
DIGITAL PLATFORM FOR DISSEMINATION OF THE FAUUSP ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN COLLECTIONS

Plataforma digital para difusão dos acervos de arquitetura e design da FAUUSP

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Abstract

This article aims to present the collections of the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism of the University of São Paulo (FAUUSP) and describes the implementation of an online interface for those collections, developed with the Omeka S platform for sharing and collaborating with organized and structured data and information. As part of the discussion, it summarizes the historical moment in which the importance of the design and architecture archives and collections is debated, discussing the history of the institution's catalogue and covering issues involving their online dissemination. It also presents a special metadata topic, specifically Dublin Core, which is the standard adopted by FAUUSP. Results are discussed and perspectives for the continuity of the platform are also commented on.

Keywords: Digital platform; Collections; Architecture; Design; FAUUSP

Resumo

O artigo tem por objetivo apresentar as coleções da Faculdade de Arquitetura e Urbanismo da Universidade de São Paulo e descreve o processo de implementação de uma interface online voltado para sua difusão, desenvolvido com a plataforma Omeka S, a partir do qual se pode fazer o compartilhamento e a colaboração na organização dos dados e das informações organizadas e estruturadas. Como parte da discussão, resume o momento histórico em que se discute a importância dos arquivos e coleções de design e arquitetura, levantando a história do catálogo da instituição e cobrindo questões que envolvem sua divulgação online. Apresenta também um tópico especial de metadados, especificamente o Dublin Core, padrão adotado pela FAUUSP. Os resultados são discutidos e as perspectivas para a continuidade da plataforma também são comentadas.

Palavras-chave: Plataforma digital; Acervos; Arquitetura; Design; FAUUSP

1 Introduction

Considering Borko's (1968 p. 3) concept of Information Science as "a discipline that investigates the properties and behavior of information, the forces governing the flow of information, and the means of processing information for optimum accessibility and usability", this article contributes to the methodological dimension of the field of Information Science by presenting an experience report, as part of an exploratory and descriptive study of the implementation of a platform for FAUUSP collections, evolving organized and structured data as well as information retrieval matter as a way to motivate similar initiatives. This work is a result of a multidisciplinary contribution, having worked directly with the Design area which focused on the graphical interface design of the digital products. This interface intermediates the exchange between the database and the final user of the platform. Interaction Design acts directly on the integration of Information Architecture approaches, thinking about their paradigms of organization, labelling, navigation flows and search systems (Rosenfeld et al. 2015), and the design of the user experience, understanding the platform in a way that supports user behaviors (Cooper et al. 2014).

As an introduction, it seems important to point out the historical moment in which the importance of the design and architecture archives and collections is discussed.

In his book *Design History*, the design historian Kjetil Fallan leaves no doubt regarding the epistemological changes the field has been undergoing. According to Fallan, the discipline is no longer concerned with the constitution of a "history of objects and their designers" (Fallan 2010 p. viii). New practical, theoretical and methodological concerns focus on cultural issues, involving actions and practices of specific groups. Not least, he recognizes that critical and historiographic production, as well as design practices, are far more interested in the relationships between things, people and ideas, removing the centrality of manufacturing as an autonomous manifestation set apart from the shared values between people in their cultural contexts.

In architecture, the situation is very similar. Historians, critics and architects themselves, at least since the late 1960s, have been working to recognize and redraw disciplinary boundaries, to find work methods as well as materials. On this topic, there is a striking proposal by the

historian, critic and curator Beatriz Colomina, who establishes a distinction between construction and architecture, stressing that the latter is a “critical and interpretative act” (Colomina 1988 p. 6). By establishing this distinction, Colomina synthesizes a shift which is outlined in a series of articles published since the second half of the 20th century - explaining the expansion of disciplinary domains, along the lines proposed by Anthony Vidler (2013). Thus, critics, historians and architects themselves, influenced by advances in other disciplinary fields - especially anthropology, history, linguistics and philosophy - have contributed to the epistemological transformation of architecture, extending its domains and practices.

If the changes in these two disciplinary fields allow for the recognition that the object of work and reflection no longer exclusively resides in the artefacts or their manufacture - which until then had been at the center of reflection - it was natural that the next movement sought to recognize practices as well as structures from which professionals, historians and critics could act. At the heart of this transformation were issues that repositioned the user at the center of the debate. In Design, the discipline appears quite influenced by anthropology, which not only has contributed several theoretical and practical approaches (Anastassakis 2020), but has also outlined a basis for debates on human-centered design. Similarly, architecture became more intensely focused on the mediations and representations between buildings and readers, highlighting the debate of visuality as a constitutive element of an architectural culture (Patteeuw and Szacka 2018).

This new culture which has been equated between Design and Architecture has therefore not only transformed the understanding of these disciplines. It has also contributed to the emergence of a series of new practices and structures which have become constitutive of the actions of professionals, historians and critics. After all, if disciplinary understanding no longer allows thought to be restricted to manufacturers, it is therefore necessary to establish structures that allow this strongly intellectualized action to occur. The context that was thus organized contributed to the emergence and deepening of reflection regarding three domains that are strongly rooted in the culture of these disciplines: archives, exhibitions and publications.

With specific regard to archives, some aspects are worth highlighting. First, it is recognized that the centrality assumed by culture as a set of commodities of high economic value has placed design and architecture as disciplines of great interest to companies and states. The reorganization

of the world of work (Botelho 2008) unleashed by the 1973 Oil Crisis helped states and certain economic conglomerates to set up cultural institutions and museums. Value and intellectual and political protagonism came to be mediated by the symbolic construction which operates around practices and social groups. Perhaps the most iconic manifestation of this movement was the inauguration by the French government of one of the most representative cultural facilities of the last 50 years: the Pompidou Cultural Centre, in 1977. The Beaubourg, as it is known, contributed to a reshaping of Western culture, establishing a new level of cultural institution as well as rearranging institutional practices and policies. In this new scenario, the possession of documents and archives came to be a structuring factor of actions associated, at least, to design and architectural practices. The scenario created by the new epistemology of these disciplines allows us to properly observe FAUUSP's historical initiatives, which today are responsible for the Architecture and Urbanism course as well as the Design course, created in 2006.

2 A Brief History of The FAUUSP Collections

The FAUUSP Library was created together with the Faculty in 1948, with the purpose of aiding study, research and extension programs. The Library houses the Iconographic Materials Technical Section (MATICON), so named in 2014, when the Unit's organization chart was changed. But its beginnings date back to the 1960s, with the creation of the Library's Audiovisual Sector, whose collection contains photographs, slides, microfilms, films and sound recordings, and, later, with the creation of the Architecture Drawings Sector in the 1970s (Brito et al. 2019). It is worth noting that the formation of these sectors took place in an incidental manner, without a clear institutional policy and in response to the practical and preservationist demands presented by some of the Faculty's professors.

FAUUSP's institutional actions led the Faculty to establish a significant set of documents regarding Brazilian architecture and design. Currently, FAUUSP's iconographic collection is made up of material from 44 firms and professionals from the areas of Architecture, Urbanism and Design. It contains around 400,000 drawings, over 100,000 photographic records, as well as varied objects and documents generated as a result of their professional activity. This material allows for a very diverse panorama of the wealth and complexity of architectural and urban production and

design of the last 150 years. The collection includes original drawings by the most renowned Brazilian architects and designers, such as Cauduro Martino Arquitetos Associados, Francisco de Paula Ramos de Azevedo, Gregori Warchavchik, João Vilanova Artigas and Rino Levi, among others (Lanna and Brito 2020).

Like the Library, the Editorial Production Technical Section (LPG) was also created in 1948, forming a triad with the Models, Tests and Constructive Experiments Technical Section (LAME) to support FAUUSP's teaching, research and extension programs in its initial pedagogical plan (Silva 2016). The LPG performs publishing services, from graphic design to production, to support faculty bodies and sectors, and is responsible for the production of all of its graphic material for research, teaching, extension and administrative purposes. Its collection of posters and publications reflects the faculty's work throughout its 70-year history (LPG 2020).

The Audiovisual Technical Section (FotoVideoFAU) was created in 1973, under the management of Prof. Nestor Goulart. The architect, photographer and FAUUSP graduate Cristiano Mascaro was invited to coordinate photography and video production in order to assist the work of students, researchers, professors and staff in their teaching, research culture and extension activities (Dworecki and Pan 2015). The collection under Mascaro's production includes documentaries and materials generated in the disciplines, as well as records of lectures and seminars held at the faculty (Fotovideofau 2020).

By the end of last century, FAUUSP therefore held collections of huge importance for its institutional memory, but mainly for the history of Brazilian design and architecture, which contributed to its position of national and international relevance. The creation of the PhD program in architecture during the 1990s and the consequent spread of debates rooted in its collections were new steps towards understanding the need for specific treatment regarding their form of archiving, preservation and conservation. This concern is in line with the international rise of digital culture. While it has been essential to hold collections since the 1970s, from the 1990s debate was largely guided by the issue of document digitization, systematization of files and treatment of digital-born documents. Notable among the hundreds of seminars, scientific events and publications are the following: the initiative by David Peyceré and Florence Wierre (2008) which systematized debates on the relationship between architecture and digital documents; the important and recent debate

on preservation policies regarding digital documents and platforms organised by Erica Avrami (2019); and, in Brazil, the initiative by USP professors Giselle Beiguelman and Ana Magalhães who put together a Research Group which organized seminars and the publication of *Futuros Possíveis* (2014).

This debate has also been present at FAUUSP since the start of the 21st century, with the implementation of computerized research tools. From the library, two are worth mentioning: Infoslides in 2003, an internal control tool aimed at cataloguing and digitizing slides (Rozestraten et al. 2012); and the online projects catalogue, from 2005, which gives users the title, author, date and location of already catalogued projects (Sakurai et al. 2016). From FotoVideoFAU there is the Intermeios site, a project selected by the USP Dean of Culture and University Extension in the Preservation of Document, Memory and Monument Collections 2013 edict which, by mid-2020, hosted the Section's video productions now available on the FAUUSP Youtube channel (Intermeios 2013). Regarding the LPG, on the occasion of preparations for the FAU 70 years exhibition, work has started on inventorying the Section's graphical and editorial production, but is not yet available to the public (Lanna and Castro 2018).

Attuned to these issues, Professor Ana Lucia Duarte Lanna's management (2019-2022) concentrated efforts on these three sections to best meet the expectations of the FAUUSP community and external researchers through the creation of a portal for the dissemination of the collections. Launched in December 2019, the Acervos FAU database was planned and conceived with the involvement of a collective of technical staff, professors, fellows and researchers, with support from the Unit's Directorate. This collective, in addition to choosing the Omeka platform to house the data, chose Dublin Core (DC) as the data recording standard, as well as the minimum fields for the descriptions of items of different collections (iconographic, audiovisual, and graphic and editorial production). This article presents the results obtained from the implementation, guided by the following question: What should the information architecture and user interface parameters be for the first version of a platform for the diffusion of FAUUSP's iconographic collection?

3 Resources and Methods

At the start of 2019, consultation of the MATICON catalogue required scalable resources as its database grew. Some alternatives for digital dissemination were being tested, although the process of cataloguing the items was carried out via local spreadsheets, and consultation by visitors and researchers depended on the mediation of those responsible for the collection. This led the institution to assess platforms that could attend to the entire process of digital cataloguing, from records to consultation and consumption of information.

There are many challenges for institutions that manage large collections that require digitization. Care is ongoing and restrictions are numerous, such as financial and personnel resources (Lanna 2020), as well as the need to master the technology and its means of dissemination (Rink 2017 p. 2). The growing number of donations of collections received by FAUUSP and the commitment to making them public has led not only to the implementation of a portal but also its correspondence to international cataloguing standards and norms.

The project's guiding premise for the platform was the integration of the collections of FAUUSP's three technical sections (MATICON, FotoVÍdeoFAU and LPG) into the same system, preserving the particularities of each section with different access and personalized interfaces, keeping a single database with established management rules and even with other databases of related areas and institutions. Omeka was the chosen platform: free software, widely used globally, such as by Columbus State University, which makes its digital archives and special collections available. There have also been experiences at USP itself, such as the Litoteca, a website for public consultation with photos, links and descriptions of samples of geological material belonging to the Museum of Geosciences, and the Digital Library of Artistic Production of the School of Communications and Arts (ECA/USP), that gathers images of the artworks created by students of the School presented as dissertations and theses.

Some of the advantages of using Omeka can be listed, with interoperability being the most important of them. This feature allows integration with other platforms, including the Integrated Search Portal (PBI), a fourth-generation discovery service based on the Primo Ex-Libris - Proquest system, specially configured for the needs of the University of São Paulo (Portal de Busca

Integrada 2020). The intention is to bring more information to the public in a way that is integrated with other materials from the Faculty and other databases of the University, and also with the possibility of integration with other databases of architectural collections and related areas.

The portal was conceived by a collective under the coordination of a librarian, a computer technician and a professor from the area of Design, with the collaboration of technical staff, professors, scholars and researchers, and with the support of the FAUUSP Board. This collective endorsed the choice of the Omeka platform for housing the collections data, as well as the adoption of Dublin Core as a metadata standard required for the implementation of the OAI-PMH, the interoperability protocol. (Omeka S 2020)

It was also up to this group to define the minimum fields for the description of items from FAUUSP's different collections (iconographic, audiovisual, graphic and editorial production). Following this, the existing data sheets were analyzed and prepared for adaptation to Dublin Core and later imported into Omeka.

Launched in December 2019 and entitled Acervos FAU, it has in almost two years of existence gathered about ten thousand records and summarized information from 44 iconographic collections, and is already an object of research in the field of design and digital humanities. The portal continues to be developed in order to remain attractive, current and consistent with other FAUUSP actions, in addition to providing users with a point of interaction with the collection through data availability and the implementation of new research resources, aiming for the construction of new knowledge.

The Omeka S platform is quite flexible regarding interaction and information design. It is an open-source system, available for download and installation on the servers themselves, based on PHP and MySQL. Omeka S also offers templates with a customizable stylesheet and flexibility in section labels and menu item organization. Tainacan is a similar platform, which could also have been used. However, Omeka S was a suggestion from the University, due to its greater capability of integration with its other collections, and with a greater internal technical support base. The Omeka S platform is also more widespread, with a global community of users and developers.

An Omeka site is mainly based on three types of content: items, collections and exhibitions. Items are the units of a collection, and represent a physical object, as is the case with FAUUSP, or, they can be self-referenced as a digital object (a digital photo, for example, or a .pdf file). The items are described by the DC metadata. Collections can include items organized by institution, bringing together all the projects by one architect, or all the posters produced by a studio. Exhibitions combine items and texts into a layout, and may be organized by alternative criteria, such as projects selected by a School, or posters created using a specific technique. (Maron and Feinberg 2018 p. 679).

The interface design was initially based on modifications of the supplied template, to which the FAUUSP identity was applied. A link to the institution's site is placed at the top, so as to not interfere with the context of the pages. The home page presents a short introductory text, as well as collections or content highlights. The main menu was organised into three institutional items (About, Contacts and Office) and three navigation areas by content (Collections, Types of Materials and Search).

A common challenge in the implementation of digital collections is the defining of formats, or types, of the registered items, both at the time of registration as well as consumption. This is because the item's description, when inserted into the system, contains metadata which should be interpreted by the editor (Dragon 2020 p. 4). Should a photograph of a model, for example, be considered a photo (still image) or a model (physical object)? Is it a part of a project or a separate item? The coherence of formats is also essential for cohesion in the use of the platform by the user, ensuring the findability of items and understanding of the content in general. In the case of FAUUSP, this process occurred in a very direct way, as the items had been classified for some time by the institution.

The name given to the set of categories which organizes the items is also a subject for discussion. An article written by Dragon (2020) analyzed over 100 platforms for disseminating digital iconographic collections and identified 18 different terms, with 'Format' being the most cited (26), followed by 'Type' (18) and 'Genre' (12). The FAUUSP collection site uses 'Types of Material' (dcterms:type), similar to the fourth place, which is 'Type of Resource' (5). 'Type of Item' (3) and 'Type of Object' (2) are other similar terms.

For each ‘Type of Material’, the Omeka S platform allows for the assembly of different templates. As such, a template for a video may contain an area reserved for the inclusion of code for an embedded video from an external platform, and an architectural project can have specific fields with information such as number of drawings, paper type and scales used. FAUUSP chose to assemble templates with this type of distinction. However, the greatest flexibility came with the adoption of a more versatile field called ‘Description’ (dcterm:description) which meets the need for detailed information for different types of items.

Operating with metadata that ensures interoperability between databases was one of the project requirements that led the team to choose the Omeka S platform. The production of metadata has always been an activity of libraries, which organize indexes, files and catalogues. In physical libraries, metadata ensures the location of items; in digital libraries, it amplifies cross-referencing possibilities, as well as enhancing and speeding up data searches. “The challenge today lies in the description of the information that can be found in various digital formats and that needs to meet different audiences and uses.” (Pires 2012 p. 4).

With positive assessments in variables measuring cost and use capacity, the Omeka S platform was considered adequate for use with humanities collections. A recent case study gives reasons why, such as its high capacity and flexibility for working with metadata, batch upload support, incorporation of social media tools, growing user support community (forum) and ease of installation, learning and use (Rath 2016 p. 158-159). The following advantages were specifically pointed out by FAUUSP when justifying its choice: use of the DC standard; interoperability, free of charge, open source, adherence to the institution’s technological resources, extensibility via plugins and APIs, and variety of formats for data export, such as JSON.

The Omeka S platform is described as a “a next-generation web publishing platform for institutions interested in connecting digital cultural heritage collections with other resources online.” (Omeka S 2020). Its focus is further established by adopting the Dublin Core™ Metadata Initiative standard for content structuring fields, which establishes norms and supports shared innovation in good practice and metadata design (DCMI 2020).

The DC format has 55 elements describing metadata, called terms. From these, the standard indicates the use of 15 fundamental descriptive elements of a resource, such as title, author, subject

and description. Its elements are also documented by ISO norms (2009) and NISO (2012) (Maron and Feinberg 2018 p. 679; Pires 2012 p. 4). The adoption by Omeka S of the DC standard associated to OAI-PMH, a protocol developed by the Open Archives Initiative, which defines a mechanism for collecting metadata records in repositories (Open Archives Initiative 2020), ensures greater credibility as a potential data management system, as well as the desired interoperability of databases. Recently, data from Acervos FAU has been incorporated into the Integrated Search Portal of the University of São Paulo through this protocol, and it is hoped that other integration initiatives can be made possible through networking and/or agreements and partnerships with institutions with related collections.

Even though a conceptual disconnect has been pointed out between the DC norms and the way in which the Omeka initiative addresses these norms, the platform has met the initial needs of the project. Maron and Feinberg (2018 p. 674) performed a rhetorical analysis in Omeka's communication, comparing its manuals to the definitions of norms in the DCMI, and identified some inconsistencies in the rigor of communication about the proper use and principles of metadata. The problem, however, appears to be more linked to Classic Omeka (Maron and Feinberg 2018 p. 689) and does not interfere with quality of use by FAUUSP, as the authors themselves mention the importance of case-by-case adaptation, and the configuration of metadata has proven to be quite simple and intuitive. It is worth mentioning that since its implementation, the options selected have fully met FAUUSP's needs.

4 Results

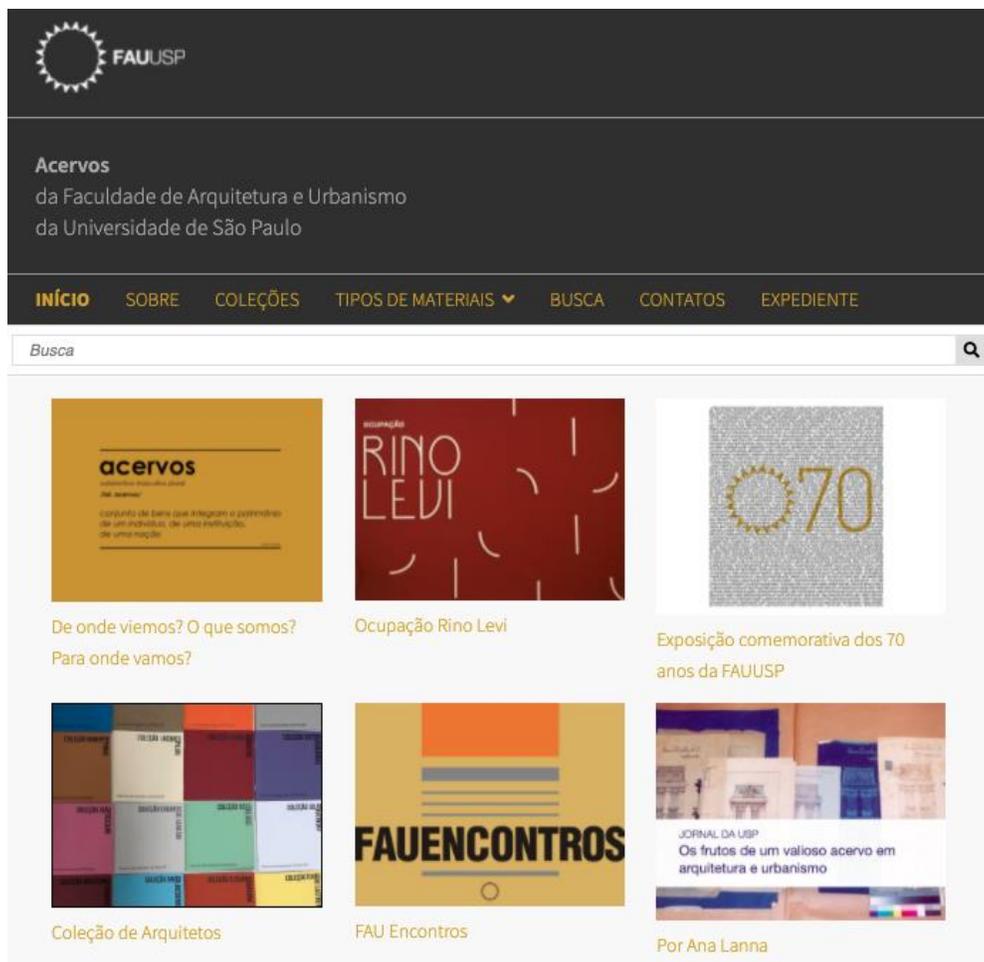
The following project requirements have been defined for the main menu:

- To offer the user a set of highlights to access items from new collections or which are being exhibited;
- To present an explanatory text about the collections and the digital platform - Acervos FAU;
- To offer a list with the collections that form the archive;

- To present a list of categories organised by type of material, making it easier to search for items according to their physical medium (e.g. slides);
- To offer a simple and advanced search function;
- To list the contacts for the technical sections responsible for the collections;
- List of institutional contacts;

The main menu, covering the requirements above, is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Screenshot showing main menu and cards with images and titles for the highlights of the Acervos FAU homepage



Source: FAUUSP (2020)

There are two DC vocabularies: DC Elements and DC Terms. The first is the result of a process of synthesis in which a list is made of the 15 key fields which define typically used elements in metadata descriptions for digital collections and is described in ISO 15836:2009. The second defines all DC standard terms, not only including the 15 DC Elements terms but also defining terms with the same names. The Acervos FAU platform uses the DC Terms vocabulary, as recommended by DCMI, from which it establishes 11 minimum fields for any catalogued item (Table 1), to be used by the three technical sections that manage its content. Each technical section can adopt other terms according to needs when registering different types of items in the collection.

Table 1 - Minimum fields in Acervos FAU

DC Label	Label adopted	DC Term	DC Definition
Identifier	Identificador	identifier	An unambiguous reference to the resource within a given context.
Title	Título	title	A name given to the resource.
Creator	Autoria	creator	An entity responsible for making the resource.
Spatial Coverage	Local	spatial	Spatial characteristics of the resource.
Date	Data	date	A point or period of time associated with an event in the lifecycle of the resource.
Language	Idioma	language	A language of the resource.
Type	Tipo	type	The nature or genre of the resource.
Description	Descrição	description	An account of the resource.
Subject	Assunto	subject	A topic of the resource.
Rights	Direitos	rights	Information about rights held in and over the resource.
Rights Holder	Acervo	rightsHolder	A person or organization owning or managing rights over the resource.

Source: Authors

The content of the ‘Type of Material’ field was delimited by a set of categories predefined by the organization of the physical collection as indicated by the Sections. When registering a new item, the user can choose the ‘Type of Material’ from a selection field, which includes slide, film,

photograph, map, model, among others. Each of these has its own template, therefore offering the user, in addition to the 11 minimum templates, other fields for filling in extended metadata.

Some ‘Type of Material’ categories were selected for access by the site user from the main menu. Table 2 shows the categories and quantity of items registered to date:

Table 2 - Categories and quantity of items registered

Quantity	Type of Material
8798	Drawings
58	Posters
116	Videos
11	Slides
34	Publications
6	Documents
10	Periodicals
3	Photographs
1	Models
1	Negatives

Source: Authors

5 Discussion

The site’s initial interaction design was partly based on the requirements defined by the people responsible for the collections, and partly on the organizational structure and tools offered by the Omeka S platform. It is essential, for the improvement of the site, that the freedom of access to the code and the flexibility of its modification are addressed with attention to new requirements established from user surveys, and not only by improvements given by the Omeka community. Evidently, the Omeka S platform meets conventional requirements in which user experience is considered, such as responsiveness of screens and layout of elements. However, assuming the need for a process of continuous improvement, the audience must be understood, with a clear grasp of who the site’s users are, including editing users (Rink 2017 p. 7). It is important to have a detailed picture of how often it is accessed, the contexts in which it is used and the reasons, objectives and tasks that bring the user to the site (Cooper et al. 2014).

Although the first data loads are still in progress and most categories have not yet been covered, practically all projects' data is already available for consultation (8798). Many cross-referencing possibilities, either by subject, collections, authorship, location, date and language are already available online. It seems to us that the expressiveness of this figure can be better explored with the implementation of visual resources to present the data, bringing out relevant information with the use of subcategories. For example: how are these projects distributed in time and space? How have the representation materials evolved? What narratives can be generated through relationships? Can content be elaborated, such as biographies and historical texts?

FAUUSP has already been implementing design improvements regarding the use of images, independently of the digital-born files. Preview images of physical items are being tested with the use of the International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF), which allows for the distribution of high resolution and interaction images (IIIF 2020). Maps for georeferenced visualisation, which positions architectural works corresponding to the items in the collection, are being tested with the use of the open-source Leaflet library (Leaflet 2020). In the same way, content has been created to provide the historical context of the collections and the professionals associated with them.

One feature present in Omeka, which has not yet been implemented in Acervos FAU, are the exhibitions. We believe that a combination of homepage highlights, extended publishing, increased use of images on the site and the setting up of virtual exhibitions can help to increase the dissemination and establishment of the site as a place of research. This demand should be met with the Faculty's expectations regarding the recreation of virtual exhibitions in the library's physical space, which would establish a conceptual connection between local visitors and the more external public.

Expanding dissemination requires actions that increase the cost of the site's maintenance. There needs to be constant communication, new items and exhibits shared on social networks and through partnerships and a greater online presence established (Rink 2017 p. 1).

User studies and communication planning are two aspects which will require future improvements for the platform, but there is one aspect that should guide the solution and which implies discussions about objectives and how the institution itself can become established in digital

media. This aspect refers to the images and virtual sharing of items in the collections. It involves copyright and distribution policies, it implies the expansion of access to materials and therefore iconographic research, as well as the need to review the entire support, security and management process of materials (Rink 2017 p. 4). Digital files become items in themselves, originals can be better preserved while the facsimiles are accessed more. This transition must be on the institution's horizon, and reflecting on it already points to the importance of placing the user at the center of the problem.

6 Conclusion

The debate around issues related to architecture, urbanism and design archives has been gaining ground among archivists, historians and architects due to the recognition of the promise that such structures have for the projection of new practices and actions in the present time. But, on the other hand, the methods of working with such structures are still incipient worldwide, as they are structures with very specific characteristics due to the complex set of documents that comprise them. We can indeed highlight exemplary initiatives (albeit few) –, such as the Gau:di project (Peyceré 2006), developed in Europe – which have sought to define parameters for good practices, challenges and particularities to be addressed. It is recognized, therefore, that this is a still very undefined field, or that it has goals which are yet to be defined. But some aspects are already recognized as basic premises for the good management of these structures.

Fundamentally, the recognition of the institutional nature of the archive is a determining factor for the structuring of its practices and policies. In this sense, it is important to emphasize that the FAUUSP iconographic collection – which includes photographs (in their diversity of formats), drawings, posters, some models, and administrative documents linked with its practices – is linked to the University of São Paulo and, therefore, its institutional mission is undoubtedly linked to teaching as well as academic research. Not being a museum, cultural institution or archive, the collection imposes a very particular access dynamic, since its users are students and researchers who are within this institutional circuit.

Education (in architectural faculties, for example) requires other methods to provide access to information in the archives or project files. It is not just a question

of archival description, but also enticing researchers to use the records in new and different ways. (Willinge and Murray 2008 p. 212).

It is within this perspective that the Acervos FAU platform was developed, as this educational premise is a structural element of its core activity.

FAUUSP's initiatives, in relation to its collection, express the faculty's interest in aligning itself with the contemporary context of design and architecture. The debate around the archives and collections therefore presents itself as a structuring element for the institution's projection and importance. On the one hand, these collections can better equalize the faculty's teaching and research practices, creating a more active dynamic in learning and recognizing contemporary agendas. On the other hand, they are also intrinsic elements for a more harmonious relationship with society, whether through exhibitions, publications, courses and other forms of dialogue. After all, it is through them that mediation with the internal and external public can be established, allowing for reflection, debate and building.

It is in this sense that the choice of the Omeka S platform and the DC standard was appropriate, in view of the complexity of working with the dissemination of multiple collections with little time and resources. The technology guarantees both a level of control in data standardization and flexibility of use. The information architecture can be planned independently for different types of users - editors, researchers and visitors. The advantages of the platform have not yet been fully exploited from the design point of view, but this is a frontier that FAUUSP is keen to explore. Despite this potential, the institution remains alert to possibilities with more resources, that are more robust and have more stringent requirements.

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