The Wyoming Places Project

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About the Wyoming Places Project

After repeatedly receiving the same question—from a myriad of sources, about a number of different sites, over the course of many years—researchers at the State Library of Wyoming set out to find answers. The question: How did this place get its name? But that wasn't the only query. Historians, genealogists and residents regularly sought the information about a location's history, geography and people as well. The emerging answer was called the Wyoming Places Project—which now, through a collaboration between the State Library of Wyoming and SirsiDynix®, can be easily accessed through this rich, interactive discovery prototype.

The Digital Data

The primary record set for the Wyoming Places Project is a collection of almost 2,000 wiki pages with information about place names, histories and geographic coordinates. In a way, it's like a catalog of places in Wyoming. Linked to those wiki pages are a number of images, historical newspapers and maps, which you can explore through the SirsiDynix discovery interface.

Searching Wyoming Places Data with SirsiDynix Portfolio

SirsiDynix Portfolio provides an intelligent engine for keyword searches on Wyoming places data. Portfolio searching accommodates spelling variations—especially important for historical place names. Full text searching of the historical newspapers

is made possible by the optical character recognition that Portfolio automatically ran when the page images were imported into the system. The newspaper page images were then harvested from their previous repository using OAI-PMH. Now, through Portfolio, researchers can focus searches and narrow search results by county, feature type and date.

Browsing Wyoming Places Data with SirsiDynix Portfolio

Researchers need to actually see Wyoming Places in an interactive map to understand the spatial relationships that text alone can't convey. Because all SirsiDynix Portfolio functionality is available through documented Web Services, our SirsiDynix team was able to quickly present Wyoming Places in the Bing™ Maps interface. This lets users zoom, pan and toggle through views of the data to view, for example, where all the Pony Express stations were located. For users visiting the state library, this interface is available in a large multi-touch display called the Microsoft® Surface computer. For home and branch users, the Wyoming Places Project interface is available through a web browser.

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