

PATRON DRIVEN IR DEVELOPMENT



2011—Simon Fraser University Library (SFU) decided to move to a new IR platform.

Why change?

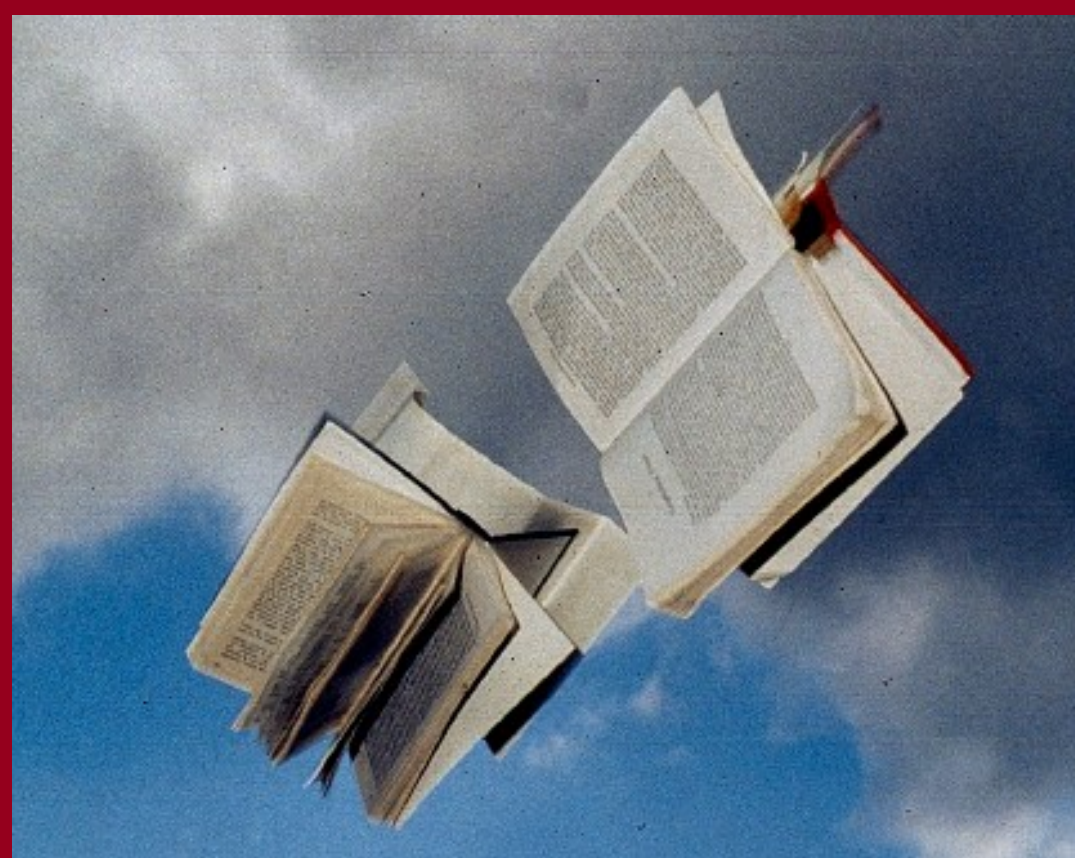
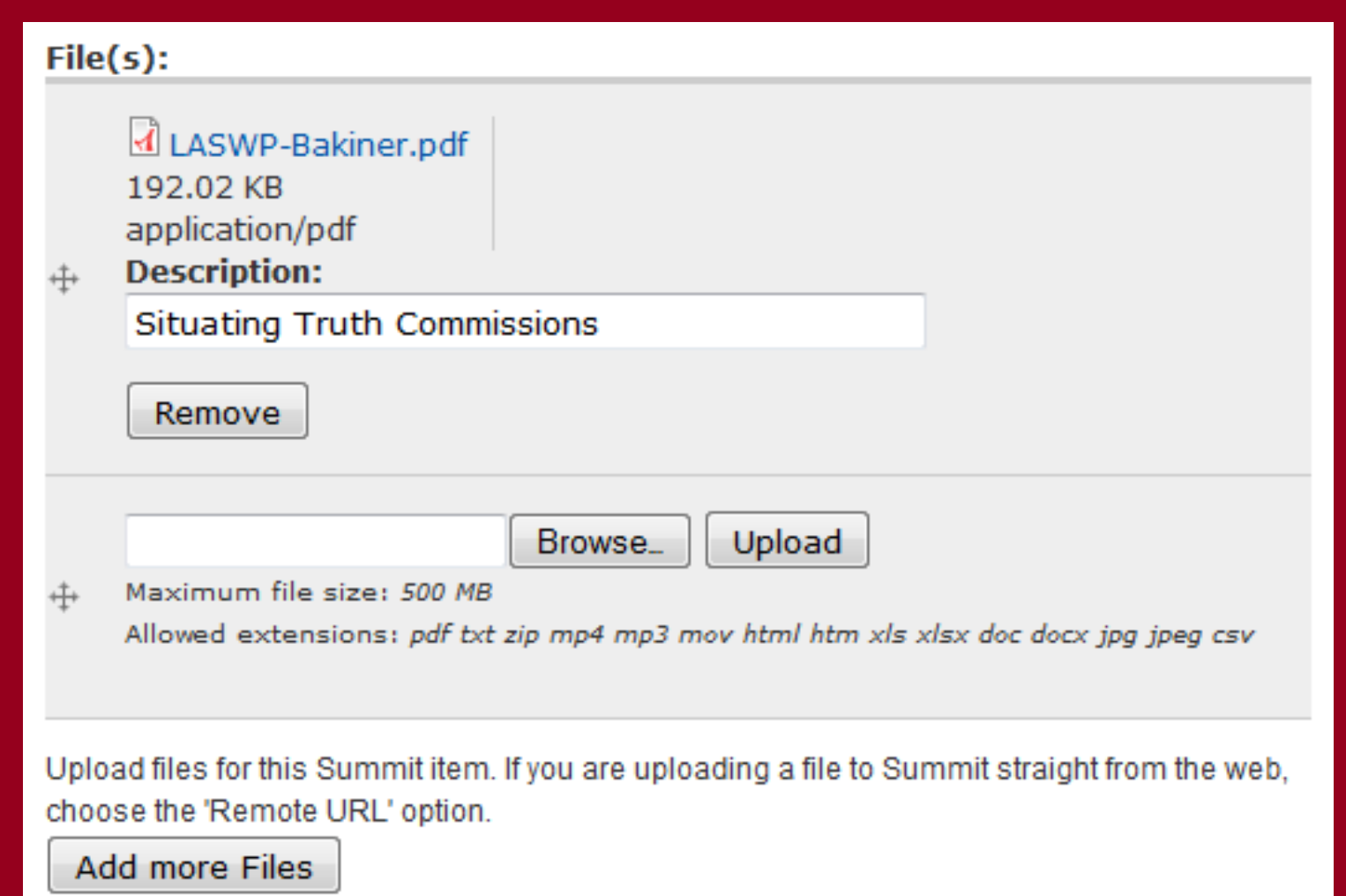
- Lacked Java programming skills to fully utilize current IR software; content recruitment was languishing; faculty disenchantment with functionality constraints; Library Systems supporting too many software applications.
- Had hoped to utilize an off the shelf IR back-end and Drupal front-end but this plan was not feasible. Therefore, SFU decided to develop and implement a Drupal based IR.

Why Drupal?

- By using Drupal, an open source content management software, SFU Library is able to take advantage of the large global pool of Drupal developers, it's inherent flexibility, and also to leverage in-house expertise in Drupal. As well, the large pool of developers keeps support sustainable over the long term. For example, SFU only needed to write three Drupal modules, whereas we utilized 7 "contributed" modules from the larger Drupal community.
- Drupal flexibility allows Library to respond to user needs in a positive way and to be able to offer an organic service that responds to needs for enhancements and allows for collaboration with faculty.

Some patron driven enhancements.

User driven enhancements encourage departments and individual faculty to work with the Library. Examples of user driven enhancements include: writing a module for metadata headers to make the IR records compatible with Zotero and ensuring the IR was crawled by selected indexes; easy versioning of documents and document removal; enhancing RSS feed to synch content from an IR collection to the departmental website; permissions that allow for multiple people to create and edit a record; restricted collections for document sharing purposes; ability to attach as much supplemental material as one wishes to a single record.



Detail from Untitled (two books) by Allyson Clay, Scholarly Digitization Fund 2011.



Detail of poster for Women's Studies conference at SFU from GSWS dept. Scholarly Digitization Fund 2011

Scholarly Digitization Fund

A Drupal IR allows the SFU Library to more easily promote our Scholarly Digitization Fund. This Fund enhances the visibility of the IR, promotes Open Access amongst those less likely to be aware of it (visual arts and some social science fields), and encourages the Library to look at research output as being more than simply article and monograph publications. The SD fund helps smaller departments (e.g Women's Studies) to recognize that the IR and Open Access means greater visibility for their department in a time when visibility and returns on investment are important for the survival of smaller departments in the academy.

