

AAPB NDSR Final Assessment

Host Mentor: Leslie Bourgeois

Organization: Louisiana Public Broadcasting (Baton Rouge, LA)

Resident: Eddy Colloton

Original Project Plan

As originally outlined in the project proposal, the LPB Digital Preservation Planning Project consisted of two phases. During the first phase, the resident was tasked with: documenting LPB's current digital workflows and storage locations; digitizing analog tapes in order to better understand the workflow; creating a metadata map between MediaInfo files and the LPB Archive database; and creating a procedure to import the technical metadata from the MediaInfo files into the LPB Archive database. During the second phase of the project, the resident was responsible for creating a digital preservation plan for LPB.

Changes to the Original Plan

The timeline of the LPB NDSR project changed due to two unforeseen events: historic flooding in the Baton Rouge area and Eddy's decision to leave the residency three months early.

At the end of Eddy's second week at LPB, Baton Rouge was inundated with twenty inches of rain in two days, which caused widespread flooding. During this event, my house and car were both flooded. Thankfully, Eddy was living in an area of Baton Rouge that did not flood and he was able to return to work on Wednesday, August 17th. I ended up missing almost two weeks of work and was not back full time until the week of August 29th. During my absence, Eddy was forced to perform duties that I normally would have handled. Most notably, he was asked to compile a list of archival footage pertaining to previous floods. One of the clips that he found, footage of the 1983 floods, was used as a part of LPB's flood coverage on *Louisiana: The State We're In*. You can view the episode here: http://ladigitalmedia.org/video_v2/asset-detail/LSWI-3949 Eddy was also asked to put together a blog post for the Louisiana Digital Media Archive discussing our footage of past flood events. You can view his post here: <http://ladigitalmedia.org/home/flooding-in-louisiana>

At the beginning of November 2016, Eddy informed me that he would be leaving his residency three months early in order to accept a job at the Denver Art Museum. At this point in the project, he had already completed the documentation of our workflows and had started working with our technical metadata files. We had already decided that he would not digitize any of our analog tapes because he had previous experience with digitization and he felt that he had a good understanding of our workflow through his multiple interviews with our Transfer Engineer. Therefore, Eddy immediately turned his focus to Phase 2 of the project, the creation of the digital preservation plan. He was able to complete the plan by the end of his residency in February 2017. If Eddy had stayed through the end of the residency in May 2017, he would

have been able to play a role in implementing more of the recommendations he made for improving LPB's workflows.

Project Milestones & Deliverables

Workflow Documentation

During the first two months of the residency, Eddy documented LPB's workflows for digitizing analog tapes and for creating new productions. In order to accomplish this task, he interviewed LPB's Engineering Director and Information Technology Manager, as well as several members of the Engineering and Production departments. After completing the interviews, he created a flow chart and step-by-step guide for both workflows. This work was critical to the success of the project because it allowed Eddy to gain a greater understanding of the complexities of working in a production environment and to find areas in the workflow that could be improved for long-term digital preservation.

Technical Metadata

Throughout the residency, Eddy worked toward importing MediaInfo files and technical metadata into LPB's Archive database. Before this project, LPB was creating MediaInfo files for digitized content as text files. During Immersion Week in Boston, Eddy and I both learned that MediaInfo can export PBCore 2.1-compliant XML. Eddy worked with LPB's Information Technology Manager, John Tooraen, to develop and run a batch script in order to create the MediaInfo PBCore XML files for all of the MP4 files on LPB's media server. He also tweaked and ran the script on the fourteen LTO-6 tapes that contain LPB's digitized archival content. In addition, Eddy created a metadata crosswalk between the MediaInfo files and the LPB Archive database. During this process, he identified a few technical metadata fields that need to be added to the database. John has identified a process to import the MediaInfo files and technical metadata into the LPB Archive database, though it has not yet been implemented. Eddy also incorporated the creation of these MediaInfo XML files into LPB's workflow for digitizing analog tapes.

Digital Preservation Plan

During the last four months of the residency, Eddy created a 75-page digital preservation plan for LPB. It consists of: an introduction to digital preservation; background on the LPB Archive; a set of collection-wide policies; digital preservation policies for legacy programs, born-digital programs, and documentaries; a section on disaster planning; and a summary of recommendations. Based on the information he gathered while documenting LPB's existing workflows, Eddy developed recommendations for improving the workflows and LPB's digital preservation practices. As he was working on the plan, I set up a meeting with our Executive Producer, Engineering Director, IT Manager, Engineering IT Support Specialist, and Operations Supervisor to discuss the feasibility of Eddy's recommendations. We received positive feedback on his recommendations. (Eddy discussed his preparation for this meeting in a recent AAPB NDSR blog post available here: <https://ndsr.americanarchive.org/2017/02/27/advocating-for-archives-in-a-production-environment/>).

Before the end of the residency, Eddy was able to implement several changes that are outlined in the digital preservation plan. For the analog to digital workflow, he was able to incorporate MediaConch as automated quality control and a policy checker to ensure that the digital files are encoded properly. He also implemented scripts to automatically generate MediaInfo XML files and checksums using MD5Deep. We also worked together to create a set of protocols for accepting hard drives into the LPB Archive. Eddy also worked with John Tooraen, the IT Manager, to run fixity checks on documentation files, like scripts and closed captioned files, which are uploaded to the LPB Archive database. Lastly, Eddy left me with a set of detailed notes that outline the status of the implementation of his other recommendations so that I can follow-up on his work with the appropriate staff members.

Project Impact

Station

The AAPB NDSR project gave LPB the opportunity to reassess its archival practices and ensure that we can save Louisiana's stories for future generations. The main goal of the LPB Archive is to preserve our collection so that we can make it available to the general public via the Louisiana Digital Media Archive (ladigitalmedia.org) and the American Archive of Public Broadcasting. Going into this project, we recognized that we needed to make changes to our workflows in order to better align with digital preservation best practices.

In the short term, Eddy has provided us with a simplified analog to digital workflow that contains less opportunity for human error. He also helped bring together LPB staff members to start the conversation about implementing his short, medium, and long-term recommendations. I plan on keeping the conversation going in the months and years to come.

In the long term, Eddy has left LPB with a road map for creating uncompressed or lossless preservation masters and implementing a file-based workflow. Because these changes require a significant investment in resources and LPB has experienced nine straight years of budget cuts, it is unknown how long it will take for them to be implemented. Due to these constraints, we'll only know the true impact of this project as time goes on.

Professional Community

LPB's AAPB NDSR project will impact the professional community through the release of our digital preservation plan. We hope that we can serve as an example to other public media stations to see the value of organizing and preserving their archives and sharing their content with the public through the American Archive of Public Broadcasting. Through all of seven of the AAPB NDSR projects, the residents are putting together valuable information that will help both public media stations and audiovisual archives to start or reassess and improve their digital preservation practices. By sharing their experiences of completing these projects, the residents' blog posts and webinars will also help all archivists to continue to improve their digital preservation skills.