UBC Graduate School of Journalism Case Study Proposal
High Definition Video Electronic and Online Digital Archive

The UBC Graduate School of Journalism is proposing a case study to research, create and implement a plan to preserve and index a high definition digital video archive in online and electronic formats.

Background

High Definition video is expected to be industry standard within the next ten years. The School provides students with cutting-edge technological training; expansion into HD technology is part of our mandate. We acquired seven state-of-the-art Canon XL-H1 professional High Definition cameras, and are amassing a library of relevant and newsworthy High Definition material that can be offered free to university and online users, rather than cost $1000/second which is the current rate. Every year the School of Journalism's students film hundreds of hours of video footage relevant to news and current affairs in Vancouver and many other parts of Canada and the world, as part of their class assignments and thesis projects. Our most recent documentary – and first HD creation – was a collaboration between School of Journalism students and Dan Rather on a project for HDNet. We have now begun planning for the acquisition and installation of technology and equipment necessary to construct a long-term, sustainable high definition digital video archive to store and preserve student video projects.

The Problem

Currently, the SOJ's technological resources and software are inadequate to store and preserve high definition video. We have applied for limited funding to start to address this problem and we anticipate our application's success. However, we also need expertise on how best to preserve and index this archive – on computers and online – and believe these issues should be addressed during the planning and start-up stages rather than later. We need a technical and archival solution to preserving our digital video records in a format that will withstand technological obsolescence.

Approach & Key Activities:

An InterPARES 3 project resource person will be requested to work with our records manager, research assistant(s) and faculty liaison from the earliest phases of this project. He or she will collaborate or take the lead on researching copyright and legal ramifications; researching present High Definition preservation systems and which ones are most appropriate for our proposed archive; developing a system with ease-of-use and long-term sustainability as the first priorities; training students and employees in the system's use; and final testing with periodic review.

Timing & Assessment Criteria

We anticipate that this project will involve two to four hours a week for the SOJ's administrator, and ten to twenty hours a week for the InterPARES researchers in the initial research, planning and installation stages over a period of eight months. We expect that subsequent development, training, final testing and review will involve the same amount of hours over a subsequent eight months.

Summary:

This is an important project, one that is only now becoming a problem for records managers. As high definition television becomes standard technology in the next ten years, this pilot project could very well provide a model for the preservation and indexing of future high definition archives across the country.