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INFO 287: The Hyperlinked Library

Spring 2025

Memory Labs: Preserving Our Stories

Image Source: https://www.dijifi.com/blog/reasons-to-digitize-your-family-photos

What are Memory Labs?

- Memory labs are meant to be free spaces where patrons can digitize their photos, documents, audiovisual recordings, and other formats (California State Library, n.d.).
- The idea was conceived by the District of Columbia Public Library (DCPL) and funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) through the National Leadership Grant (Memory Lab Network, n.d.).
- Their goal was to build Memory Lab digital preservation programs in public libraries across the U.S. based on the DCPL Memory Lab model (Memory Lab Network, n.d.).

Image Source: https://www.tularecountylibrary.org/memory-lab

Where to implement it?

- The institution I have chosen to work with is the Sacramento Public Library (SPL).
- Its first library, the Sacramento Free Public Library, was opened on June 14, 1879 and was a collaboration between some of Sacramento's leading citizens of the time (Sacramento Public Library, n.d.).
- Today, SPL has 28 branches which serve residents of the greater Sacramento area. One of its core values includes providing access to resources that help their patrons achieve their goals and supporting everyone's freedom to choose for themselves what they read and learn (SacLib, 2024).
- Its strategic plan for 2024-2027 includes the goal of fostering a lifelong love of learning and reading among their patrons by promoting access to a wide range of materials (SacLib, 2024).

Image Source: https://www.saclibrary.org/About/Mission-Vision

Goals/Objectives

- Community members will gain the skills and the confidence to digitize, care for, and manage their own histories.
- The library will start to develop a digital preservation workstation that meets the transfer needs of their community collections.
- Library staff will gain practical knowledge in digitization, design user-centered programming, and develop plans to continue and sustain the Memory Lab.

Image Source: https://career-advising.ndsu.edu/blog/2023/01/13/how-to-set-better-goals/

Action Brief (Patrons)

Action Brief (Patrons)	
Convince	Sacramento Resident library users
That by	Using the Memory Labs in our Library
They will	Gain the skills and confidence to digitize, care for, and manage their own histories
Which will	Enable them to organize, digitize, and share their family collections/stories
Because	Our library values fostering a lifelong love of learning and access to materials

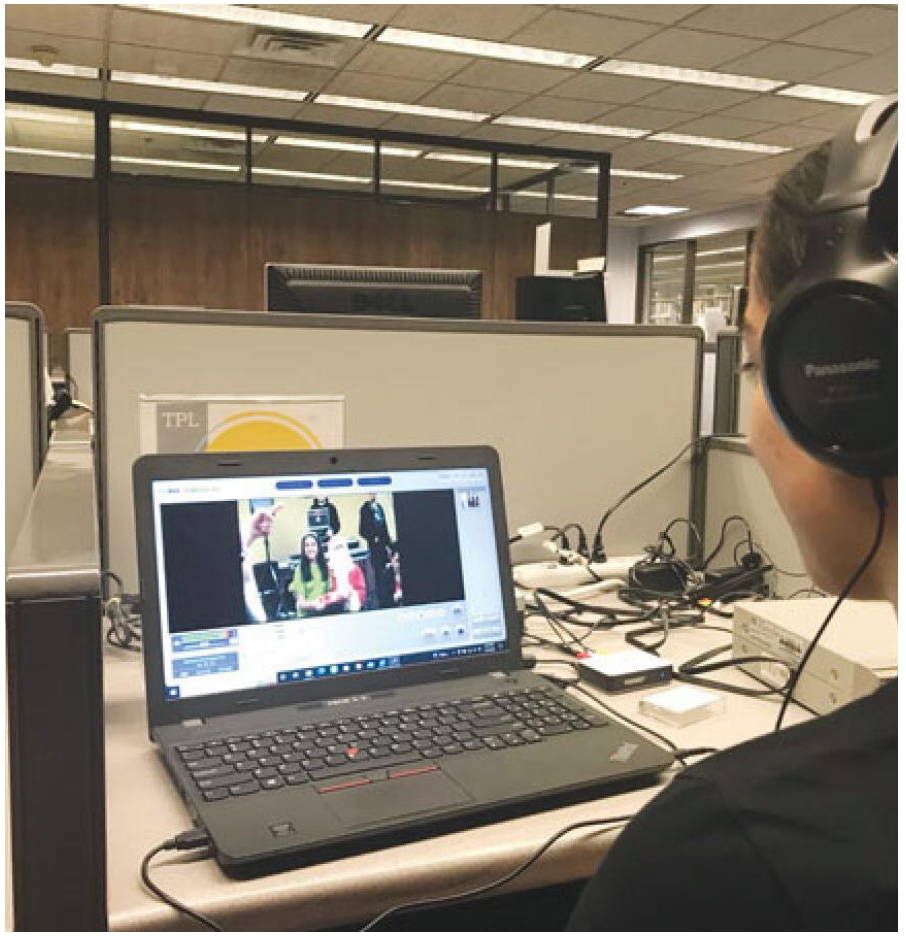

Image Source: https://www.candgnews.com/news/troy-librarys-memory-lab-lets-patrons-preserve-older-photos-videos-in-the-digital-age-328

Action Brief (Staff)

Action Brief (Patrons)	
Convince	Library admin and staff
That by	Creating Memory Labs at SPL locations
They will	Enable community members of all ages and digital literacy levels to learn how to organize, digitize, and share their family collections/stories
Which will	Preserve the community's digital heritage
Because	Our library values enabling patrons to achieve their goals and supporting their lifelong learning

Image Source: https://aliveemployeesclub.com/library-octavia-lab-makerspace_202308/

Target Audience

Community members of all ages and digital literacy levels, especially those from marginalized communities whose histories and stories have not been included in library collections or archives.

Image Source: https://johnsoncountypost.com/2024/05/04/your-library-memory-labs-first-year-surpassed-all-expectations-233094/

Motivation

Memory Labs have been implemented in…

Image sources:
https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.sanleandro.org%2F162%2FPublic-Library&psig=AOvVaw0hXgmi1KnulVT1Ucepgr6l&ust=1742079745358000&source=images&cd=vfe&opi=89978449&ved=0CBQQjRxqFwoTCICIwfbWiowDFQAAAAAdAAAAABAE
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CALIFORNIA REVEALED

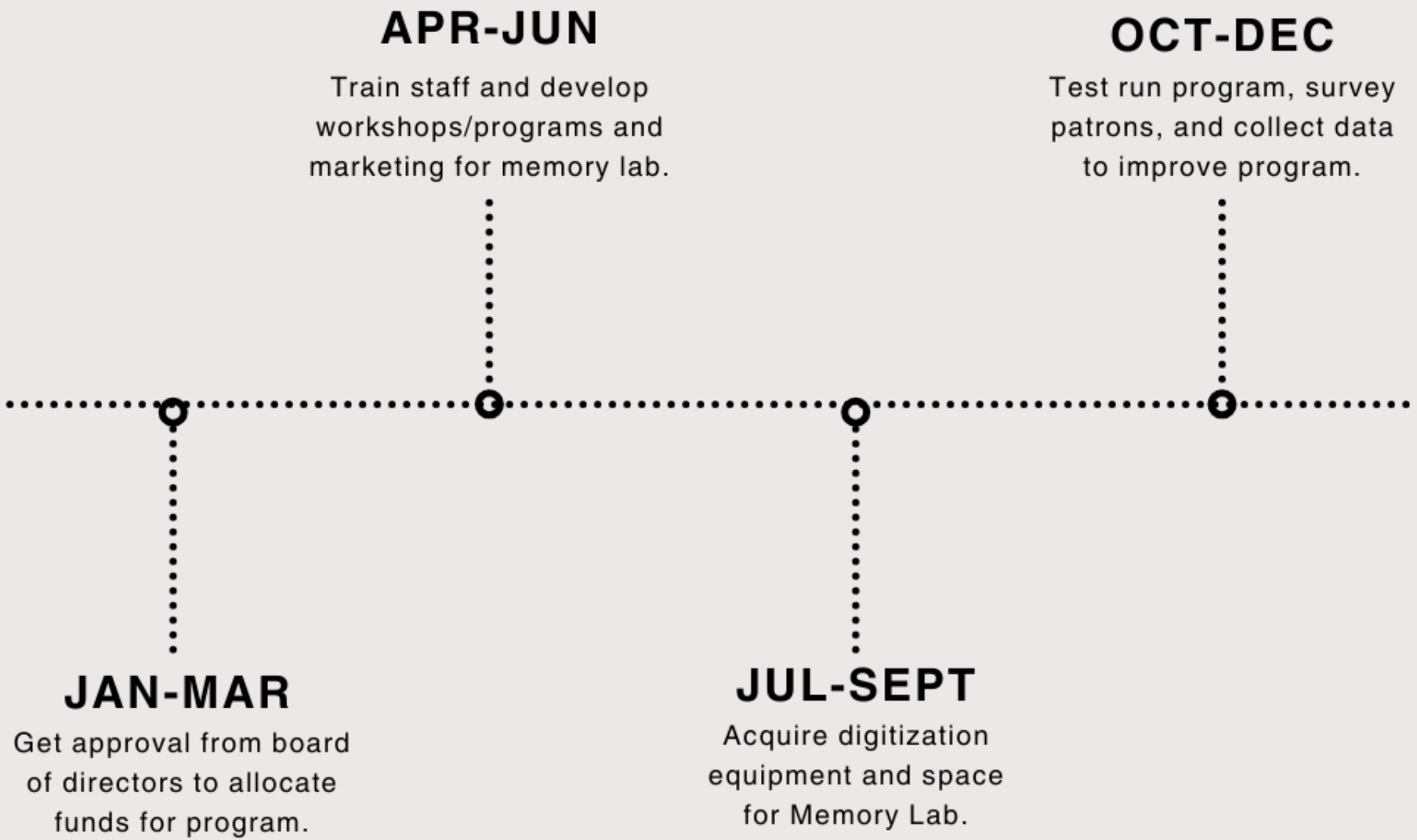
Guidelines/Policies

- Sacramento Public Library board of directors and library staff will be responsible for developing the guidelines and policies for implementing the Memory Labs.
- The Los Angeles Public library website has guides that include information on what materials can be digitized, the equipment is provided, patron responsibilities, and even an in-depth online orientation before using Memory Labs.
- The California State Library and California Revealed offers additional information and guidance on how to implement Memory Labs at public libraries, and how to apply for grant funding.

CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY

Image sources:
https://californiarevealed.org/sites/default/files/2023-06/car-logo-horizontal_black-text.png
https://www.library.ca.gov/wp-content/themes/csl/images/csl-logo.png

Timeline: 1 year



Marketing (Patrons)

Use existing social media pages to promote events/workshops around the Memory Lab.

- Facebook
- Twitter/X
- Instagram
- Youtube

Create engaging events/workshops around the Memory Lab

- Open-house style events where the community could bring their family photos, videos, or analog materials to the Memory Lab and learn how to digitize them.
- Preservation workshop series (photo, digitization, textile, paper, art, genealogy, etc.)

Image Source: https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fincae.edu%2Fen%2Fmarketing-trends-for-2022%2F&psig=AOvVaw0SwE3CVmKldzesfEFosOSL&ust=1742081029358000&source=images&cd=vfe&opi=89978449&ved=0CBQQjRxqFwoTCIDP9NzbiowDFQAAAAAdAAAAABAE

Marketing (Staff/Stakeholders)

- Reach out to community stakeholders like California Revealed and the California State Library for guidance on how to implement and sustain the Memory Lab program.
- Promote the program to staff and provide incentives to invest in professional development (e.g. on the job training).

Image Source: https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.aihr.com%2Fblog%2Femployee-marketing%2F&psig=AOvVaw2l28__dZDvBE9srPBxgFa5&ust=1742081212938000&source=images&cd=vfe&opi=89978449&ved=0CBQQjRxqFwoTCJDIu7DciowDFQAAAAAdAAAAABAE

Evaluation

- Library staff could create a paper or online survey for patrons to complete anonymously at the end of each session.
- Surveys would collect information on the number of lab users, number of hours, formats transferred, common issues, and feedback.
- The data compiled from the surveys could help SPL quantify the level of services provided by the program.
- Surveys and interviews would evaluate the significance of the Memory Lab for the institution, and articulate findings of how to create and sustain a successful program.

Image Source: https://www.psychologicalscience.org/redesign/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/h600-resize_Stylized-Eval-Form.jpg

References

California State Library (n.d.). Memory Lab. Retrieved March 14, 2025, from https://www.library.ca.gov/services/to-libraries/ideas/memory-lab/

SacLib (n.d.). Our History. Sacramento Public Library. Retrieved March 14, 2025, from https://www.saclibrary.org/About/Our-History

SacLib (2024). Sacramento Public Library Strategic Plan 2024 - 2027. *Sacramento Public Library.* https://www.saclibrary.org/Saclibrary/media/MediaAssets/Sacramento_Public_Library_Strategic_Plan-2024.pdf

Image Source: https://apastyle.apa.org/images/references-page-category_tcm11-282727_w1024_n.jpg