Development of E.A.S.C.A.:
An Electronic Archives and Special Collection Application

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By

ALMAR B. RED

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of the study is geared towards the development of an Electronic Archives and Special Collection Application (EASCA) for the Aklatang Emilio Aguinaldo of DLSU-Dasmariñas.

The developed system (EASCA) has the ability to handle with ease and flexibility the five diverse types of information that the Archives and Special Collection maintains, namely; Memorabilia, Photo Collection, Thesis/Rare Books, University Publication, and University Records. It has a web-search-similar interface which is very user-friendly in delivering a virtual reference upon query request. It can store and maintain all archived records in one place while still keeping instant and simultaneous access.

Its text retrieval capability searches more than one field at a time and a Boolean searching feature, resulting in rapid word search and full-text searching due to its variable and unlimited field length thereby delivering incredible speed and dead-on search accuracy. Users get the power of "relational-like" databases, but without the slow search speeds. The system also has the ability to link multiple textbases and share all information on a many-to-one basis. A "Browse Choices" option (by pressing the F3 key on query boxes) enables the user to browse and paste choices directly on the database index instead of guessing what keywords or terms might yield quality results.

The system is also unique and robust because the integrity of the textbase and the speed of the searches are maintained and not compromised as the textbase grows. Because of its unlimited field length, fields take the shape of text entries. It can place as much information into a field as necessary – from a one-word entry to a 500-page

document. Fields are also multiple-entry capable (by pressing the F7 key on field boxes during record adding/editing), simplifying form design/maintenance and maximizing searching and reporting precision.

Data security is also a definite consideration because it restricts unauthorized users from accessing vital information and features like adding or modifying through the primary textbase password feature, straightforward “eyes-only” interface and automatic read-only access (silent password) for regular users. Only the Archives and Special Collection personnel could gain authorized access to sensitive configurations and settings. Security for certain PDF links source file is also strictly applied through PDF encryption and password protection, especially for converted thesis/dissertations and scanned confidential documents, disabling the copy/paste and printing option and even a password to open if necessary.

Based on the summary of software evaluation, all software quality characteristics garnered excellent marks. With efficiency scoring the highest due to the developed system’s profound performance speed followed by usability for its very user-friendly interface. The features and contents can be easily grasped even by the most novice user.

Overall, the developed system can be considered as highly accepted and appreciated by the respondents/evaluators for it has met all the requirements and intended functionalities.

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