

Association of Earth Science Editors
Abstracts

**BEST PRACTICES FOR CREATING AND PRESERVING GEOLOGIC
FIELD TRIP GUIDEBOOKS**

Lura Joseph, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Most would agree that geologic field-trip guidebooks contain valuable information. In addition to providing useful background information about the geology of an area, many guidebooks report cutting-edge research. In some instances, the information in guidebooks cannot be found in any other resource. At the very least, guidebooks are part of the record of the history of the various societies and meetings. This talk will discuss some of the best practices for creating field-trip guidebooks, and some of the problems related to finding and preserving these valuable resources. In addition, some possible solutions to the problems will be presented, including a collaborative project of Geoscience Information Society and AGI GeoRef.

**COLORADO PLATEAU DIGITAL ARCHIVES: BUILDING
GOOD DIGITAL COLLECTIONS**

Peter Runge, Manuscripts and Digital Content Curator, Cline Library,
Special Collections and Archives, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ

We live in a digital world and digital archives are becoming increasingly prevalent for institutions wishing to share information. The Colorado Plateau Digital Archives at Northern Arizona University's Cline Library has been evolving for the past twelve years; this presentation will address the fundamental components of the Colorado Plateau Digital Archives and some of the lessons we have learned along the way. Topics that will be discussed include selection criteria, workflow, metadata, and discovery versus access. The presentation will conclude with some general observations and an opportunity to ask questions.

**RECONSTRUCTING THE PAST: CONSIDERATIONS IN THE
DEVELOPMENT OF A MUSEUM ARCHIVAL PROGRAM**

Jonathan Pringle, Archivist, Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff

The archival material at the Museum of Northern Arizona contains a wealth of information related to the museum's institutional machinations as well as a variety of unique and original manuscript collections from individuals who functioned outside the museum but whose activities still fell within the broader geographic area known as the Colorado Plateau. While a portion of the records have received some degree of preservation and intellectual treatment, a large backlog of unprocessed materials lies scattered among different storage locations across the museum campus. As the Museum Archives moves ahead with a strategy, it will have to consider issues of copyright, cultural sensitivity, and access with regard to its holdings and their dissemination, all the while working within a very limited budget.

**INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE PLANET EARTH – US NATIONAL
COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES**

John W. Hess, GSA

The International Year of the Planet Earth, as proclaimed by Resolution 60/192 of the United Nations General Assembly at its 60th Session, is a three-year event (2007–2009) aimed at promoting the contribution to sustainable development of society by using geoscience knowledge and information. It is a joint initiative by the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) and UNESCO. The US National Committee (USNC) for the International Year of the Planet Earth is responsible for developing national science and outreach activities that contribute to the success of the global awareness on the use of geoscience for society. The USNC plans for a series of activities throughout 2008 and 2009. They include hosting public lectures and sponsoring shows on the PBS “Earth and Sky” series. The major US event is built around the GSA/SSSA/ASA/CSSA/GCAGS Joint Meeting in Houston in October 2008. Many US-based geoscience societies and federal agencies will be conducting IYPE-branded activities in support of the year.

BUILDING A DAM SYSTEM: FLOOD CONTROL FOR DIGITAL IMAGES

Judy Colbert, Manager of Visual Resources, Gemological Institute of America (GIA), Carlsbad, California

Photography and graphics are important communication media in the earth sciences arena. Images are used in editorial publications, in marketing materials, for educational purposes, and in other practical applications. Professional photography and art can be very expensive, and so there exists a need for a system to organize and archive images and to provide easy access in order to reuse this material.

Since the preferred format for images has become digital, a digital asset management (DAM) system is fundamental to maintaining any significant collection of digital images. Images that are originally analog can be converted to digital images through scanning.

The GIA Visual Resources Library, in conjunction with other departments at GIA, developed and implemented a plan for an enterprisewide DAM system to manage the increasing number of digital images being generated and acquired. The key to a successful implementation of a DAM system lies not only in the selection of the appropriate products but, more important, in the planning of the policies and procedures the users will follow in their new workflow.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY OF MINERALS, GEMSTONES AND JEWELRY

Robert Weldon, Manager, Photography and Visual Communications, GIA, Carlsbad

The successful photography of small objects, such as minerals or gemstones, depends on a basic understanding of photography and a familiarity with concepts such as depth of field, aperture, and shutter speed. These should become second nature to the photographer so that more attention can be placed on photographic composition and emphasizing a subject's most important characteristics.

Much also depends on the various tools you have to work with. The camera is one such tool. There are many options and brands when it comes to selecting a digital camera. Your selection should depend on your needs — but for close-up photography, lenses with macro capabilities are essential. Second, you should work in an area where you can control the lighting conditions to best illuminate your subject matter.

Choosing the surface (or background) for your subject is important too, and various kinds of backgrounds can be selected. An understanding of digital photo manipulations is also important because it is the final step in perfecting an image before it should be viewed, printed, or made available for publication.

PALEOGEOGRAPHIC MAPS: SCOPE, CONSTRUCTION, AND USE

Ronald C. Blakey, Department of Geology, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff

Paleogeographic maps represent the ultimate synthesis of complex and extensive geologic data. They express pictorially, with or without additional text, the hypothetical landscape of some region during the geologic past. They need little explanation, even to the nongeologist, because most individuals are familiar with the basic information shown on the maps (water vs. land, plains, vs. uplands, vs. mountains, etc.). They can be layered to show the distribution of certain geologic data with respect to the map. Examples include paleocurrent data, grain-size data and lithology, tectonic elements, and fossil data. Maps can be prepared at many scales, usually somewhat dependent on the size of the area shown; map areas range from outcrop scale (10s of kms) to global. Maps that show relatively small regions can be extremely detailed and confined to a relatively narrow time slice, based, of course, on available detailed geologic data. Maps portraying larger areas up to global scale tend to be more generalized and average paleogeography over longer time slices.

Maps are constructed by compiling and plotting geologic information on a base map. Data are turned into rough sketches on the map, which in turn are painted in the program Adobe Photoshop. Maps are rechecked and updated as necessary. Pictorial paleogeographic maps can be used to illustrate earth history in many settings and at many levels. For example, the maps appear in books that range from preschool to professional geologic papers. In addition to books, they can be used in displays in regional and national parks, museums, and roadside displays. They have heavy usage in classrooms and lectures at all levels. Perhaps their ultimate value is that pictorial paleogeographic maps communicate with the viewer regardless of their level of understanding of geology or earth history.

BUILDING A PICTURE OF U.S. GEOSCIENCES HUMAN RESOURCES

Christopher M. Keane, Director, Communications and Technology,
American Geological Institute, Alexandria, Virginia

At the end of 2007, AGI began the geosciences workforce data snapshots “Geoscience Currents.” This publication series provides the community and the public focused views of a specific aspect of the geosciences profession—from human dynamics to economic variables. These snapshots are done in response to rapidly rising questions which AGI has become aware of or of new analyses available by AGI’s effort to develop a comprehensive analytical compendium of the geoscience profession. The first edition of this compendium will be available in early 2009.

Some clear emerging trends have been noted during the current study, some of which run counter to “popular opinion,” such as federal investment in geosciences, employment demographics, and the dynamics of geosciences programs. An overview of the major trends and issues will be presented, including the clear disconnects between the activities on the supply side (universities) and the demand side (employers) within the United States.

For example, though many geosciences departments have closed in the last 10 years, more have actually entered our field—a few brand-new geology programs but also the evolution of outside programs such as biology and geography entering our field, employing faculty, and producing students that enter the profession. Likewise, many traditional bastions of both education and employment in the geosciences are seeing increased multidisciplinary involvement and “fade” from the center of the profession.

THE FUTURE OF GEOSCIENCES EDUCATION: NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND NEW PARTNERS CREATE NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Rod Parnell, Professor of Environmental Sciences and Geology, Director,
Center for Sustainable Environments, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff

The new technologies available to geoscientists through Geographic Information Systems analysis; the new demands for comprehensive water, soil, and natural resources management; and the new discussions of our future as a postcarbon society have combined to create unprecedented opportunities for a revolution in geosciences education. To create a geosciences curriculum for the 21st century, we must resolve some of the tensions that have developed. As we train our students to take advantage of the technological advances brought about by Geographic Information Systems analysis and the hardware it requires, we risk slighting fundamental academic content in favor of an emphasis on tools. As we take a wider, ecosystems perspective, considering concepts such as sustainability and resilience, we risk giving short shrift to the traditional disciplines in geology that have served us well. As we look to opportunities in a postcarbon society, we must remember that generations to come will still depend on fossil fuels, even without our current level of dependence on petroleum. In striving to achieve balance among these competing concerns, we must decide how to best train our students to master the academic background as well as the professional techniques required for the new demands of a new century.

E-PUBLISHING: CURRENT TRENDS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Michael J. Margotta, Director of Sales and Marketing, MetaPress,
EBSCO Industries, Birmingham, Alabama

Online delivery of information has expanded dramatically in recent years. Users of academic information are increasingly demanding more types of content. The demand has led to willingness to pay for just the right information when it is easily located; the burden is to provide tools to locate the right information easily with business models for its access. A comprehensive hosting system can accommodate all these needs. Areas of discussion include user behavior, expanded content searching and indexing protocols, standards, the trend toward content fragmentation, the significance of metadata, and usage analytics.

WHAT’S NEW IN ONLINE PUBLISHING

Anna Jester, Product Manager, Online Publishing and Peer Review, Allen Press, Lawrence, Kansas

Online publishing continually evolves. Once contemporary topics are addressed and innovative features are implemented within your website, it is already time to step back and objectively evaluate the newest developments. Staying current on the latest and greatest trends can be time consuming, but there are several key trends to keep an eye on as your publication and your readership’s expectations mature. Targeted advertising, plagiarism detection and innovative content models are among the topics worth evaluation.

PUBLISH RESPONSIBLY: PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Melanie Dolechek, Director of Marketing, Allen Press

Environmental issues are heating up as the hour's hot topic. Sustaining our environment is important to our future, and association members, readers, and subscribers want to know how organizations are doing their part. Such sustainability solutions include the Forestry Stewardship Council, renewable energy sources, low- and no-VOC-emission inks and solvents, and digital workflows that reduce paper waste. "Greening" a publication is easier than many people realize, and it can demonstrate to members, readers, and subscribers that publishers are responsible global citizens who care about the future of the earth.

CO-PUBLISHING PARTNERSHIPS AMONG PUBLIC, NONPROFIT, AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS

Lowell Lindsay, Sunbelt Publications, Inc., El Cajon, California

Co-publishing projects (publishing partnerships) can optimize the unique strengths of two or more cooperating organizations to develop and distribute a product or service that may be beyond the resources available to an organization acting alone. Several case studies of such partnerships with a California-based regional publishing company illustrate joint projects that have been instrumental to the accomplishment of the respective missions of the partners.

Some examples include: Anza-Borrego: A Photographic Journey (California State Parks, Anza-Borrego Foundation/Institute, Wells Fargo Bank; and a coalition of private/public sponsors); Fossil Treasures of the Anza-Borrego Desert (California State Parks, Anza-Borrego Foundation/Institute, private sponsors); The Panda Who Would Not Eat (San Diego Zoo, Quail Botanical Gardens); History of the San Diego Symphony (San Diego Symphony); The Play's the Thing (San Diego Performing Arts League, Dr Seuss Foundation); California Desert Miracle (Sierra Club/Earth Justice); Fire, Chaparral and Survival in Southern California (Allstate Insurance, private foundation); Kelemen Journals (The Kelemen Foundation); The Sugar Bear Story (Santa Barbara Natural History Museum); Louis Rose: San Diego's First Jewish Settler (Agency for Jewish Education, private sponsors); Mission Memoirs (Mervyns Foundation); Mission Trails Regional Park Map (City of San Diego); and My Ancestor's Village (Barona Tribal Council/Barona Cultural Museum).

BOOK PRINTING, DOMESTIC OR OVERSEAS?

Mark McCombs, The Covington Group, Kansas City, Missouri

Printing overseas can often be cheaper, and quality is usually competitive. However, in comparing domestic and overseas printers, it is essential to look at the "big picture." Considerations for going overseas include added freight costs; taxes, customs, duties (Who handles these? You or the printer?); cash-flow considerations; time to market; and timeliness of scientific material. Other things to consider are how production/quality problems will be handled long distance and whether good legal recourse exists in a worst-case scenario. Other elements that would rarely if ever be an issue domestically may interfere with printing overseas, such as local political restrictions, employee rights, religious concerns, etc.

In shopping for a printer, take the time to think about how you buy other things such as computers, office furniture, and consulting: at the lowest price or are there considerations outside of price? Is printing a commodity? How do ease of use, efficiency of communication, timeliness, quality, etc., figure into our decisions?

DEVELOPING BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR WRITING CASE STUDIES

Gayle Nesom and Donna Talbot, Schlumberger, Sugar Land, Texas

Case studies are commonly used throughout the oil and gas industry to stimulate current and prospective customers' interest in products and services. Well-written case studies can be powerful sales tools because they speak directly to customers and provide facts and figures that lend credibility to marketing claims. An integral part of a service company's marketing collateral, they are widely read on Web sites and are popular, highly effective resources for sales teams. The Schlumberger Oilfield Marketing Communications editorial team is responsible for developing the company's case studies. Despite existing guidelines and a basic template, however, finished documents did not always meet the department's high editorial standards. Moreover, the guidelines were inadequate for training new editors and informing submitters about what goes into a great case study. For these reasons, the team undertook a group project to improve the quality and development process of case studies. Team members reviewed information-gathering tools, the typical source information obtained from subject matter experts, and numerous completed case studies. They concluded that the information provided by the experts was often insufficient to create a compelling story, that the project brief form was inefficient and overwhelming to users, and that the team needed better guidelines.

On the basis of these results and the group's best practices, the team developed new, detailed guidelines. The updated materials are available to subject matter experts on an internal Web site. As a result of this project, the team has a better grasp of how to develop powerful case studies and is more effectively communicating with subject matter experts when developing the studies. The team expects that this streamlined process will produce more compelling case studies. All these materials are living documents, and the goal is to regularly review, update, and improve the relevant processes.

AVOIDING DEATH BY DETAIL: MAINTAINING QUALITY IN A FAST-PACED ENVIRONMENT

Margaret Read, Schlumberger

One guarantee when you work in a busy environment is that you will never be bored. If you are a single editor with many masters, you are at the beck and call of any number of product experts, coworkers, deadlines, and the often complex production system of which you are a part. You will be challenged by a variety of subjects that can put your mind through contortions and written materials that range from hastily assembled to "almost but not quite there," and your patience and your stress level will be well exercised. Of course, very few will commiserate because they have priorities of their own.

So what do you do?

Create your own system. Think of it as a routine, an assembly line peopled by one—you. Establish your process so that it works for you and works within the organization for maximum efficiency. Simplify by having well-oiled tools in place and as many of your wits as you can muster about you. There are numerous ways to streamline the process. Determine the level of detail required for each project, avoid the ubiquitous focus busters, and most important, maintain perspective. Remember that you are just a cog in a large machine. Take each day as a single, complete life cycle to be negotiated anew every morning. Flexibility, patience, and diplomacy go a long way, and it's your own attitude that will make or break your sanity.