A Tale of Three Libraries:
Key Factors in Successful Online Collaborative Projects

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Virginia State Law Library

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Georgetown University Law Library
Goals today

- Offer advice about and examples of the “key factors” that lead to success in a collaborative project
- Discuss factors that could hinder the success of a collaborative project
- Help you decide if a collaborative project is right for your library
Genesis of today’s presentation

- Our project encountered a series of setbacks, structural problems, and unforeseen events that would usually doom most projects.

- Yet, going on three years later, our project continues to thrive.

- Why?
The Chesapeake Project

- Collaborative effort among:
  - Georgetown University Law Library
  - Maryland State Law Library
  - Virginia State Law Library

- Goal: to preserve born-digital collections
Our short history

- Brainchild of Robert Oakley, former director of the Georgetown University Law Library
  - Strong commitment to preserving legal information
  - Believed online legal information at risk
  - Believed law libraries to be responsible for the preservation of born-digital legal information
The partners

- Enlisted the directors of the Maryland State Law Library and the Virginia State Law Library

- Designated as a demonstration project of the Legal Information Preservation Alliance
Obstacle 1

- Three very different libraries
  - Georgetown Law Library
    - One of the premier law schools in the nation
    - Two “branches”: E.B. Williams and Wolff International
    - Staff of 68
  - Maryland State Law Library
    - Part of the Maryland Judiciary
    - Open to the public
    - Staff of 15
  - Virginia State Law Library
    - Part of the Virginia Judiciary
    - Serves the appellate court of Virginia
    - Staff of 4
Obstacle 2

- Loss of our visionary
  - Bob Oakley passed away before we completed our first year
  - Provided the leadership, the reputation, and the vision to keep three totally unaffiliated libraries together
Obstacle 3

- Total change of preservation system and technology
  - OCLC discontinued the Digital Archive
  - Required to learn a whole new system: CONTENTdm
  - Great deal of time went into learning the old system and setting up our processes
  - Had to start all over again!
### Obstacle 3: Digital Archive

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Obstacle 3: ContentDM

**CONTENTdm Administration**

Current collection: Maryland State Law Library

**Edit item**

Edit metadata then click **save changes**. To remove this item from the collection, click **delete**. After making changes, you must rebuild the text index.

* Fields marked with an asterisk are required.

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Key factors in successful collaborative projects

- Fundamental commitment to the project goal
- Project directly tied to the library's mission
- Management commitment
- Talented project manager
- Complements current work processes
- Flexibility and creativity
- Face time
- Outcome is useful
Fundamental commitment to the project goal

- This is the key factor

- Define the goal, know what you are trying to achieve, and know why
Project directly tied to the library's mission

- Provides the project with a strong foundation
- Makes it a less likely target for budget cuts
- Makes it easy to focus on project’s goals
Management commitment

- Chain of command must commit to the fundamental goals of the project
- Commitment is demonstrated by staffing and budget
- Collaborative projects cannot be “under the radar”
Talented project manager

- Need a savvy point person from the start
- Someone who has not been given the job of project manager as "other duty as assigned"
Project work complements current work processes

- The project needs to integrate with current library work process
- Does not require a complete re-tooling of work processes
Flexibility and creativity

✦ When trying anything new, everyone involved must be willing to be flexible

✦ Great opportunity to learn
Face time

- Communication is always key and a great deal of work can be done via email and phone
- But there is no substitute for face-to-face meeting
- Team meets every quarter
Outcome is useful

- Even if all the above items are met, unless the goal of the project is to produce something of use, it will be hard to sustain
Our accomplishments

- Harvested more than 4,000 publications!
- Available through our library catalogs, WorldCat, and Web search engines (i.e., Google)
- Estimate that approximately 1 in 7 of these publications is no longer available online within a year of harvesting
Why collaborate?

- Combine resources and talent to accomplish what seems overwhelming and impossible
- Opportunity to work with your peers
- See what “life is like” in another library
- For smaller libraries, opportunity to participate in projects that may be out of reach
- Learn, learn, learn
- Network
- Contribute
- Have fun
Take a look at our handiwork

- The Chesapeake Project
  www.LegalInfoArchive.org
Access via library catalog

Online Catalog

Search for print and online versions of treatises, form books, law reviews, task force reports, and government publications available at the library.

Maryland State Law Library

Start Over  Save To List  MARC Display

RECORD #  b1098637

Title
Reforming redistricting [electronic resource] : why popular initiatives to establish redistricting commissions succeed or fail / by Nicholas Stephanopoulos.

Author
Stephanopoulos, Nicholas.

Publisher

Available Online:
Connect to original electronic version
Connect to archived electronic version

Create a permanent link to this item

Description

Note
Title from title screen (viewed Oct. 29, 2007).
“March 2007.”


System Det

System requirements: Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Subject
Apportionment (Election law) -- United States.
Gerrymandering -- United States.
Election districts -- United States.
Links to The Chesapeake Project

Reforming Redistricting: Why Popular Initiatives To Establish Redistricting Commissions Succeed or Fail

Reformimg redistricting why popular initiatives to establish redistricting commissions succeed or fail

American Constitution Society for Law and Policy

Title
Reforming redistricting why popular initiatives to establish redistricting commissions succeed or fail

Description
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Publisher
American Constitution Society for Law and Policy

April 1, 2009 Computers in Libraries 2009 27
Access via Google

Votelaw, Edward Still's blog on law and politics
"Reforming Redistricting: Why Popular Initiatives to Establish Redistricting Commissions Succeed or Fail" ... decreasing the black population of the adjacent 4th District, encompassing Chesapeake, from 39.4 percent to 33.6 percent. ...
www.votelaw.com/blog/archives/redistricting/ - 977k - Cached - Similar pages

The Chesapeake Project: Search Results
Reforming redistricting why popular initiatives to establish redistricting commissions succeed or fail, Apportionment (Election law)--United States; ... cdm268901.cdmhlt.com/cdm4/results.php?CISOBOX1=apart&CISOFIELD1=CISOSEARCHALL&CISOOP1=any ... - 91k - Cached - Similar pages
Reforming redistricting: why popular initiatives to establish redistricting commissions succeed or fail

by Nicholas Stephanopoulos, American Constitution Society.