Nathalie GASCOIN - Archives départementales Gironde, head of the Bureau de l'appui technologique et de l'information numérique, LoCloud chief project manager

I am in charge of the technical and digital support at the Archives Départementales (Departmental Archives) and a LoCloud project manager. I am going to present you the LoCloud project, with my colleague Julien Dutertre who is in charge of digitalisation and is a LoCloud project manager, and James Lemaire, who will join us to present the LoCloud tools. James Lemaire is a functional administrator at the Archives. I will talk about the beginnings of the project, Julien Dutertre will present the work that was undertaken with the network and partners from the Gironde, and James Lemaire will present the tools that were developed, set up and tested for LoCloud. They will be available at the end of the project.

Europeana was at the root of all this. Europeana is a European portal where you can find all the digitalised archives, artworks and books in Europe. As Mr Respaud said, for Europe, yes, it is difficult to construct. But thanks to Europeana we can see what we all have in common. And that is culture and that it is what makes you want to take part.

On the other hand, there is the Archives Départementales de la Gironde in their new building. This is an important archives repository, with more than 60 linear kilometres of collections, 45,000 books and periodicals, an exhibition hall, a conference room, and an educational space. You can consult all the archives in our large reading room, on 40 computers that are all connected to the internet, to our website and to the 3.5 million archives of the department of Gironde that we have digitalised. The research tools, meticulously written by archivists throughout the centuries, have been back-converted. They are also accessible in the reading room.

The team at the Archives shows that we are a regional digital centre. It is a team dedicated to digitalisation and computing at the Archives. There is also a team working to set up a shared electronic archive platform, with the city of Bordeaux and Bordeaux Metropole. And we have a special website that has allowed us to contribute to the BNSA, the Banque Numérique du Savoir Aquitain (the Digital Bank of Aquitaine Knowledge), which has become Aquitaine Cultures Connectées (Aquitaine Connected Cultures).

So this is why we took part in LoCloud: to contribute to this European project Europeana, but also because we already had experience of a European program. From 2008 to 2011, the Archives Départementales de la Gironde took part in a local Europeana program, the goal of which was to feed local information into Europeana, although without dedicated tools. We also have experience of local partnerships with the Estuary network.

In taking part in LoCloud, the Gironde department's goal is to test the tools that have been developed in the framework of this project, i.e. a digital library tool, LoCloud Collections, tools that enrich and validate metadata, and harvesting OAI. James will tell you about all these tools. I encourage you to look at these tools. I think one of the greatest successes of this project was developing digital library tools that allow us to put collections online, and then to put these collections onto Europeana. It's not yet 100% perfect, there are still things that need to be worked on, but yes, I think these tools have a great future. Our goal was also to enable local actors to participate in Europeana, to display our archives in Europeana, and of course to exhibit our partners' digitalised collections in Europeana.

The LoCloud project: LoCloud is an acronym of Local Cloud. It consists in putting local data onto Europeana using Cloud tools, in other words tools that don't need to be downloaded onto our computers, which we can use simply via an internet connection. There are 31 partners to this project. The lead partner is the National Archives of Norway, and then there is a whole chain of partners from the whole of Europe, and even beyond. There is Turkey, so it's really Europe in the broadest sense. In general terms, there is a series of partners that were technical partners who developed the projects and developed the tools for these projects. There are partners, like us, who are more like content providers. So we were there to test the tools in real operating conditions and to get them tested by others. Thank you so much to all our valiant partners, our first guinea pigs, who helped us. We have partners who were in charge of dissemination and coordination. And there are the Germans who were in charge of monitoring the quality of the project.

For all the partners, LoCloud's budget was of €4million, with 3.4 subsidised by the European Commission. The Gironde's budget was mainly used for human resources. The idea was to provide the project leaders with people to test these tools. 80% of the project was funded by the European

Commission. At Gironde level it was led by the Archives Départementales, liaising with the Europe Cooperation Directorate, the IT and Digital Services Directorate and the Culture and Citizenship Directorate. The target of the LoCloud project is to import 4 million items into Europeana, of which 2 million are provided by the Gironde. Another goal was to enable actors from the Gironde to participate, to test the Cloud's potential in terms of heritage by experimenting with the new online tools and aggregations dedicated to small institutions, and experiment with new services: metadata enrichment, geolocation. This is why we took part in LoCloud. I am now going to let Julien and James explain how we took part in LoCloud.

Julien Dutertre, Archives départementales Gironde, digitisation and LoCloud project manager :

Thank you.

When we decided to set up this project, we contacted several institutions and associations, varying in size, to issue a call for volunteers. We started with partners from the Gironde who are devoted to heritage, either institutions or associations with limited technical and human resources. Typically without their own server, without the capacity to host online collections, and with a small staff. However, a prerequisite for LoCloud was for the association or institution to already have a website.

The goal for us was to accompany these local actors towards Europeana and to experiment with the tools used to send the collections onto Europeana. There are various tools, James will tell you about them later, but we mainly used an easy-to-use tool called LoCloud Collections.

Concerning the associations and institutions that participated with their collections, there was the Pôle de la Mémoire Locale du Bourgeais (Le Bourgeais Local Memory Centre) which sent 600 ancient postcards from the 19th and 20th centuries; the Conservatoire de l'Estuaire (the Estuary Conservatoire), which sent between 100 and 200 recent photographs of heritage pieces related to the estuary, such as marine objects, maps, drawings, models and many other things like that. The Société Archéologique de Bordeaux (Bordeaux Archaeological Society) sent around 1800 of Emilien Pigneau's sketches and notes from the 19th century, so everything to do with the heritage of Bordeaux and the Gironde. Next, InVideoVeritas, with a dozen videos of local scenes from the 20th century; and the Musée National des Douanes (the National Customs Museum) with a dozen images, placards and posters etc. from the 19th and 20th centuries as well.

In detail, I'm now going to go explain the tasks of each partner along with an overview of their website, and then what we were able to do with LoCloud Collections.

The Pôle de la Mémoire Locale du Bourgeais is a local institution and a department of the Bourg en Gironde community of communes, open to all, and dedicated to the conservation and consultation of the territory's history. It organises events and suchlike. They uploaded the postcards I told you about onto LoCloud, around 600 items. Here's an overview of the postcard collections that we can see on the PML's website. The PML was one of the few partners that could put collections online. So here we have a mosaic overview. And here a closer view of Château Grand-Jour. So here you can see, the overview is done with Calaméo. Here we can't see it in full screen, but you can put it in full screen. The advantages of this presentation is that it is easy to read, it's attractive. The disadvantage is that it stays on the website, and the data isn't standardised, so not directly exploitable by other websites. So that's where the idea to put all this onto LoCloud Collections comes from, to then send it onto LoCloud and then onto Europeana. This is what PML did with the LoCloud Collection tools. This is a layout with a system of templates that you can choose from the back office without difficulty. So we see the same postcard, as it is displayed, which is very pleasant to browse. Here the advantage is that the data is ready and already properly indexed. It just needs harvesting for it to be able to go.

The Gironde Conservatoire de l'Estuaire is a local association dedicated to promoting the heritage and culture of the estuary, i.e. its natural environment, history, architectural heritage and identity, using a photographic inventory of tools, pieces of boats, documents etc. We sent 159 items from the 19th and 20th centuries.

Here is their website, which does not host collections. Contributing to this local program was even more beneficial because it was possible to host a collection online and this was done. Here is a different page layout. As you can see the advantage here is that there is a search engine in the top right and various languages can be used, English, French, Polish, Spanish. The navigation wheel is a digital image that appears and changes as the website loads. There is another possible display for the notice with the Conservatoire's logo, which is a buoy at the bottom right.

Next, the Société Archéologique de Bordeaux, a learned society founded in 1875, studies, promotes and contributes to the protection of Bordeaux and the department's archaeological, historic and artistic   heritage. We incorporated sketch books and notes from the Emilien Piganeau collection into this project, around 1800 items digitalised and indexed individually. We will see an example later. It's an attractive site but it cannot host collections or illustrations. So this is what was done for the project.

There are still a few glitches on this account and on a few of the others. The tools still have some things to correct, but it is a work in progress, notably for the accents. This was what was done for the Emilien Piganeau collection, and an example of a notice behind me with a different layout. Like earlier, we can put the images we see here in full screen without difficulty.

InVideoVeritas is a local association in a rural area that uses small video productions to promote heritage through digitalisation and testimonials etc. The incorporated videos touch on local life, fluvial transport, local and architectural heritage, there are a dozen items lasting around 15 minutes. Here is what we did.

The videos on their website are hosted in a Dailymotion account, resulting in the same inconvenience as earlier: Dailymotion does not index the data to reuse them in a normalised portal. LoCloud Collections helped to add value. Here is an example of a website we created with them.

Here is another example of a notice, actually we don't have it because there is a problem with the links to videos on Dailymotion.

The Musée National des Douanes deals with the customs administration revolution, from antiquity to the present day, with the history of the constitution of the French state. It is a unique museum, with integrated screens, placards, posters, postcards, radios, photos etc. 16 items in total.

Here is their website and the LoCloud Collections page, with the same layout as the Conservatoire de l'Estuaire earlier. The notices are all completed with the normalized indexation characteristics. Now I'm going to let James tell you about the tools put in place and then I'll return for the feedback.

James Lemaire, Archives départementales Gironde, functional administrator and LoCloud IT technician :

Thank you, Julien.

When they put me in charge of putting the notices on Europeana, I had to start by learning a bit about it first because I didn't really know anything. So I used this model.

For the notice to appear on Europeana you have to first go through OAI, create an OAI request on our website Gironde Archives En Ligne, which I urge you to consult: gael.gironde.fr. Next I used a Mint tool for mapping, which means matching communications; and More allowed me to enhance and publish on Europeana.

First of all, the OAI-PMH repository is a communication protocol that allows two institutions to communicate. First I had to do a search on our website Gael. Next I created a specific request using the list of results. I'm going to show you what that gave me.

First of all, I created the form. I did my search on "5 Mi". I'm using an example to show you the process from start to finish, until it appears on Europeana. So, the "5 Mi". civil status. I made my request on Gael. Next, here is the list of results. I saved this list to create my OAI set. So that's it for the Gael part.

Next I used Mint, as you can see on this diagram this helps match information inside the Archives Départementales, until More which allows you to put it on Europeana. So, how does Mint work. First, I imported my OAI set, then I did what I find most interesting: mapping. It sounds a bit hard, but once you understand how it operates, it works fast.

Just a little digression here. To get to the final result you see on Europeana, we had to tinker a little bit. With Nathalie and Mrs Wilmet's help for very specific searches. Why? Because our website gave us the possibility to create an OAI repository. But if these OAI repositories aren't perfect, Europeana and Mint cannot fully understand them. So we had to do more on Gael. End of the digression.

Here is the mapping. Next, after having done this, I could see the result in Mint. This was a new possibility, a preview, that is only available on More. The inconvenience of improving with More is that it takes time. Thanks to Mint I could see the result of the mapping on the future notice. So that's on the right, I'll put it in full screen. That way I already have an overview of how my notice is going to look on Europeana. From Mint I went to More. More allows us to improve the notices and geolocation. It highlights a few key words. Here is More's interface. I imported my Mint form into More. This lets me see the statistics, which are, of course important items that must appear in the notice. I'll show you. These statistics tell you whether your notice will be accepted by Europeana.

Here is the notice enriched in More. The enrichment is this part here, the geolocation. All the information that you can see here was important for us, and particularly the reference number that allows those who go onto Europeana to then find the document on our website. Lastly, I'm going to show you the final result on Europeana. After all these manipulations this is how the form looks on Europeana.

I'm finished. Thank you.

Julien Dutertre :

Thank you. To sum up, you have seen that we have easy-to-use tools. Or at least, easier to use with LoCloud Collections. James just showed you Mint and More. Behind these, there are also enrichment tools that are even more technical. At the Archives Départementales, we gathrered feedback and analysed the impacts on the project. For this we got direct and indirect feedback, through satisfaction surveys that we gave to our Gironde partners and other partners in Europe. There was also indirect feedback, which was more informal. We also got feedback from other partners for the aggregators, i.e. the large institutions that gathered the data, manipulated the repositories.

We realised that the tools used were different depending on the type of structure. This means that the final users, people like you and me, who love heritage, were more likely to use LoCloud Collections, were much more interested in it because it's a useable tool with which you can save collections notice by notice. The small and medium sized organisations also preferred LoCloud Collections because of its advantages, mainly the fact that it is free. This meant that we already had websites allowing us to publish collections online. Our task was to normalise the data, find out how to standardise it, and which procedures to put in place to then send these items to Europeana.

... which were appreciated more for the artwork's beauty and used less for geolocation, enrichment, and the historic management of place names, the links with Wikipedia which are powerful tools – here James showed you the Macau notice. It means that using a GPS platform displaying a map, we can focus directly on Macau. That was for the enrichment aspect. For the historic management of place names, we are going to manage all of Bordeaux's names from its foundation to today; all of the United Kingdom's names from its origins to today etc. The links with Wikipedia were mainly used by the Conservatoire de l'Estuaire.

What was the main positive feedback?

Mostly, the tools meet their goals. They send collections to Europeana, easily and in several stages. To LoCloud Collections then Europeana.

The negative points are mainly the fact that the data isn't easy to manipulate, even with these tools. We are actually switching to the Semantic Web. The fact that we are changing technology surprised a lot of our partners. Even though we are used to Wordpress, or other online publication websites, here we are talking about normalising data which isn't the same thing. We manage things such as n-uplet, mainly for OAI-PMH, and it becomes even more powerful. Transferring data to Europeana isn't easy even with these tools because Europeana harvests on a monthly basis. Once the harvest starts, there is a latency period to make sure it gets there etc.

From this, what prospects can we give?

The first is to improve the understanding of the data, by putting in place tools that better fit the description and the meaning of the document for example rather than its technical aspect. To improve the micro-tools' integration to the more powerful tools so they can be used more easily and more often. To better promote the audio-visual collections, as we realised that of all the people, organisations and associations who send collections via LoCloud, less than 30% are audio-visual. This needs to be increased. And to ensure we continue to put in place tools for free during the project. At the start, LoCloud's plan was to allow the associations or organisations that aren't very visible on Europeana to go onto Europeana. The idea is to reuse all of these tools. The question is how? Thank you for listening.