The Black Star Collection at the Ryerson Image Centre

A Case Study on Crowd Source Technologies
• How do you provide access to large, un-catalogued collections with multiple users?
• Is crowd-source cataloguing the answer?
• Has this technology provided the results we were hoping for?
• What other uses can come from this type of project? Can improvements be made?
Ryerson Image Centre, North Entrance, Toronto, Canada
View of collection items in the Peter Higdon Research Centre, Ryerson Image Centre
View of collection items in the Peter Higdon Research Centre, Ryerson Image Centre
View of collection items in the Peter Higdon Research Centre, Ryerson Image Centre
The Black Star Collection in permanent storage, Ryerson Image Centre
Phelps (Flip) Schulke
*Rosa Parks, 1955*
gelatin silver print
BS.2005.290716/197-472

Phelps (Flip) Schulke
*Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and son, 1964*
gelatin silver print
BS.2005.288591/196-690
John Launois
*The Beatles in London, June 1955*
gelatin silver print
BS.2005.130329/77-253

Eddie Van Der Veen
*Louis Armstrong, n.d.*
gelatin silver print
BS.2005.128004/75-1021
Chris Niedenthal
Polish Guard of Honour during departure of President Carter, Warsaw, 1977
gelatin silver print
BS.2005.130329/77-253

Charles Fenno Jacobs
View of the Berlin Wall, 1948
gelatin silver print
BS.2005.018978/11-1645
Fred Ward
*John F. Kennedy, 1961*
gelatin silver print
BS.2005.222236/133-11

Don Wallace
*Amelia Earhart, ca. 1930*
gelatin silver print
BS.2005.148410/88-1312
Steffan Wennberg

Floor of the New York Stock Exchange, ca. 1960
gelatin silver print
BS.2005.275698/171-1234

NASA
Apollo 11, 1969
gelatin silver print
BS.2005.130329/77-253
Fields currently catalogued

- Maker
- Medium
- Event Date
- Black Star Subject (pre-populated)
- Inscription
- Dimensions
Screen capture from the RIC’s internal database highlights the number of fields not being prioritized due to time constraints
Protestdemonstration gegen die Ermordung Minister Rathenaus

9909. Die riesige Menschenmenge im Lustgarten.

Demonstrations against the assassination of Minister Rathenaus by the Nazis before the Lustgarten in Berlin.

1923
Toronto, Canada
Yonge Street and young crowd

Credit: JOHN LAURIE
from BLACK STAR
Screenshot of RIC + Tagasaurus Workflow
Tagasauris Workflow
Tagasauris Workflow

Digitized images provided to Tagasauris
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3 workers, tag up to 9 keywords per image
Tagasauris Workflow

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1. Digitized images provided to Tagasauris
2. 3 workers, tag up to 9 keywords per image
3. 5 additional workers review the attributions for redundancies and errors
4. Keywords verified by three or more workers loaded back into the RIC Database
Tagasauris Workflow

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2. 3 workers, tag up to 9 keywords per image
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Keywords verified by three or more workers loaded back into the RIC
Tagasaurus Workflow

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4. Keywords verified by three or more workers loaded back into the RIC Database
Tagasaurus Keywords: 2 people; 2 people; African American; African-American Civil Rights Movement; Baptists; Child and adult; Civil rights movement; Close-up; Day; Dexter Scott King; Father; Head-and-Shoulders Portrait; Indoors; Lifestyle and leisure; Male; Martin Luther King, Jr.; Minister of religion; Moustache; No Photostyle; Politics; Son; Waist-Up Portrait

Credit Line: Image from the Black Star Collection at Ryerson University. Courtesy of the Ryerson Image Centre.

Black Star Subject: PERSONALITIES / K
Retouching: N
Tagasauris Keywords: 1 person; 1 person; Aerial View; Day; Face; Female; Female; Flower; Lifestyle and leisure; Looking-at-Camera Portrait; No Photostyle; Outdoors; Person; Scarf; Soviet Union; Still Life; Waist-Up Portrait; Youth; Youthful

Credit Line: Image from the Black Star Collection at Ryerson University.
Courtesy of the Ryerson Image Centre.
Black Star Subject: U.S.S.R. (RUSSIA) / TRANS-SIBERIAN EXPRESS
Retouching: N
**Title:** Martin Luther King (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.)

**Event Date:** 1964-04-09

**Medium:** gelatin silver print

**Dimensions:** overall: 25.4 cm x 20.6 cm

**Accession Number:** BS.2005.288591

**Tagasauris Keywords:**
- 2 people; 2 people; African American; African-American Civil Rights Movement; Baptists; Child and adult; Civil rights movement; Close-up; Day; Dexter Scott King; Father; Head-and-Shoulders Portrait; Indoors; Lifestyle and leisure; Male; Martin Luther King, Jr.; Minister of religion; Moustache; No Photostyle; Politics; Son; Waist-Up Portrait

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**Retouching:** N

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**Related Media**

**Recto**

**Verso**
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**Retouching:** N
Rewards + Benefits

- Enhanced cataloguing productivity
  - Obtain more information and metadata in a shorter period of time
- Alternate perspectives on subjects portrayed
  - Provides an additional entry point outside of standard fields already being catalogued
- Enhanced keyword search-ability
  - Does not require the end-user to have specialized training to find what they want
- Participating in an active, evolving meta-data technology that can be adapted for future use in other projects
  - Requires the development of quality control guidelines which can also be re-utilized
Detail

Viewing Record 2 of 2
Previous Record
Switch Views: Lightbox | Image List

Add to My Group

Category: The Black Star Collection
Photographer: SCHULKE, Phelps
Title: Rosa Parks
Event Date: ca. 1955
Medium: gelatin silver print
Dimensions: approximately 8 x 10 inches; 20.32 x 25.4 cm
Accession Number: BS.2005.290716

Inscriptions:

Tagasauris Keywords: 1 person; 1 person; Bus; Coat; Day; Face; Female; Glasses; Indoors; Mid adult; No Photostyle; Panoramic; Person; Public transport; Social issues; Three-Quarter-Length Portrait; Waist-Up Portrait; Window; Woman

Credit Line: Image from the Black Star Collection at Ryerson University.
Courtesy of the Ryerson Image Centre.
Black Star Subject: PERSONALITIES / T
Retouching: N

Related Media

Recto

Verso
Detail

Viewing Record 1 of 1

Switch Views: Lightbox | Image List | List

Category: The Black Star Collection
Photographer: BLOOM, Al and Lil
Event Date: n.d.
Medium: gelatin silver print
Dimensions: approximately: 8 x 10 inches; 20.32 x 25.4 cm
Accession Number: BS.2005.096206

Inscriptions:
Lil & Al Bloom / 10340 SO. KOMENSKY AVE. / OAK LAWN, ILL 60453 / 1-11-A105
Credit: [star] / from BLACK STAR / GRAYBAR BUILDING NEW YORK
Captions: Verse: EVEN EXCHANGE / THIS TOURIST IN BANFF NATIONAL PARK / IN CANADA IS OFFERING A VERY TAME MOUNTAIN / RAME A A COOKIE TO INDULGE HIM TO POSE FOR A PICTURE.
Markings:

Tagasaurus Keywords: 1 person; 1 person; Animal; Banff National Park; Canada; Day; Face; Feeding; Full-Length Portrait; Grass; Horn; Landscape; Landscape; Lifestyle and leisure; Male; Mid adult; No Photostyle; Outdoors; Person; Tourism; Tree

Credit Line: Image from the Black Star Collection at Ryerson University. Courtesy of the Ryerson Image Centre.
Black Star Subject: CANADA / WEST
Retouching: N

Related Media

Recto

Verso

No Image Yet
Viewing Record 2 of 2
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Credit Line: Image from the Black Star Collection at Ryerson University.
 Courtesy of the Ryerson Image Centre.
Black Star Subject: PERSONALITIES / T
Retouching: N

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Verso
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Retouching: N

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Recto
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Risks + Limitations

- Quality control
  - Errors, dirty meta-data, incorrect attributions

- Search-ability and functionality
  - Do the tags ultimately provide supplemental information for your assets or make the keyword search more complicated?

- Future literacy and relevance
  - Language, cultural implications, accurate terms and standardized vocabulary have changed significantly over the past decade due to changing technology - how does this impact this type of work?

- Available monetary and human resources
  - Budgets, project management and objectives need to be outlined beforehand
Questions to ask prior to embarking on a crowd-source cataloguing project

- What are the goals? Have the end-users been considered?
- What are the resources available?
- Is there an implementation and quality control plan?
- How does the technology you plan to use deal with integral problems of standardized vocabulary and specialized industry terms?
- Can this meta-data be useful in other ways in the future?
Thank you!

Contact:
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chantal.wilson@ryerson.ca