

# ***DASE - A Joint Special ITAC Proposal for 2008-2009***

## **Further Development of the Digital Archive Services (*DASE*) Project: A Joint Special ITAC Proposal for 2008-2009**

*Submitted by:*

**College of Liberal Arts - Liberal Arts Instructional Technology Services (LAITS)  
Division of Instructional Innovation and Assessment (DIIA)  
College of Fine Arts (CoFA)**

The *DASE* Project, which recently entered its fourth year of development, has become an integral part of the UT campus information ecosystem. *DASE* currently has over 100,000 digital assets available to users with a current UT EID, including audio, video, documents, and images. Faculty, students, and staff have created more than 5000 user collections, comprising over 65,000 *DASE* items. *DASE* includes collections created and administered by staff and faculty in the College of Liberal Arts, the College of Fine Arts, the College of Natural Sciences, and the School of Architecture. Development for 2008-2009 will seek to enhance the ways in which *DASE* enables sharing, enhances learning, and promotes innovation.

### ***DASE* enables sharing**

The primary goal of *DASE* has always been to allow faculty members to share digital media with students, both in the classroom and on the web. With little effort, an instructor can create a slideshow or study collection for use in class, and enable "sharing" so that students can "subscribe" for viewing outside of the classroom.

*Proposed enhancements:*

#### 1. Improve the sharing functionality within *DASE*

As *DASE* collections and use of *DASE* for sharing instructional materials has grown, so has the need for a better user interface for this sharing functionality. Allowing students to search shared collections by course, instructor, and even to auto-subscribe to collections for enrolled courses would provide well-needed enhancement to the sharing capabilities of *DASE*.

#### 2. Improve options for sharing outside of *DASE* itself

While *DASE* provides something of a one-stop-shop for course-related multimedia, it need not be a "silo" for such materials within the greater information ecosystem which includes systems like Blackboard, Pachyderm, and ArtStor and websites like Facebook. Increasing the visibility and usefulness of *DASE* collections by creating Blackboard building blocks, a Facebook widget, and a Pachyderm plug-in would greatly increase the value of *DASE* for instructors and students alike. Likewise, building web service-based interoperability with systems like ArtStor, allowing users to search assets contained within ArtStor from the *DASE* interface provides even more opportunity for a ubiquitous and flexible *DASE* presence.

# ***DASE - A Joint Special ITAC Proposal for 2008-2009***

Podcasting offers yet another means by which instructors can deliver content. *DASE* has the potential to be an ideal platform to create, host and distribute podcasts. Developing intuitive user interfaces for transforming and exposing *DASE* user collections as podcasts will be a valuable enhancement to the sharing capabilities of *DASE*.

## ***DASE enhances learning***

*DASE* offers instructors a means to enhance their students learning experience with a wide range of media. By using *DASE*, instructors can incorporate images, video, and audio into the course curriculum while abiding by all applicable copyright laws. Students get the benefit of a richer learning experience with media specifically chosen and organized by their instructors to supplement more traditional course materials.

### *Proposed enhancements:*

#### 1. Enhance fine-grained access controls within *DASE*

A key element of copyright law compliance involves the identification of rights and ownership information for digital assets and implementation of proper access controls for those assets. Likewise, a key benefit of storing and sharing resources in *DASE* is that the system itself (without creating unnecessary restrictions or obstacles) enables compliance by way of collection-level access control based on UT EID authentication and *DASE*-based authorization. As *DASE* grows, the challenges and opportunities provided by the "Fair Use" provisions of copyright law will necessitate item-level rights management and access control. Such fine-grained rights management and access control will require further development of user interfaces to administer the new functionality in as intuitive a means as possible.

#### 2. Leverage existing information system outside of *DASE*

Compliance with "Fair use" provisions will in many cases necessitate access controls based on current course enrollment information. *DASE* is built in a modular fashion such that integration with outside information sources, such as the Office of the Registrar, is possible by way of *DASE* modules and extensions. A goal for 2008-9 is to create such integrations, with emphasis placed on security, privacy and data integrity.

#### 3. Course integration

One of the side benefits of better integration with course information for access control is a more seamless workflow for faculty wanting to integrate digital media into course materials. An ideal scenario would entail a faculty member selecting or uploading digital assets in *DASE* specifically selected for a class, then being presenting with a menu of options based on her own teaching assignments for the current semester (e.g., "publish to English 306K"). Subsequently, a student enrolled in the course would automatically see a notice of the availability new course materials the next time they log into *DASE* (or Blackboard). For copyright restricted materials, access would be granted for the semester but would necessarily not extend beyond the end of the semester (per the stipulations

# ***DASE - A Joint Special ITAC Proposal for 2008-2009***

of "Fair Use").

## ***DASE promotes innovation***

*DASE* specifically enables faculty members to begin using digital materials in class as effortlessly as possible. With highly intuitive search interfaces and simple tools for managing sets of digital assets *DASE* has been enthusiastically embraced by instructors with all levels of technical expertise. By keeping usability as a primary goal, the focus can be kept on the value of the instructional materials themselves and not the enabling technology.

### *Proposed enhancements:*

#### 1. Make *DASE* a widely-available asset management tool

The current version of *DASE* embodies a distinction between end-users with limited ability to create "user" collections and administrative users (or collection managers) who have the ability to upload digital assets, create new metadata fields, add new administrative users, etc. A recent innovation in *DASE* has been the establishment (on a limited basis) of "private" collections for faculty members. A private collection in *DASE* is essentially an asset management tool that allows the faculty member to organize digital media in any way they wish and to use those media in the classroom or to share the collection or subsets thereof with the built-in capabilities of *DASE*. A faculty member can also, at a time of their own choosing, integrate a private collection into the appropriate departmental collection for campus-wide access. The private collection pilot program has been a success and in 2008-9 we propose to make private collections available to all faculty.

#### 2. Enhance the ability to re-purpose *DASE* collections

Another key aspect of *DASE* is the opportunity it provides for re-purposing digital assets, thus multiplying the value of these assets. In many cases, making assets available within *DASE* is only the first step in a larger process, the end result of which might be a free-standing and unique web-based resource. A notable example is the recently launched eLucy.org website. The hundreds of pieces of information -- text, images, and video -- that are included in eLucy.org were all collected, managed, and catalogued in *DASE*. A subsequent effort focused on building a *DASE* "module" -- a mini-application built on top of the *DASE* framework that forms the entire eLucy.org website. *DASE* thus provides the back-end for the site and will facilitate the evolution of the site as more materials are added. The eLucy.org site is a truly organic yet completely unique web-based information resource and teaching tool. We look forward in the coming year to building more *DASE* modules and standardizing the processes for creating such modules.

So far 2007-2008 has seen a rapid expansion of the *DASE* project, both in usage statistics and in defining a broader vision and definition of purpose. 2008-9 will be pivotal as we seek to follow this broader vision.

## ***DASE - A Joint Special ITAC Proposal for 2008-2009***

Through the history of the *DASE* project, two defining values have become firmly established: one, that we will build a system that is as easy to use and intuitive as possible, and two, that *DASE* will continue to address actual needs of users here at UT, and that the development trajectory will be highly correlated with those needs. With adequate resources, we believe we can deliver on our vision for *DASE* and to continue to be a truly user-centric tool.

For 2008-9 we request \$70,000 in ITAC funding for a full time software developer. With the addition of an ITAC funded programmer and additional server capacity, Liberal Arts, Fine Arts, and DIIA will be able to add the enhancements described above and make *DASE* widely available to departments and faculty outside of the Colleges of Liberal Arts and Fine Arts. ITAC funding will provide the resources both for development, and to meet the training and user-support needs required for such an expansion.

### **College and DIIA Contribution**

Liberal Arts	Programmer .5 FTE	\$35,000
	Systems Analysis .25 FTE	\$15,000
DIIA	Programmer .2 FTE	\$14,000
<u>Fine Arts</u>	<u>Programmer .33FTE</u>	<u>\$20,000</u>
Total college and DIIA contribution		\$84,000

### **ITAC Request.**

	Programmer 1 FTE	\$70,000
	<u>Server Hardware &amp; Software</u>	<u>\$20,000</u>
Total ITAC Request		\$90,000

Total project cost \$174,000

Joe TenBarge  
Assistant Dean, College of Liberal Arts

Jim Kerkhoff  
Assistant Dean, College of Fine Arts

Shan Evans  
Assistant Dean, DIIA