A Digital Family Story

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The art of presenting family stories using common software tools

Everyone has family and every family has stories

Thanks to technology, records of births, marriages, deaths and other “official” events will be preserved for future generations to explore and discover. But it’s the family’s stories; the dreams and realities, the successes and failures, the joys and sorrows, life’s milestones and everyday living that give definition and depth to our families.
Digital Storytelling

Digital storytelling is the process of using computer technology to collect, author and publish stories. As this technology becomes more accessible to our households we have the opportunity to choose the story we want to tell. We get to write the script and put it together using photographs, captions, simple animation, video, voice-overs and music.
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The five steps of making a Digital Story

1. Collection
2. Considerations
3. Digitization
4. Production
5. Publication
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The five steps of making a Digital Story

Step 1. Collection

A collection contains the artifacts created in the past and saved over time. Collections may be newly started or passed on from earlier generations.

What do we collect?

Where do we find these collections?
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Step 1. Collection

What do we collect?

- Photographs
- Letters
- Newspaper clippings
- School papers and projects
- Arts and crafts
- Slides
- Home movies/video
- Music
- Souvenirs
- Awards and trophies
- Audio tapes
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Step 1. Collection

Where do we find these collections?

- Our own collections
- Relatives
- Libraries
- Museums
- Archives
- Internet
- Attics
- Basements
- Storage sheds
- Shoe box in Aunt Millie's closet
- Closet
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The story is in the collection.
You just have to find it.
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Step 2. Considerations

Some issues must be addressed to determine which tools to use for your project.

Who is your audience?

Family, clients, students, employees, evaluators.
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Step 2. Considerations

Some issues must be addressed to determine which tools to use for your project.

What types of artifacts are you going to use?

Video, 8mm movie film, photographs, 35mm slides, newspaper articles, letters, souvenirs, craft projects, art objects, audio tapes, phonograph records, music CDs.
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The five steps of making a Digital Family Story

Step 2. Considerations

Some issues must be addressed to determine which tools to use for your project.

How much material do you want to create?

Live interviews, voice-overs, titles, transitions, still motion (Ken Burns effect), original music.
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Step 2. Considerations

Some issues must be addressed to determine which tools to use for your project.

In what format will you publish your story?

Full motion video, slide show, illustrated manuscript, hyperlinked multimedia.
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Step 2. Considerations

Some issues must be addressed to determine which tools to use for your project.

In which media are you going to publish?

CD-ROM, DVD, VHS tape, web-site, print.
# Digital Family Story Considerations Worksheet

Project Name: ____________________________________________  
Author: ___________________________________________________  
Date: _____________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Artifacts</th>
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Notes:

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Step 3. Digitization

Digitization is the process of converting all the artifacts into a computer readable format.
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# Digital Family Story

## Artifact Digitization Tools

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<tr>
<th>Artifact</th>
<th>Photograph up to 8&quot; x 10&quot;</th>
<th>Photograph over 8&quot; x 10&quot;</th>
<th>35mm Slides/film strip</th>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Newspaper Clippings</th>
<th>Scrapbooks/Photo Albums</th>
<th>Art: Drawings/Paintings</th>
<th>Sculpture</th>
<th>Craft Projects</th>
<th>Home Movies (8&amp;16mm)</th>
<th>VHS analog video tape</th>
<th>8mm analog video tape</th>
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Step 4. Production

The tools used to create your production for the most part will be Editors. Editors are designed to create, alter, enhance, and even publish different elements. One editor usually cannot handle all the elements of your project, so several editors may be used.
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Production Tools

Text editors
Graphic editors
Movie editors
Audio editors
Web Page editors
Text editors let you write stories and edit them. The formatting features are for selecting the font style, size and color. Text editors are also Publishing Tools.

Microsoft© Word

Apple© Works
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**Production Tools**

Text editors

Graphic editors

If you want to improve pictures (still images), use a graphic editor. You can resize, correct contrast, brightness, color hue and saturation, and remove unwanted scratches from your pictures.

**Graphic Converter**

Apple© iPhoto

Adobe Photoshop Elements

Macromedia Fireworks
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Production Tools

Text editors

Graphic editors

Movie editors

There are several editors for digital video processing. They all capture from tape, edit in digital video, and export to multiple formats for distribution.

Windows© MovieMaker                             Apple© iMovie
Pinnacle© Studio                              Ulead© VideoStudio
Adobe© Premiere                                   Apple© Final Cut
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Production Tools

Text editors
Graphic editors
Movie editors
Audio editors

Audio editors capture and edit sounds for your project. Sound is captured through the “Microphone” or “Line-In” jack on the soundcard.

Microsoft© Sound Recorder
Felt Tip Software Sound Studio
Voyetra® AudioSurgeon
Next Generation Wave
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Production Tools

Text editors
Graphic editors
Movie editors
Audio editors
Web Page editors

Web Page editors are used to compose web pages for publication to the internet. Reserving a Domain Name and securing a Web Hosting Service will get your page on the internet.

Netscape© Composer                   Microsoft© FrontPage
Macromedia© Dreamweaver              Adobe© GoLive
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Web-Site</th>
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<tr>
<td>Powerpoint, Outlook)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Adobe Photoshop Elements</td>
<td>$99.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adobe Premiere</td>
<td>$549.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apple Final Cut Express</td>
<td>$299.00</td>
<td><a href="http://store.apple.com/1-800-MY-APPLE/WebObjects/AppleStore">http://store.apple.com/1-800-MY-APPLE/WebObjects/AppleStore</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Apple Final Cut Pro</td>
<td>$999.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinnacle Studio (USB Devise)</td>
<td>$199.00</td>
<td><a href="http://pinnaclesys.com/">http://pinnaclesys.com/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulead Video Studio (Firewire)</td>
<td>$148.95</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ulead.com/">http://www.ulead.com/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>(Photo Story)</td>
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The five steps of making a Digital Family Story

Step 5. Publication

Digital Family Story

Publishing Tools

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Legend:
- Excellent tool for task
- Adequate tool for task
- Inferior tool for task

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Publishing Formats

1. Full motion video
2. Slide show
3. Illustrated manuscript
4. Hyper-linked multimedia
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Full Motion Video
(Digital Storytelling)

- Create with a movie editing program.
- Use still images and movie clips.
- Add music, narration, transitions and titles.
- Publish to CD-ROM, DVD, WWW and video tape.
- Limit to 3 – 5 minutes.
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**Slide Show**

- Create with iPhoto or PhotoStory and convert to QuickTime.
- Create with PowerPoint and then “Pack and Go”.
- Use still images.
- Add still motion, music, narration, transitions and titles.
- Publish to CD-ROM, DVD or Web Page.
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Illustrated Manuscript

- Create with word processing program (Microsoft© Word).
- Embed captioned pictures into paragraphs.
- Use varied fonts and styles to add a pleasing visual effect.
- Print as single pages or in a book format.
- Converted to PDF files for viewing on a computer.
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Hyper-linked Multimedia

- Create with Text, Graphic Editors.
- Convert and assemble as a PDF file using Acrobat.
- Movies and sound files can be added.
- Hyperlinks are added for navigation.
- Publish to CD-ROM or DVD.
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The Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling


Constructing a story is not a simple process that follows a recipe or prescribed formula. These elements require consideration for every story and determining the balance each element occupies in the story can take a lot of thinking and re-thinking.
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The Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling

A Point (of View)

A Dramatic Question

Emotional Content

The Gift of Your Voice

The Power of The Soundtrack

Economy

Pacing
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The Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling

A Point (of View)

Stories are told to make a point and should not be presented as a recitation of mere facts. Define the premise of your story so that all parts can serve to make the point. Consider your audience and direct the point to them.
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The Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling

A Point (of View)

A Dramatic Question

You want to capture your audience’s attention at the beginning of the piece and hold their interest throughout. Typically you want to pose the dramatic question in the opening lines and resolve it in the closing lines.
The Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling

A Point (of View)

A Dramatic Question

Emotional Content

Emotional content can help hold your audience's attention. The images, effects, music, and tone of voice all lend to contributing emotion to the piece. Try to keep the elements consistent with the emotion of the moment.
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The Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling

A Point (of View)

A Dramatic Question

Emotional Content

The Gift of Your Voice

Most likely the first time you heard your recorded voice you couldn’t stand the way it sounded. And you still can’t. Suggestion….get over it! Your voice is a great gift and even thought you don’t like to hear it, others do. If you “read” your script your audience will not know how to react. Take time to learn and practice your script so you can speak in a conversational voice. Record several takes and select the best one. Trust that your audience will think it is perfect.
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The Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling

A Point (of View)

A Dramatic Question

Emotional Content

The Gift of Your Voice

The Power of The Soundtrack

Music is a big plus to a digital story. The right music can set the story in time and can convey emotion. Play music behind an image and a specific emotion is generated. Change the music behind the same image and an entirely different emotion is experienced. Sound effects can add tension and excitement to a piece, but be careful, they can be a distraction too.
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The Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling

A Point (of View)

A Dramatic Question

Emotional Content

The Gift of Your Voice

The Power of The Soundtrack

Economy

A compact, fast moving digital story will contain only those elements necessary to move the audience from beginning to end. We know that our brains are constantly filling in (from our own experiences) details from suggestions made by sights and sounds. Don’t give every detail to clarify your story, let your audience fill in some of the blanks.
The Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling

A Point (of View)

A Dramatic Question

Emotional Content

The Gift of Your Voice

The Power of The Soundtrack

Economy

Pacing

The rhythm of the piece is what keeps your audience’s interest in the story. Music tempo, speech rate, image duration, and panning and zooming speed all work to establish pace. Generally pace will be consistent, but once in a while it will pause, accelerate, decelerate, stop or blast-off.
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Sample Movies
Next Exit is an interactive theatrical performance created and presented by Dana Atchley. Atchley sits on a log next to a digital campfire and, drawing from a virtual suitcase of seventy stories, creates a unique selection for each audience. Next Exit is in turn humorous, touching, surprising and emotionally resonant. It is an excellent example of the positive impact of new technology on the ancient art of storytelling.
“Although the historical roadmap may never be complete, it is often the journey that provides the richest rewards.”
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