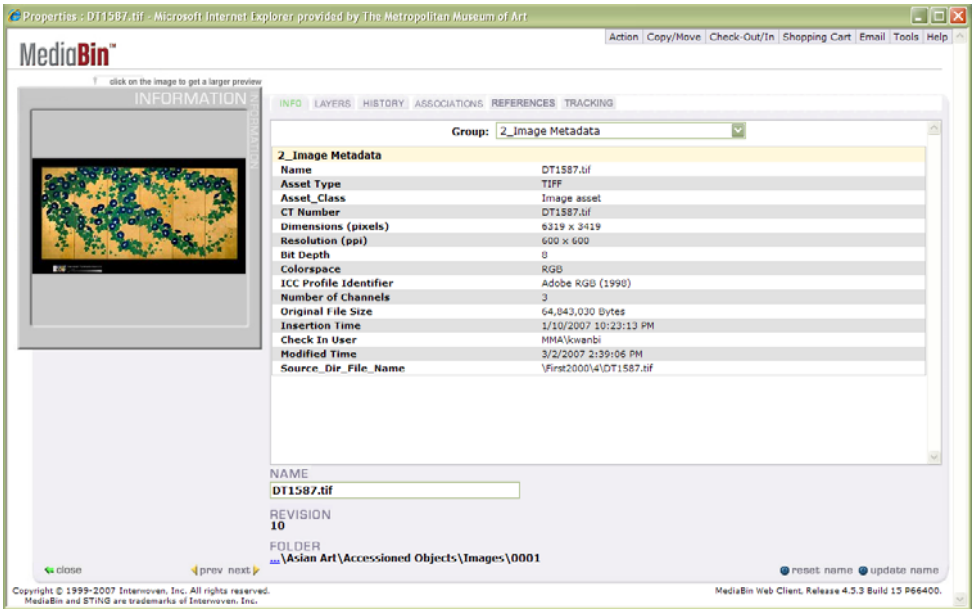
Current MediaBin's Metadata Groups

- Object Metadata:
  - Object Repository, Department, Accession Number, Object Maker, Object Title, Object Name, Object Culture, Object Date, etc.
- Image Metadata:
  - Image View, Image Description, Image Public Caption, Photographer, etc.
- Rights and Restrictions Metadata:
  - Image Rights Allowable Use, Image Rights Condition, Image Rights Copyright Notice, Image Rights Legal Restrictions, etc.

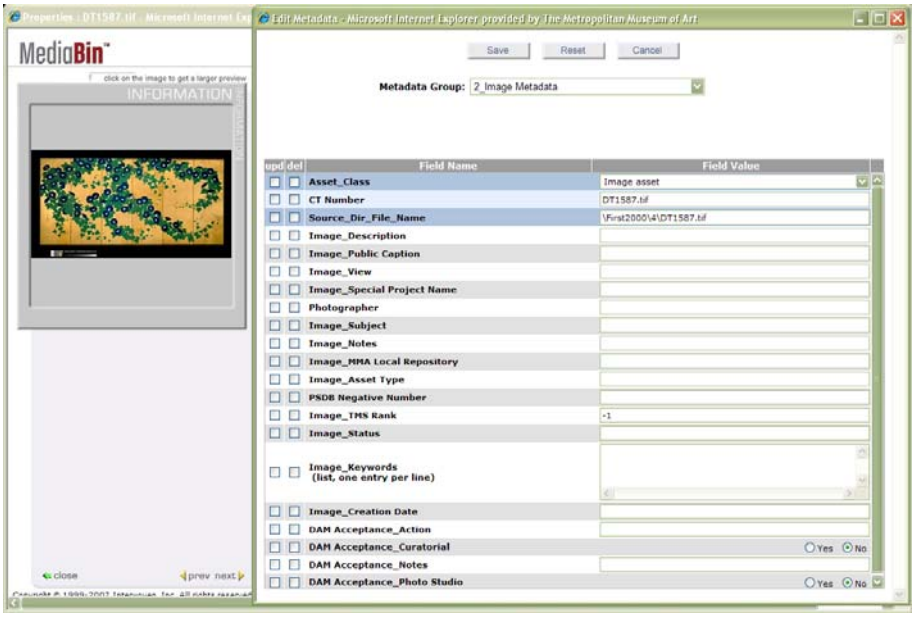
MediaBin-Object Metadata



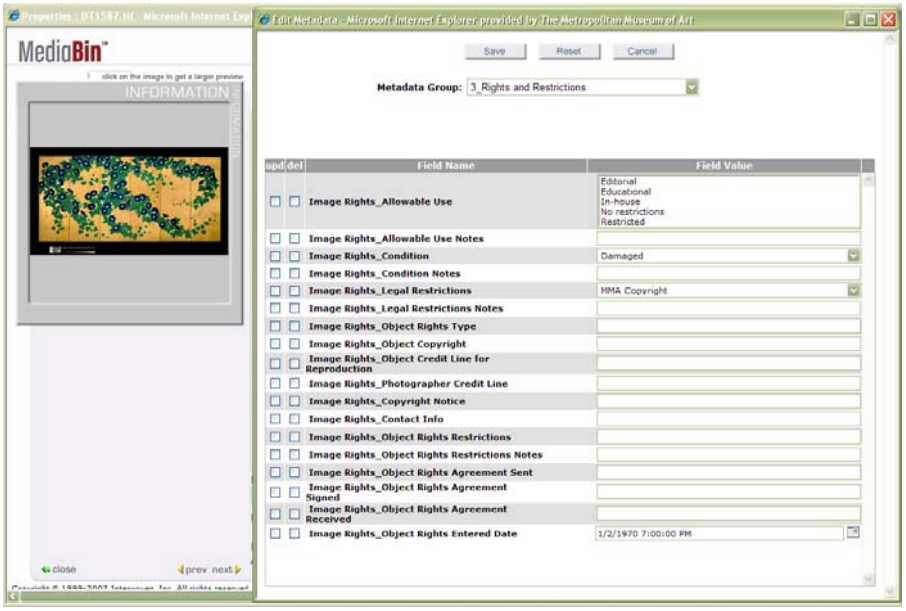
MediaBin-Image Metadata



MediaBin-Image Metadata (cont.)



MediaBin-Rights & Restrictions Metadata



Implementation Constraints

- Large amount of object metadata from TMS:
  - Data quality and standards vary among each curatorial department; commitment/compliance to standards also varies.
- Initial implementation process, no reference to VRA Core 4.0 and CCO standards:
  - E.g., Object Maker is a concatenated text of a number of fields related to the object creator(s), such as creator name, role, dates, and attribution, etc.
  - Many fields can only be mapped to the display elements of the VRA Core 4.0 and CDWA Lite XML standards.

Implementation Constraints (cont.)

- Flat-file structure of the MediaBin database.
- Lack of an authority/thesaurus module in the system.

Conclusion

- Met's first digital asset management system.
- Provides the Museum with a technological platform to grow in the future:
  - Moving closer to the visual resources standards
  - Interoperability with other collection/information/ content management systems within and without the Museum.