

MARKETING ARCHON

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Why we undertook this research

- Introduced Archon in January 2012
- While it was indexed and appearing on search engines, it was not getting a lot of attention
- Special Collection & University Archives did not have a presence on the Library's social media

The kernel

- The kernel of the idea was sprouted years earlier at SAA in Chicago- when a presenter mentioned that Google crawls social media **MUCH** more effectively than a library website!

Research Question

- Can Social Media sites be used to promote finding aids of archival collections?
 - ▣ Does this type of material play well with the online community
 - ▣ What sites provide the best return on investment
 - ▣ Running these sites takes a lot time- can we see a clear advantage to running two or three sites?

Methodology

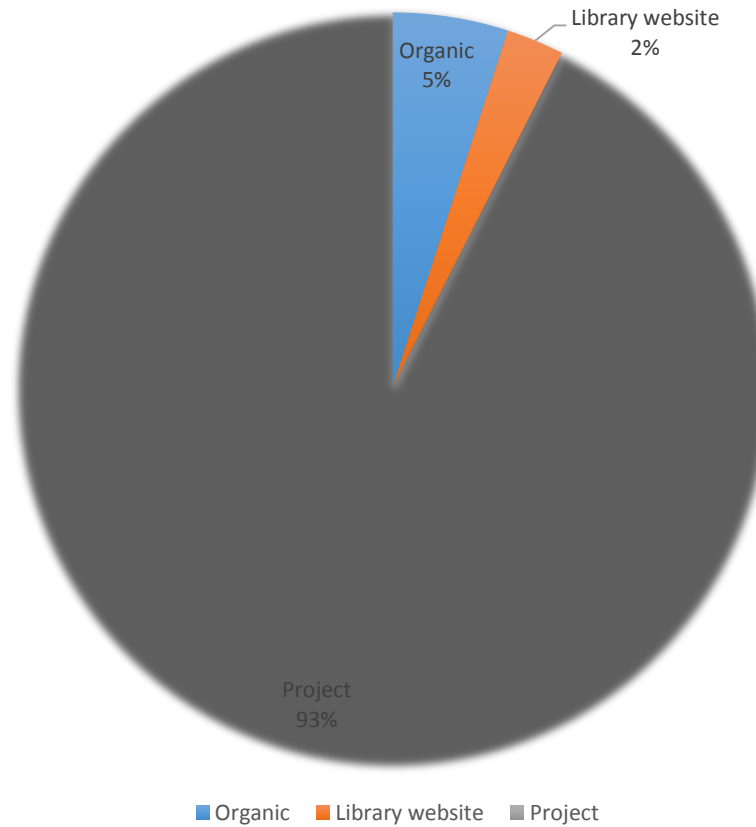
- Maintain 11 social media sites
- In the six months leading up to the research project- build a following by posting good content on a bi-weekly basis.
- During research phase, publish one finding aid a week for twelve weeks
- We also emailed 1,000 people via listserv's
 - Archives and Archivists (631)
 - Arkansas History (306)

Steps that we took

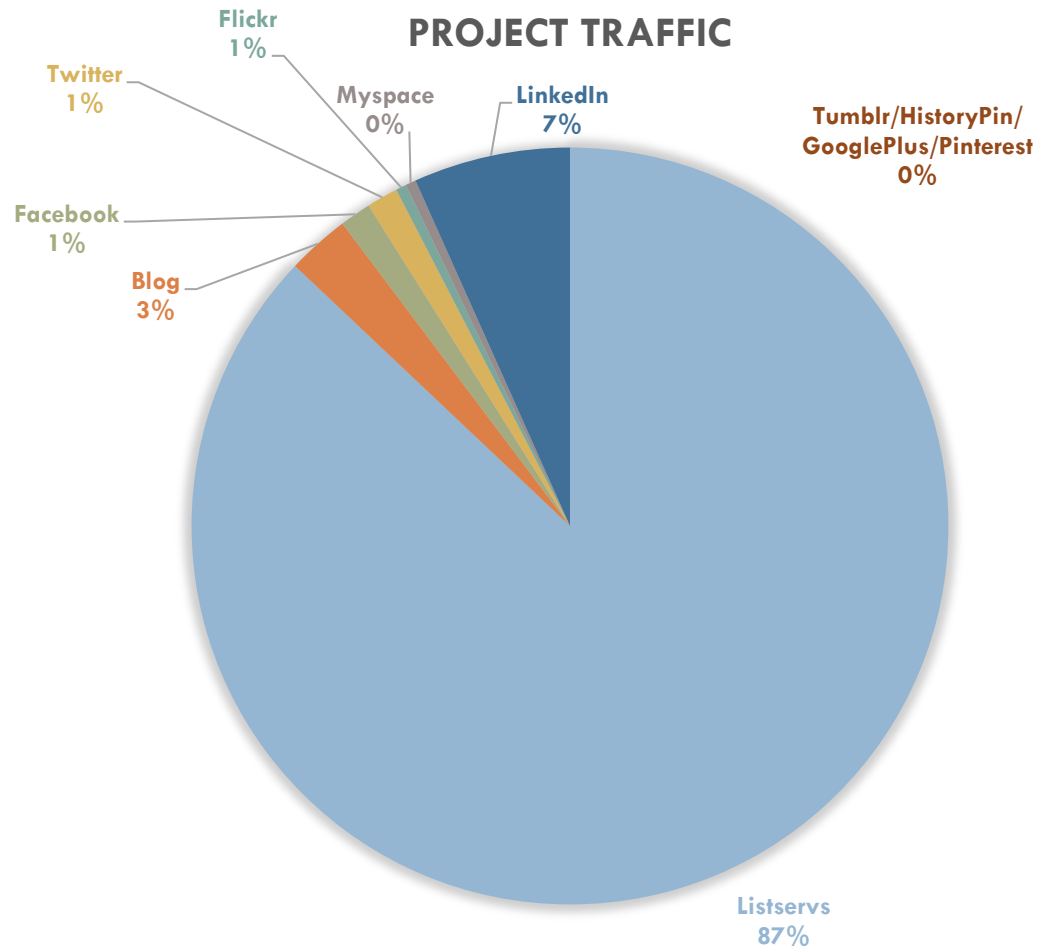
- Select the 11 social media sites
 - ▣ Used statistics on most popular sites
 - ▣ Included sites that had been pushed within the archival community
- Built audience for each site
 - ▣ Drew from materials in Special Collections & SHSU Archives
 - ▣ Selected content from collections with appealing historic interest or visual content

Initial Findings

Breakdown of Archon Traffic since 10/08/2013

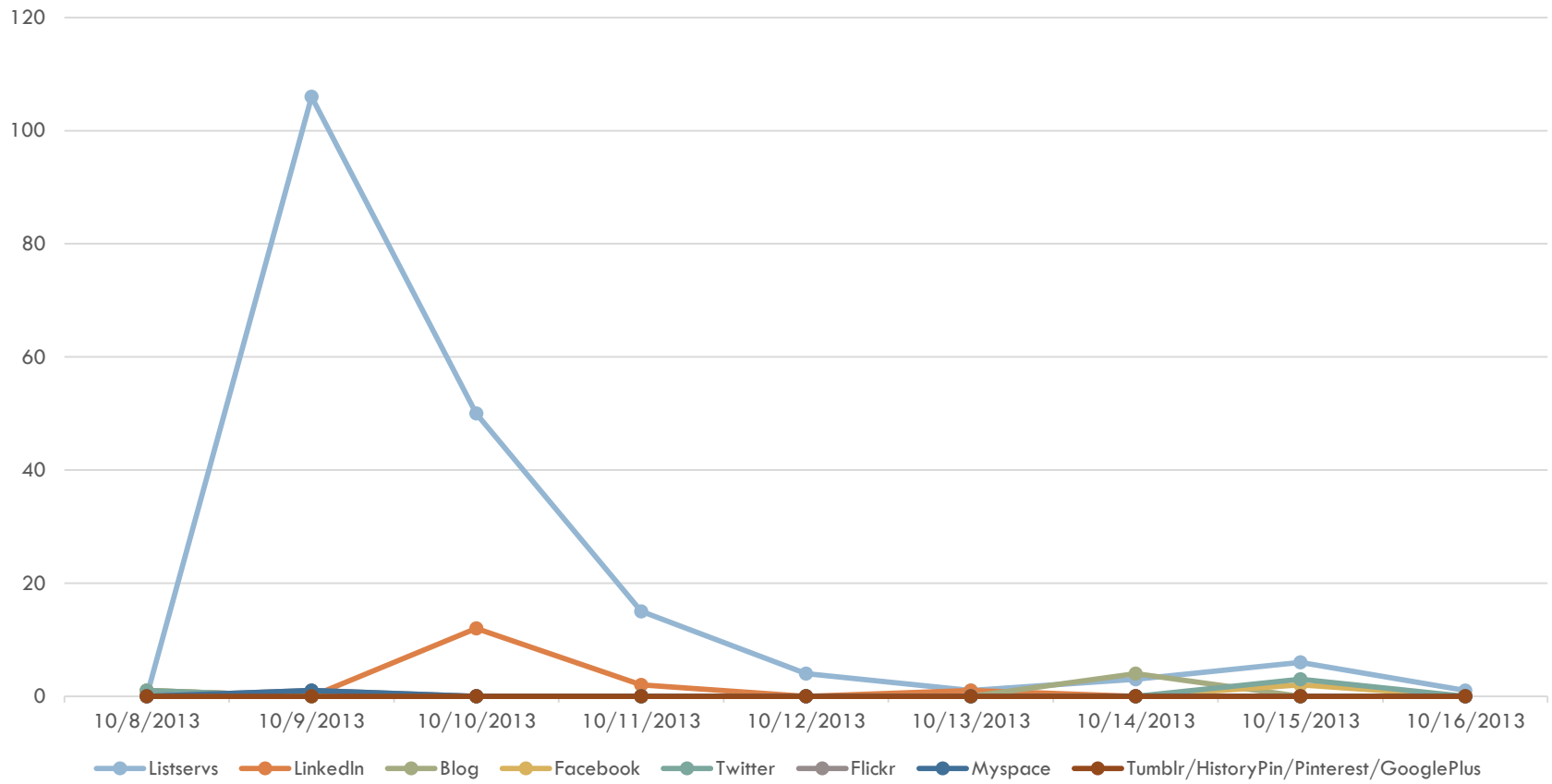


Initial Findings



Initial Findings

Frequency of Social Media Use



Takeaways

- Note: before the project, there were several weekly re-pins, likes, comments and re-blogs. While we are only a week into this project, the initial burst of activity has been almost entirely from the email listserv's.
- Social media platforms resulted in many views, but have not yet been shared, re-blogged, re-pinned, etc.

Takeaways- Social Media

- James joined and targeted specific groups in Linked In, and these groups did respond to his reaching out.
- James also targeted specific history and archival groups in Flickr and Tumblr.
- Local history and community groups on Facebook in addition to the growing group of followers on the blog seem to be the most loyal group of social media fans.

Benefits of Social Media Effort

- After six months of social media efforts, we have already seen these benefits:
 - ▣ People on campus are increasingly aware of Special Collections & SHSU Archives
 - ▣ More students contacting us for research help or to put up displays (one of our learning objectives)
 - This is probably the most noticeable and drastic change!

Research Takeaways – the Listserv’s

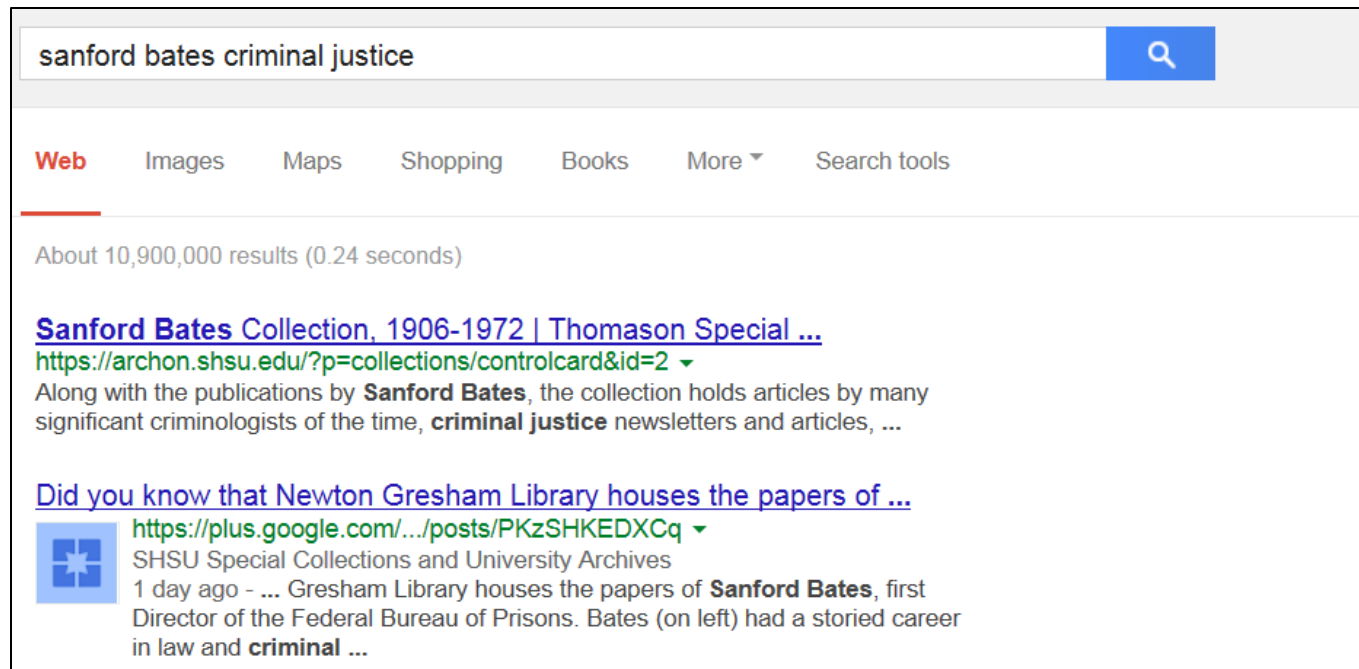
- We got a great response from the emails we sent to listserv’s, including great individual responses, like:
 - “Would love to see the results of your research posted here? This is a great project design and work. Thank you for sharing.” April Akins from Archives and Archivists on October 10, 2013

Google searching – the big fish!

- Before advertising finding aids on social media, if you knew the title of the collection, Archon finding aids would be on the first or second page of results.
- Now, it will be higher on the result list- and you will have more than one point of entry.

Google searching – examples

- For instance, after launching the Sanford Bates Finding aid on Social Media last week, the first two search results on Google are from us!




sanford bates criminal justice

Web Images Maps Shopping Books More Search tools

About 10,900,000 results (0.24 seconds)

[Sanford Bates Collection, 1906-1972 | Thomason Special ...](#)
<https://archon.shsu.edu/?p=collections/controlcard&id=2> ▾
Along with the publications by **Sanford Bates**, the collection holds articles by many significant criminologists of the time, **criminal justice** newsletters and articles, ...

[Did you know that Newton Gresham Library houses the papers of ...](#)
<https://plus.google.com/.../posts/PKzSHKEDXCq> ▾
 SHSU Special Collections and University Archives
1 day ago - ... Gresham Library houses the papers of **Sanford Bates**, first Director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Bates (on left) had a storied career in law and **criminal** ...

Surprises

- Google Plus has gotten next to no interest from followers
- It does however greatly enhance Google search results, bringing information about finding aids to the top of the Google Search results page.

More surprises

- Historypin is touted in the literature and Myspace is listed in the top ten of all social media sites, but neither seem to garner much attention from our audiences
 - ▣ The jury is still out on these two!
- Tumblr really surprised us by how much patrons interact with the content

What's next

- Twelve weeks
- 4 posts with specific content
- We will determine which social media platforms work for posting our finding aids, but also for advertising events, reaching new audiences and serving our community.
- Anticipate running 2-4 social media platforms for the long term.

Questions?

- Email me anytime with questions
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