Administrative Aspects

According to the website, the CPL mission statement is:

“We welcome and support all people in their enjoyment of reading and pursuit of lifelong learning. Working together, we strive to provide equal access to information, ideas and knowledge through books, programs and other resources. We believe in the freedom to read, to learn, to discover.”

The digital library was created as a means to fulfill this mission. The CPL is for all residents of the city of Chicago. There are 80 physical branches throughout the city in most neighborhoods. The CPL is owned by the city of Chicago and run by a Board of Directors. The CPL partners with the area museums and a large number of local businesses and events to provide a diverse array of services and programs. CPL also benefits from the Chicago Public Library Foundation, the not-for-profit organization connected to the library. Annual reports are available to the public through the CPL website. The library website provides all of the most important information patrons would need about the library and the collections held by the library.
Collection Content
The CPL has its collection development policy integrated into the strategic plan that is posted on the website. The digital collections have large and diverse subject matters including fiction, non-fiction, and reference materials. The local history collections contain digitized artifacts from the civil war like uniforms, swords, canteens etc., newspapers, photographs, and other local history documents from the Chicago land area relating to culture and events.
Alexa T. McCray and Marie E. Gallagher (2001) state “Images that are skewed, dark, or cut off are not welcome in a digital library” All digitized items in the CPL collection are of high quality. The CPL also has subscriptions to Zinio, Hoopla, Homework Help, Overdrive, and OneClickdigital. Tony Horava (2010) states of academic libraries “We need to focus not only on the range and types of material that our patron groups require, but also on how the resources we acquire can lead to effective learning outcomes” (Access and Delivery Issues, para. 4). This is something that CPL is focusing on through its collection development as well as its programing according to their strategic plan.

**Information Organization**

The content of the CPL digital library is organized into collections based on subject matter. The CPL digital collections use the Dublin Core metadata standards in conjunction with unique archival classification codes, Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH), local subject headings, and Thesaurus for Graphic Materials (TGM) allowing for people from many different backgrounds to be able to search the collections. This is a strategy recommended by the National Information Standards Organization (NISO). The NISO publication A Framework of Guidance for Building Good Digital Collections states “To enable the most effective end-user access, the implementation of local, collection-specific authorities and vocabularies in addition to the use of terms and names from standard published authorities is often the best strategy” (2007, p. 79).
Collection Storage and Preservation
The CPL digital collections contain items that have been digitized as well as items that were born digital. The physical items that have been digitized are stored in the archives at the Harold Washington Library branch of the CPL for preservation and physical access.
Items that are born digital have master copies stored on CDs in the same archives as the physical items. Although storing these images on CD is not wrong, there are better means of storing and preserving images than CD. Margaret Hedstrom states “The HDROM is capable of storing 180 times more information than current CDROM technology at roughly onethalf of one percent of CDROM costs” (1998 p. 198). All items in the digital collections are accessible in .jpg, .jp2, or .tif. This is not uncommon; according to Kyle Rimkus, Thomas Padilla, Tracy Popp and Greer Martin, these three formats have fairly high rates of confidence from those in charge of digital libraries (2014, no page). All locally digitized items are digitized through imaging (not scanning) however I did not hear back from the special collections division as to the procedure or storage formats.

Collection Access
The CPL use BiblioCommons and Contentdm to manage digital content and services. Both BiblioCommons and Contentdm are proprietary software. The CPL has all digital content hosted externally and uses a SaaS (Software as a Service) platform.

The user interface is fairly straight forward and simple. There is a search option at the top of each page that allows for searching the catalog or the website, the site is consistent with common UI elements and has a purposeful layout, and the site has a notification bar at the top of the page to communicate important announcements and/or events related to the library system; all of which are recommended by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services User Interface Design Basics (2016).
The search functioning of the catalog allows for general searching as well as advanced searching.
The search results are displayed in a list with a cover image for each item. The list can be changed to remove the cover image. The results can also be filtered via a sidebar on the right with multiple option like format, genre, audience etc.
The catalog can also be browsed by format. Records from the catalog are displayed in a manner consistent with most OPACs.

The only differences for the digital archive collections is that the search only searches the digital collection, not the catalog or entire website.

**Technical and Service Aspects**

The access policies are laid out in the strategic plan that is posted on the website. The digital archive collections are completely open to the public but the subscription based collections are limited to CPL library card holders. The collections all have assistance options via a help button, FAQs, blogs, and email a librarian.
Users have the option to print, or share records.

Sources Cited


