

# A Conversation about Curating Digital Collections





We will explore such topics as:

- \*organizing the physical collection before digitization;
- \*the importance of selection and curation;
- \*provenance and copyright issues;
- \*and thinking about your digital collections within the vast number of collections out there in the digital universe.

We will also look at and evaluate examples of well-curated collections versus a lot of “space junk” filing a void, all from the Indiana State Library’s Digital Collections and Hosted Collections.

Let’s get started. It’s a long road to travel.





Before you start digitization, get **organized.**

Consider:

1. Used or requested frequently?
2. Already available online?
  - Internet Archive, Hathi Trust, Google Books, Library of Congress, etc.
3. Public interest?
  - Anniversaries
4. What is its condition?
  - Fragility, obsolescence, requires special equipment
5. Is it unique?
6. Provenance and most importantly, **Copyright!**





The next leg of the journey is visualizing your digital collection.

1. What is the purpose of your digital collection? Who is your intended audience?
2. What are your goals and/or focus?
3. Is it subject or format based?
4. Will the collection grow, or does it have an ending?
5. Do some exploration!

Let's look at some examples.





# Select and Curate!

## Tips and tricks:

1. Digital collections are not free! Storage space is expensive and an ongoing cost. You can't digitize everything, nor should you.
2. Consider structure and organization.
3. Quality control is boring but crucial.
  - Duplicates are not cool.
  - Wonky scanning.
  - Blurry images.
4. Create a comprehensive digital collection before publishing it.
  - Landing page
  - A decent number of digital items





A scenic landscape featuring a wide, unpaved dirt road that winds through a valley. The valley is filled with dense, low-lying shrubs and bushes in shades of yellow and orange, suggesting an autumn setting. In the background, a range of rugged, dark mountains rises against a clear blue sky with a few wispy white clouds. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and expansive.

The way to  
get started is to  
quit talking and  
begin doing.

-- Walt Disney





# Thank you

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