

Directors' Message: Reflections on a successful 2010

Dear TDL Members,

With the year largely behind us, it is a natural time to reflect on what we've accomplished in 2010 and begin to look forward to the next year's challenges and successes. Overall, we are pleased with the progress TDL has made in 2010, and we're excited about building on our efforts in the coming months.

On the technical development side, our team stayed solidly on track in 2010, delivering on commitments for releasing Vireo as an open source technology and making substantial improvements that make the software more valuable to our members. We also released a production version of the Texas Learning Object Repository in September and continue to develop functionality for our Preservation Network.

In addition to these development successes, we strengthened our organizational framework by re-establishing or creating brand new user groups and interest groups as important venues for member participation and feedback.

Heading into 2011, we are excited about the prospects for continued improvement in our technical development and organizational efforts. As just one example, TDL is planning an initiative in 2011 to reinvigorate the "bridge groups" located at our member campuses.

These groups, consisting of representatives of each library unit, help to translate the work of the TDL to local institutions, and we believe they are an essential mechanism for ensuring strong engagement with



TDL and usage of TDL services. We encourage you to stay tuned for more information on this initiative in the first months of 2011.

As we close the calendar year, we are grateful for the continuing support of our members and friends, and we look forward to working closely with you in the coming new year.

We wish all of our TDL colleagues a safe and happy holiday season.

Sincerely,



Mark McFarland
TDL Co-director

John Leggett
TDL Co-director

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TDL upgrades TDL-hosted Vireo installations to latest version

On November 22, the Texas Digital Library upgraded most TDL-hosted Vireo installations to the latest version of its electronic thesis and dissertation management software. The new version includes several bug fixes and feature enhancements that will improve overall user experience with the system.

[Vireo](#) is the TDL's software system for managing the submission, approval, and publication of electronic theses and dissertations.

The primary enhancement to the most recent version of Vireo is greater flexibility in working with ETD embargoes, including publication delays and patent holds. The new version allows administrators to create multiple, customized embargo types, and it provides faculty and student users with more information about embargoes.

The new version also fixes several known issues in

the software. These bugs are listed in the [release notes](#) for Vireo version 1.1.0 in TDL's issue tracking system, JIRA.

The work on Vireo happened over the course of two development sprints in Fall 2010, with Ryan Steans (TDL program coordinator) and Laura Hammons (Thesis Office Director at Texas A&M) serving as product owners. TDL development team members who worked on developing and installing the new version of Vireo include Otto Fox, Jade Lindquist, Alex Maslov, Scott Phillips, and William Sidney, as well as TDL Chief Technology Officer Peter Nürnberg.

All TDL-hosted Vireo installations have been upgraded to the new version, with the exception of Texas State University, which opted to perform the upgrade after the fall semester has concluded. ◇

TDL undertakes migration of services to Amazon EC2

The Texas Digital Library has undertaken a project to upgrade the underlying systems that support TDL applications and data, with the intention of increasing the stability of services and reducing both labor and monetary costs to the consortium.

As part of this project, the TDL's Installation, Configuration, and Management (ICM) team has been implementing a phased migration of all TDL services to Amazon Web Services' Elastic Compute Cloud. The migration began December 1 and will conclude before the end of 2010.

Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud (or EC2) is a web service that provides resizable computing capacity using Amazon's robust and reliable infrastructure. The service is valuable to the TDL in a number of ways, not least of which is that it is highly scalable, giving TDL the ability to increase or reduce capacity quickly as needs change.

The flexible nature of EC2 is valuable to the Texas Digital Library for a number of reasons, according to chief technology officer Peter Nürnberg.

"EC2's scalability allows us to launch new services or respond to fluctuations in usage more quickly – like at the end of semesters when large numbers of students are submitting theses through Vireo," said Nürnberg. "But it also allows us to improve cost efficiencies, since we only pay for what we use. Just as with an electric utility, we pay more when usage peaks, but at other times we pay less."

Additionally, EC2 is highly reliable, with a service level agreement promising 99.95% availability of services, and the ability to commission replacement instances rapidly. Data stored there is redundantly stored in multiple physical locations as part of normal operations.

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TDL migrates services to Amazon, cont'd.

For additional backup, TDL is maintaining duplicates of all applications and databases on TDL hardware housed at the UT Austin data center. And data stored in TDL-hosted services will continue to be preserved in the TDL Preservation Network through the TDL partnership with the Texas Advanced Computing Center (TACC).

The team began investigating Amazon Web Services in the fall of 2010 as a disaster recovery system for TDL services, in preparation for the planned move of the UT Austin Data Center to new facilities

in December 2010. However, the promised uptime and potential for cost savings that the service offers led the team to consider it as a more cost-efficient solution to the organization's needs for computing infrastructure.

The ICM team is investigating additional Amazon Web Services offerings, such as its Simple Storage Service, for other potential uses that will benefit members. TDL anticipates providing further information about services it can offer to members through Amazon in spring 2011. ◇

Tech Teams Update

The Tech Teams Update is a feature intended to provide information about the work of the TDL technical staff, which includes:

- 1) a Software Development team with members in Austin and College Station;
- 2) an Installation, Configuration, and Management (ICM) team located in Austin;
- 3) a Support team located in Lubbock.

ICM team

- Upgraded TDL-hosted Vireo installations to latest version.
- Undertook phased migration of TDL services to Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud (EC2).

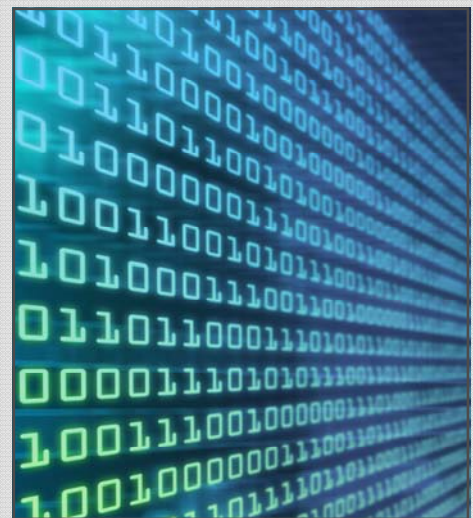
Development team

- Completed work on Vireo 1.1.0.3 release.
- Held exploratory sprint to investigate Amazon Web Services software development tools.
- Conducted several sprints devoted to the Texas Learning Object Repository, during which the team fixed several bugs and added new functionality.

Support team

- Responded to help requests as they came through the TDL Helpdesk.
- Supported ICM team in EC2 migration through monitoring of systems.

More information about the work of the TDL technical teams can be found in the TDL's issue tracking system JIRA, located at <http://texasdl.jira.com/>.



TDL Travels: Program Coordinator on the road to visit members

TDL program coordinator Ryan Steans was on the road throughout much of the fall semester, checking in with TDL member institutions to learn more about how institutions are using TDL services and what TDL can do to help members thrive.

Steans began the fall with a visit to UT Brownsville, where the UTB staff held a “TDL Fair” to promote services available to faculty and staff through membership in the consortium.

“It’s exciting to see the energy at schools like UTB and the way they’re finding uses for TDL resources,” Steans said. Several interesting projects are ongoing there, according to Steans, including a multi-institutional Border Studies repository.

Following the TDL Fair, Steans visited 10 other member schools during fall 2010, including the following:

- Angelo State University
- Baylor University
- Texas A&M University
- Texas A&M University – Kingsville
- Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi
- Texas A&M University at Galveston
- Texas State University
- University of Texas at Austin
- UT Medical Branch at Galveston

- UT M.D. Anderson Medical Center

At each university, Steans met with library groups and, in some cases, graduate offices, to talk about TDL’s offerings for faculty, staff, and students, and to learn how the TDL can engage with and help its partners.



TDL program coordinator Ryan Steans.

“Fantastic projects are happening in the libraries of all our member institutions,” he said. “I learned about a wide variety of initiatives headed by enthusiastic librarians across the state, and TDL is eager to partner with them to increase the accessibility of scholarly work.”

Steans also visited the University of Houston in December to attend a CONTENTdm conference hosted there. He plans to hit the road again in early 2011 to visit additional TDL member schools. ◇

OR11 conference website hosted by the Texas Digital Library

The Texas Digital Library is pleased to be hosting the conference website for the Sixth Annual International Conference on Open Repositories (OR11), which will be held June 8-11, 2011, in Austin, Texas. The University of Texas at Austin Libraries is organizing and hosting the 2011 conference.

The OR11 website is located at <http://conferences.tdl.org/OR2011/OR2011main>.

Open Repositories is an annual conference that

brings together an international community of stakeholders engaged in the development, management, and application of digital repositories.

The primary theme of this year's Open Repositories conference is **Collaboration and Community: The Social Mechanics of Repository Systems**.

More information about the conference management service offered by the TDL can be found on the TDL website at <http://www.tdl.org/conferences/>. ◇

UT Southwestern Medical Center Library moves ETDs to DSpace



Using TDL services, member institution UT Southwestern Medical Center Library is upgrading its electronic thesis and disserta-

tion (ETD) program to streamline submission and management and make theses and dissertations more visible to the worldwide scholarly community.

This fall, the library completed the migration of all of its existing electronic theses and dissertations from a homegrown online database to its TDL-hosted DSpace repository. Led by Digital Services and Technology Planning Manager Matthew Zimmerman, the UT Southwestern team moved roughly 450 theses and dissertations and related metadata from the legacy system to DSpace.

According to Zimmerman, the migration is the first step in a process of revamping the UT Southwestern ETD program in ways that will ease the process for the library, as well as the graduate school and medical school, both of which produce theses and dissertations.

“Moving the ETDs to TDL-hosted DSpace takes our library staff out of the business of maintaining our own system,” said Zimmerman. “It also makes the theses and dissertations more discoverable to other scholars because DSpace exposes the metadata to Google.”

The next step in streamlining the UT Southwestern ETD program will come in the spring of 2011, when the graduate and medical schools begin pilot testing TDL’s [Vireo](#) system for ETD submission and management.

UT Southwestern has allowed students to submit electronic versions of their theses and dissertations on compact disk since 2002. With online submission through Vireo, however, the process becomes much easier for both students and thesis offices, which will no longer have to keep track of the disks.

“Moving to DSpace made ETD management easier for the library,” Zimmerman said. “Vireo will make things easier for the graduate and medical schools and their students.”

The institution plans to pilot Vireo as an ETD submission tool beginning in January 2011 with the intention of deploying the system fully for May 2011. Theses and dissertations submitted through Vireo will be published in UT Southwestern’s DSpace repository, which is located at <http://repositories.tdl.org/utswmed-ir/>. The ETD collection can also be searched from the [UT Southwestern Library homepage](#).

In addition to Zimmerman, UT Southwestern staff

members Joseph Tan, Janis Darden, Cameron Kainerstorfer, and Jon Crossno worked on the technical implementation of the DSpace ETD collection; and Heather Perkins, Paul Denning, and Tracy Beeson contributed metadata and cataloging support.

The team collaborated with personnel at the TDL, including Lance King, Ryan Steans, and William Sydney to successfully complete the migration.

For more information about the UT Southwestern ETD program, contact Matthew Zimmerman at matthew.zimmerman@UTSouthwestern.edu. ◇



DSpace-based Galveston Bay Bibliography disseminates essential information for researchers

It produces one-third of the state's commercial fishing income and accommodates the third largest concentration of recreational boats in the US. It serves as a spawning ground and nursery for a rich and varied mix of wildlife, including shrimp, crabs, fish, and oysters. It is at the center of one of the world's busiest shipping hubs. Some four million people live in the counties that border it.

What is it? Galveston Bay, the 600 mile area of Texas where the Gulf of Mexico meets and mingles with fresh water sources like the Trinity and San Jacinto Rivers. Like all estuaries it is a tremendously productive natural and economic resource, and TDL member Texas A&M Galveston works to safeguard its future through the Galveston Bay Information Center (GBIC), a clearinghouse of information resources about the Galveston Bay Area.

The Texas Digital Library hosts a key piece of the GBIC collection, the Galveston Bay Bibliography, which is stored and disseminated through Texas A&M Galveston's TDL-hosted DSpace repository. The Bibliography includes references to some 10,000 works of historical and current research and artifacts related to Galveston Bay, including maps, published and unpublished reports, books, videos, photographs, charts, computer files, and press releases.

"The Bibliography is really the core of the information center," said GBIC research assistant Kristen Willis. "It's where people come to answer their questions for research or other needs, and having it available online is incredibly valuable in this information age."

Many of the references in the Galveston Bay Bibliography include the digital items themselves or links to those available online. However, the bibliographic references alone provide important information about available resources, according to Willis, and most of the physical items can be found at the GBIC



A wading bird on the shoreline of Galveston Bay. The complex ecosystem of the Bay is a rich area for many types of wildlife, including finfish, shellfish, and birds.

and the Jack K. Williams Library at Texas A&M Galveston, where the GBIC resides.

The GBIC moved the Galveston Bay Bibliography to its TDL-hosted DSpace repository from a legacy system that was more costly and labor intensive. With the GBIC losing state funding in June 2010, the need for a solution that was cost effective and required minimal technical labor grew stronger. As Texas A&M Galveston was a member of the TDL consortium, they opted to use the existing DSpace repository hosted by TDL as part of their membership.

Through a collaborative effort between GBIC and TDL technical staff, the bibliographic records were migrated from an existing Access database to DSpace. Since the initial migration, Willis has added roughly 800 new records to the bibliography.

The Galveston Bay Bibliography is available at <http://repositories.tdl.org/tamug-ir/handle/1969.3/10190>. For more information about the Bibliography and the Galveston Bay Information Center, please contact Kristen Willis at willisk@tamug.edu. ◇

TDL thanks volunteer trainers for a successful 2010 training program

The Texas Digital Library would like to thank all the faculty and staff from TDL member institutions who traveled to Waco during the year to lead training sessions. Volunteer trainers for 2010 included Matt Zimmerman (UT Southwestern Medical Center), Lance Grigsby (Baylor University), Steven Williams (UT Austin), Michele Reilly (University of Houston), and Kristi Park and Ryan Steans (TDL).

The TDL provides low-cost training courses to faculty and staff each semester. The courses are held at Baylor University, which generously provides training facilities and logistical support as part of its membership commitment to the TDL.

Recognizing that the fastest way to become proficient at something is to teach it, the TDL training program strives to create campus-level experts by giving users the opportunity to teach, prepare, and lead training classes. The TDL relies on its users to make this model successful and is appreciative of

their exceptional efforts at making the TDL work for all its members. ◇



TDL Winter Break Schedule

The Texas Digital Library offices will be closed for the winter break beginning Thursday, December 23. Offices will reopen at 8:00 AM on Monday, January 3, 2011.

The Texas Digital Library wishes all its members a safe and happy holiday season and looks forward to an exciting 2011! ◇

About the TDL

The Texas Digital Library is a multi-university consortium providing the digital infrastructure to support a fully online scholarly community for institutions of higher education in Texas and to promote the widespread availability of their enormous intellectual capital.

Services provided by the TDL to its members include:

- ◆ Institutional repositories
- ◆ Electronic Journals
- ◆ ETD Submission and Management software
- ◆ Blogs and wikis
- ◆ Faculty homepages
- ◆ Online conference management

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TDL Member Institutions

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Baylor University
Texas A&M University*
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
Texas A&M University-Kingsville
Texas A&M University at Galveston
Texas A&M University at Qatar
Texas State University
Texas Tech University*
University of Houston*
The University of Texas at Austin*
The University of Texas at Brownsville
The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas
The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston
The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center

* *founding institution*