CARLI Digital Collections
Google Analytics Summary: 2012-2013 Quarter 1
July-September 2012

Traffic Sources:

This report primarily discusses website traffic from sources that are external in nature, excluding resource pages from CARLI member institutions. Web resources such as Facebook, FLICKR, and Wikipedia are also excluded as these mainly contain internal promotional initiatives. Statistics do not include visitors who access the collections directly or through search engines.

1. CARLI Collection home pages that received traffic from multiple sources:

    ➤ Swedish American Genealogist (Augustana College)

    Two genealogical sites: Elisabeth Thorsells hemsida, a Swedish genealogy site, and Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter

    ➤ Daily Life Along the Chicago Burlington and Quincy Railroad (Newberry Library)

    Traffic from two public libraries in Burlington, IA and Galesburg, IL

    ➤ IDOT Chicago Traffic Photographs (University of Illinois at Chicago)

    Two blogs: PlanetBarberella, a personal blog, and Uptown Chicago History.

2. Traffic sources that lead to home pages or images from multiple CARLI Collections:

    ➤ University of Pennsylvania Libraries (University of Pennsylvania)

    Linked to the home pages for three newspaper sites: Daily Egyptian Diversity News Archive (Southern Illinois University Carbondale), The Decaturian (Millikin University), and Student and Alumni News Periodicals (Illinois Wesleyan University)

    ➤ WUOT 91.9 fm (University of Tennessee Knoxville)

    Linked to the home pages for two different Civil War-related collections from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville: American Civil War Collection and William R. Townsend Civil War Diary

    ➤ Cinema Treasures (movie theater guide)

    Referred to images of movie theaters from three different collections: C. William Brubaker Collection (University of Illinois at Chicago), CITY 2000 (University of Illinois at Chicago), and Peoria Historical Society Image Collection (Bradley University)

- ➢ CONTENTdm & OCLC Featured Collections Sections

   Referred to images from three different collections: Carberry Collection of Caribbean Literature (University of Illinois at Chicago), Spalding's Soccer Foot Ball Guide (Southern Illinois University Edwardsville), and Percival Bailey Brain Specimens Collection (University of Illinois at Chicago)

- ➢ Chicago Past (Tumblr-hosted site that collects photos of historic Chicago)

   Included images from multiple collections including C. William Brubaker Collection (University of Illinois at Chicago), Chicago Aerial Photo Services (CAPS) (University of Illinois at Chicago), Chicago - Photographic Images of Change (University of Illinois at Chicago), Metropolitan Planning Council, 1934-2000 (University of Illinois at Chicago),and IDOT Chicago Traffic Photographs (University of Illinois at Chicago)

3. Other notable patterns:

- ➢ Other sites also referred to images of Chicago: A site promoting preservation of historic structures in Chicago; the Chicago version of a neighborhood news feed; the Chicago version of a real estate blog; a site for skyscraper enthusiasts.

Conclusions:

Genealogists and train enthusiasts are active consumers of digital collections. Collections on these themes will find audiences.

Collections of images of structures in a major metropolitan area are utilized by a wide range of users with disparate interests in the locality.

Make sure your local public libraries and/or historical societies know about your collections that would be of interest to their patrons so they can link to them from their websites.

Keywords

This ranking removes keyword searches resulting in access to the CARLI Digital Collections homepage (such as CARLI, CARLI digital collections, CARLI collection of collections, etc.). The analysis took into account slight variations in wording and word placement, but concentrates on specific search phrases. As a result, some common keywords used across a large number of disparate search phrases (e.g., Chicago, Illinois, University, Pullman) may not appear in any of the highly ranked keyword phrases, and words from the search phrases below may not appear on the list of most frequently searched single keywords.

The top keywords/phrases used to access the CARLI collections via search engines were:

1. 1973 forgottonia (169)
2. Bertha Hofer husband (115)
3. city 2000 (67)
4. Peoria Historical Society (60)
5. Bowen Country Club / Frank B. Meyer Sketchbook (Tie, 35)

Analysis: Each of the keyword phrases that appears in the top 5 for this quarter indicates a search for a specific topic, rather than a more general search. The first two phrases are a product of current events and culture, the first likely the result of the recent passing of the founder of "Forgottonia," Neal Gamm, this year. The other appears to be the result of searches based on a National Geographic reality show. The phrases in the third, fourth, and fifth spots, however, reflect topics that are likely more consistent generators of traffic. In fact, "city 2000," "Bowen Country Club," and "Frank B. Meyer Sketchbook" each made appearances in the top 5 of the last quarter's keyword phrase rankings. These can be seen as indicators of strong collection development, and institutions wisely choosing to build their collections around unique, popular material that will continue to consistently bring searchers to the collection.

The words that appeared most frequently in the search phrases were:

1. Illinois (63)
2. Chicago (56)
3. University (36)
4. Pullman (32)
5. Sanborn (20)
6. American (19)
7. Car (18)
8. Maps (15)
9. Progress (14)
10. County (14)

Analysis: Individual word rankings capture a general trend. Generally, the individual keywords that turn up most often are words that could be part of a variety of searches based on locality or institution. These results speak to the importance of including city, state, and institution names in digital collection titles when appropriate. Even if they seem unnecessary or redundant, they will be frequent generators of search-related traffic.

This summary was created by the CARLI Digital Collections Users' Group (DCUG) based on data derived from the Traffic Sources reports in Google Analytics.