



InterPARES 2 Project

International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems

Characterization of Case Study Validated

Case Study 03: *HorizonZero/ZeroHorizon* Online Magazine and Media Database

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Version 1, February 2006

Relevance of the Case Study to InterPARES 2

The purpose of this case study is to explore the “distinction between electronic records and publications.”¹ Its purpose is to examine the digital entities created through the publication of an issue of *Horizon Zero*, an online magazine that combines text, sound, image, and video within an interactive Web site. The relevance of the case study is therefore to enable InterPARES to meet its goals in relation to the study of artistic activities that are conducted using experiential, interactive and dynamic computer technology.

Information about the Creator

The creator of *Horizon Zero* online magazine is the Banff New Media Institute. This Institute is part of the Media and Visual Arts Department of the Banff Centre, which is located in Banff, Alberta, Canada. The Banff Centre was founded in 1933 by the University of Alberta, Department of Extension, with a grant from the U.S. based Carnegie Foundation.

As part of a larger organization, the individuals involved in the creation of *Horizon Zero* constitute only a small portion of the staff employed by the Centre. The magazine’s staff consists of an administration section and three “teams:” a Leadership Team, an Editorial Team, and a Production Team. According to a description of the magazine’s internal structure in the final report, the latter two teams consist of five individuals and the former of four. The administrative section consists only of one staff member. In addition to the publication of *Horizon Zero*, the Banff New Media Institute is also involved in the Banff Summer Arts Festival, as well as various co-productions and summits.

An associated body to the Centre is the Department of Canadian Heritage of the Federal Government. While the magazine is published at the Centre, the entire publication remains the joint property of The Banff Centre and this Department, which funds the magazine. The Banff Centre Web site states that the Centre “is an incubator of creativity that inspires and empowers

¹ InterPARES 2 Case Study 3 Proposal.

artists, the mountain community, and business and community leaders from Alberta, Canada, and around the world.” According to its Web site, the Banff New Media Institute “provides research opportunities, summits, resulting research prototype labs, professional development workshops, co-productions, partnerships, project commissions, academic exchanges, and publishing and business incubation”²

The magazine *Horizon Zero* is one of the projects of the Institute. The magazine’s objective is the dissemination of Canadian digital art and culture. It places an emphasis upon the “commissioning and promoting (of) Canadian new media content and innovators in the convergent fields of science, technology, media arts, and research” and is “dedicated to opening the new field of new media to the larger realm of Canadian culture, to build new audiences, to engage cultural and ethnic diversity and to foster dialogues between new media practitioners and their audiences.”³

The functions of the creator in the creation of the magazine would in all likelihood follow along the lines of its internal structure and teams and include administration, editorial and production work.

Information about the Administration / Management Function

Administration includes staffing, scheduling, budgeting, critical path. Documents arising from administrative activities would include those related to these activities as well as any contracts or other legal documents.

There do exist some internal procedures that effect recordkeeping. These include procedures for technical production and editorial content, as well as procedures for the preservation of version histories by the technical lead and graphic designer. These procedures are kept within what is referred to as a “Production Bible” that is kept on the internal server. However, there are no strict controls or recordkeeping practices for the creation or maintenance of Horizons records and the procedures outlined in the Bible are not formalized and are created on an ad hoc basis.

Information about the Digital Entity Being Studied

The activities under study are those surrounding the production of an issue of the magazine “ from conception to publication.”⁴ The online magazine “combine(s) text, images, sound, and video in an interactive environment encapsulated in a Flash Web site.”⁵ As part of its interactive element, the Web site also contains message boards. There are three main types of digital documents created:

- Administrative - “facilitate communication and control of the production process”
- Journalistic/artistic - are “drafted, revised, and ultimately incorporated into the published magazine”
- Programming code that “creates the presentation and interactive features of the Flash Web site”⁶

The primary interest of the case study was upon the latter two categories of

² Banff New Media Centre at <http://www.banffcentre.ca/bnmi/about.asp>. Accessed Nov 22, 2004.

³ InterPARES 2 Case Study 3 Final Report, pg. 3.

⁴ InterPARES 2 Case Study 3 Final Report, pg. 5.

⁵ InterPARES 2 Case Study 3 Final Report, pg. 1. Website is located at www.horizonzero.ca.

⁶ Case Study 3 Final Report, pg. 5.

documents. Some of these documents become part of the Zero Horizon database, and could potentially be utilized later for educational or other uses. The files include graphic material including still images, video and flash (.psd, tiff, and .ai, .fla, and .swf files) as well as word files and audio material in the form of .wav and .aiff files. Copyright is one legal consideration with the production of the magazine. For each issue, *Horizon Zero* enters into a licensing agreement with its contributors. Generally, the contributor holds the copyright but “waives the moral rights to the work.” The agreement is typically broad, which allows Horizon Zero, “to use the work for any purpose without further royalty.”⁷

Most of the documentation created by *Horizon Zero* remains in its possession. The exception to this is email, which belongs to the larger organization (and is kept for a limited time on the Centre’s email server), and contracts, which are kept within the Department of Media and Visual Arts fonds. Records are generally stored in one of two locations: the hard drives of staff members or within the shared server space. The records are organized by issue, with each issue having subdirectories related to different activities surrounding its creation. While this filing system exists, it is ad hoc, with different issues having a somewhat different internal structure.

There is the potential issue of technological obsolescence and backward compatibility. There is no plan towards the maintenance of the Web site or its associated materials into the future. It is though that the ability to access material will remain for as long as the links remain active, although the ability to use the message boards and other interactive features will cease at the end of 2004, when the project is scheduled to end. At this time, the Web site and the associated files will be stored within a PC computer and the Web site contracted for a period of ten years, after which no plans have been made for preservation.

⁷ Case Study 3 Final Report, pg. 10.