

Collection management systems

General comments

More than one person in the group needs to understand the computer system and be able to use it. The design of forms and records should be discussed with someone with experience in establishing a database, so that they capture essential information in ways that will be useful for users.

It's a relatively easy process, though time-consuming to learn how to enter information into the database, however make sure training is provided for everyone who will use the system. There are many cases where a volunteer or well-meaning person has come to the museum or gallery, set up a system and put it into use, and then left without training others in how to use the database.

Off-the-shelf products

Microsoft Access

Microsoft Access is purchased as part of the Microsoft Office Professional system that also performs word processing, spreadsheets and publishing tasks. As Access is a relational database system, distinct sets of information can be linked to work together. Access costs around \$150 and will only function on a PC computer.

FileMaker Pro

FileMaker Pro is said to be the Mac equivalent to Microsoft Access. This product is made for Mac computers and can be run on a PC but you also need Windows. This is also a good package to create your own database and keep files on any subject. It is used by small business generally, for example by doctors to keep patients records, etc and costs around \$200 - \$500.

Custom products

These are the most popular collection management systems used in small museums and galleries in Australia:

eHive

eHive is a simple to use and secure online cataloguing system with built-in options for publishing to the web. eHive has been developed for small museums, heritage communities and councils looking for a professional low-cost solution for managing their collections.

eHive is a hosted web-based system which requires no dedicated IT infrastructure. Upgrades and backups are done automatically by Vernon Systems. The system can be accessed from any computer via broadband Internet.

Key features:

- Catalogue collections using screens for Art, Photography and Multimedia, Archives, History, Natural Science, Archaeology, and Library items.



You might also like ...

Cataloguing

Museums & Galleries of NSW

www.mgnsw.org.au/sector

- Publish collections online or keep them private. Web visitors can tag and comment on published records.
- Create communities to link collection items from many collections.
- Build branded websites using integration with WordPress, a popular web content management system.
- Share records with Trove, the National Library of Australia's online resources website.
- Example users: Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame, The Gold Museum, National Trust of Australia - Tasmania

Cost: From US\$99.00

Contact: Vernon Systems Ltd

Website: www.ehive.com

Email: info@ehive.com

(August 2013)

Vernon CMS

Vernon CMS is comprised of a core cataloguing module and an optional activities management module. It is designed to accommodate all types of collections within one system. Many clients have mixed collections that include social history, natural history, archives and library material. The Activities module provides comprehensive workflow control for all collection management processes. This includes the management of loans, exhibitions and conservation.

Vernon CMS caters for medium to large organisations, including those with multiple sites and collections running into millions of objects.

Vernon CMS' Vernon Browser module can provide public access solutions for the internet, intranet and in-house kiosks. Organisations can build highly customised branded sites to showcase their collections or share the information with a content or digital asset management system.

Services include data audits, data conversion, customisation, onsite and online training and consultation by expert staff who have years of experience in a full range of museum and gallery implementations.

Key features:

- Build custom authority term lists or use pre-built thesauri to standardise data entry.
- Create custom formatted reports.
- Import and export data in multiple formats.
- Manage workflows for activities such as outward loans, including the generation of reports and automated emails.
- Secure access to restricted information.
- Benefit from our technical and user support via phone and email.

Example users: Art Gallery of NSW, National Gallery of Victoria and Queensland Museum

Cost: From US\$6,000.00

Contact: Vernon Systems Ltd

Website: www.vernonsystems.com

Email: info@vernonsystems.com

(August 2013)

Collections MOSAiC Plus

MOSAiC was initially developed in conjunction with Museums Australia (WA) in the 1990s and has continued to evolve from a simple system into a sophisticated one, well-suited to the current technology including the option of internet access.

MOSAiC has been designed for use by museums, galleries, historical societies, church archives, schools, sporting clubs etc.

The main criterion for MOSAiC's design was that it be easy to use, without the need for lots of back-up support, especially for people in remote areas. While internet access to the system is offered it can also be used as a discreet database on your computer.

MOSAiC has fully searchable data, with built-in and user-definable reports and data export functions. It comes pre-loaded with industry standard validation lists and is fully customisable.

Key features:

- No need to buy extra software or hardware. Everything you need is included in the one easy installation and all computers purchased within the last 10 years will operate with MOSAiC requirements.
- Can be easily used to catalogue objects, photographs, documents, artworks, oral histories and more.
- Can store many types of subject data relating to the objects (e.g. the people and places that make the story behind the item.)
- Has an inbuilt classification system.
- Handles scanned images and multi-media with ease.
- IST provides unlimited free telephone and email support for small queries for your first year, and offers a generous support plan thereafter.
- Can limit access to certain people i.e. Visitors/staff/curators.
- Will produce standard letters, labels, reports etc. It can also produce letters and reports designed within your organisation.
- Transfers your data easily onto spreadsheets and word documents etc.
- Can store information not only about your collection but also reference libraries, staff/membership, loans in and out, valuations and conservation.
- Upload a copy of your data to the Web at the click of a button with MOSAiC Web.
- Is used by over 575 organisations within Australia and New Zealand

Cost:

Standalone Edition (single computer licence)
\$1298.00

Networked Edition (2 computer licences)
\$1738.00

Additional network licences \$440.00

Free evaluation packs available by contacting Sally-Anne or Rew.

Contact: Sally-Anne or Rew Whittington from Information Services and Technology

Website: www.ISTechnology.com.au

Email: Sales@ISTechnology.com.au

Phone: 08 9537 2874

Mobile: 0403 832 527

(August 2013)

Maxus Australia Databases

Maxus Australia sells and supports a versatile range of database and information management products developed by Inmagic and Maxus. Maxus has been selling Inmagic software in Australia and neighbouring countries for more than 25 years and has a large number of satisfied clients.

Maxus provides personalised services for installation, design and development, support, upgrades, consultancy and training. Maxus products can be used for a range of applications including image management, catalogues for libraries, art galleries, museums and historical societies. Maxus Collections and Maxus ArtWorks are applications that use Inmagic DB/Text Works as their database backend.

Maxus Australia Databases: Inmagic DB/Text Works

Text Works is textbase software that enables information professionals to index, manage and retrieve text, images and multimedia objects. With its fielded search engine, Text Works delivers fast, precise results.

Known for its ease of use, Text Works is a popular choice for managing all types of content including documents, images and multi-media objects. <http://www.maxus.net.au/products/dbtext>

Key features:

- Fast search speeds (computer dependent)
- Unlimited length fields
- Sophisticated report writing capabilities

Maxus provides a free trial version which expires at the end of the month following the month in which it is downloaded. That is, if you download on 5th March, the software will continue to work until the end of April. Trial versions of Maxus Collections and Maxus ArtWorks are also available.

Also available are Web Publisher PRO or Presto for DB/Text Works, which allow you to publish all your database content on the web or an intranet.

The latest versions of the Inmagic products run on Windows computers, but are not designed for use on Apple Macintosh hardware.

Inmagic products come with software maintenance and a free phone and/or email support component for the first 12 months following purchase. This service can be renewed after 12 months for an annual fee.

Maxus Collections for Museums

Developed by Maxus Australia, Maxus Collections for Museums is a product specifically designed and tailored for museums. The database structure is based on the worksheets supplied by Museums Australia (Victoria Branch). Its pricing represents excellent value for the museum community.

It is based on the Text Works platform, which means you can catalogue your collection quickly and easily while still conforming to Museums Australia standards. Almost 200 organisations have purchased Maxus Collections for Museums.

Maxus ArtWorks

Maxus ArtWorks has been developed by Maxus Australia to make it easy to catalogue your collection of art works.

Cost: \$1,690.00 for not for profit organisations, not including GST

This price is for a single-user system and includes Maxus Collections or Maxus ArtWorks. Prices for multiple user systems are available.

Contact: Maxus Australia

Phone: (03) 9646 1988

Email: maxus@maxus.net.au

Web: www.maxus.net.au

(August 2013)