

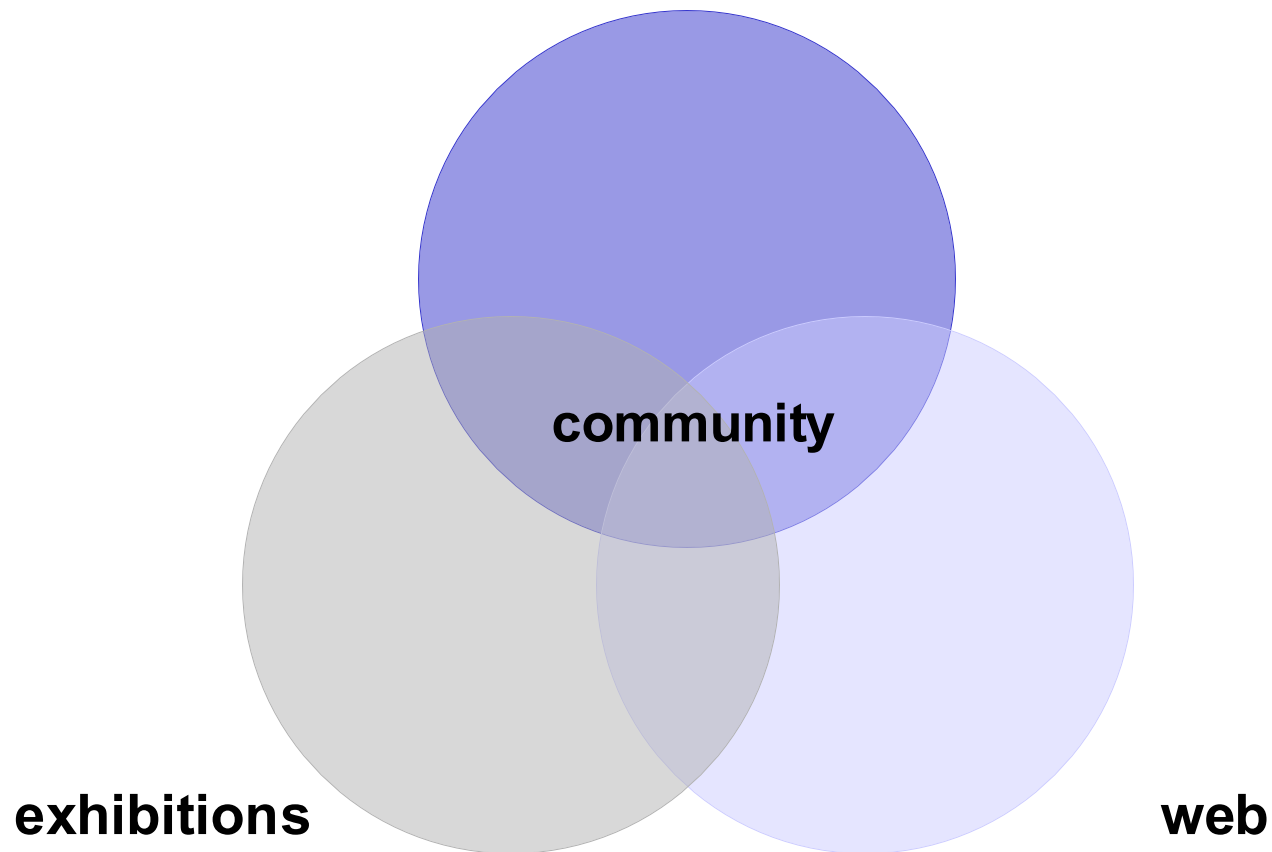
the attic & the parlor

CHM collections & exhibitions overview

May 5, 2006

Kirsten Tashev
VP Collections & Exhibitions

collections



CHM collection – by the numbers



moving images	5,000 titles
objects	20,000
oral histories	77 titles
software	5,000 titles
still images	20,000
text	4,000 linear feet

****CHM collection grows approx. 1,000 SF per year**

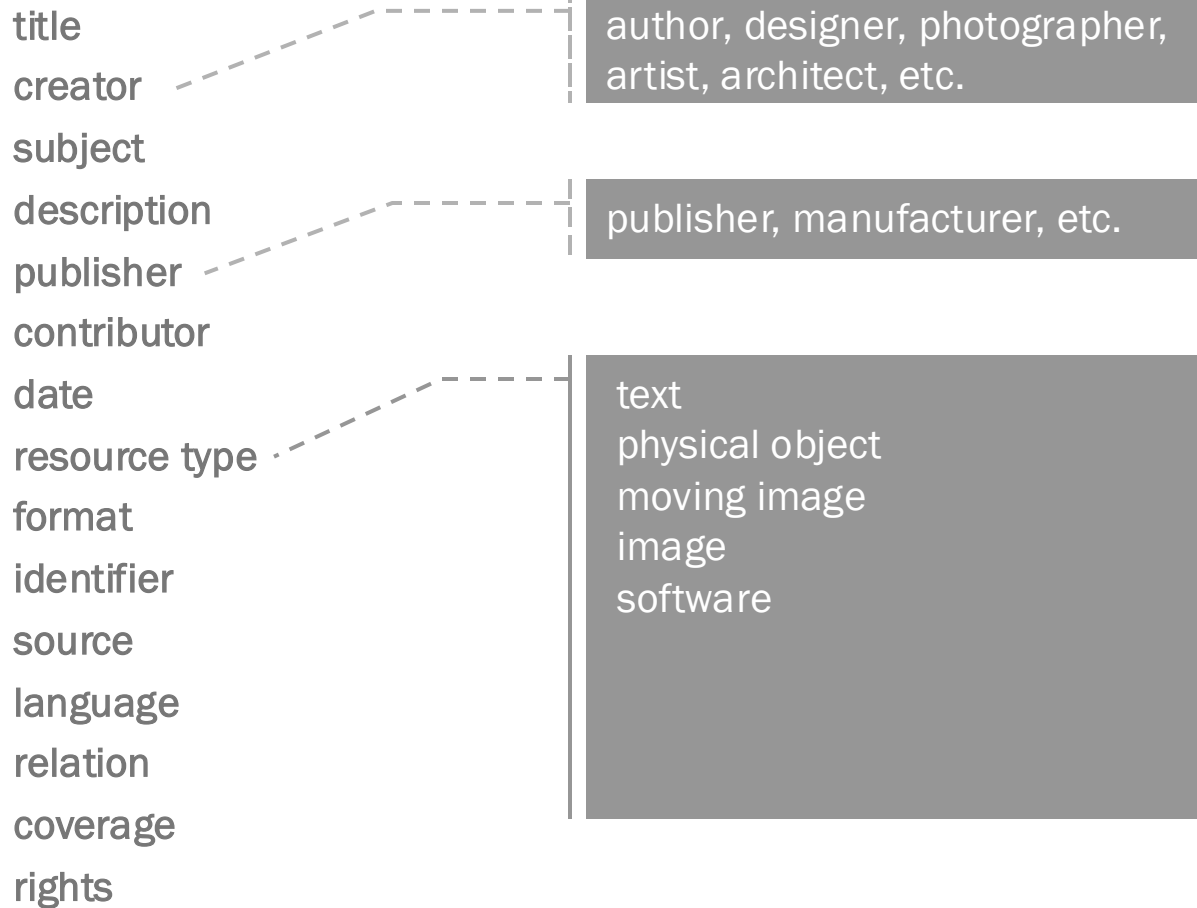
collecting criteria

The Computer History Museum accepts a large variety of *artifacts* that reflect the diversity of approaches and techniques humans have used in their development of computing machinery, concepts, and software. Generally, however, the Computer History Museum looks for items which meet the following criteria:

1. The *artifact* is unique (i.e. one-of-a-kind). This includes: prototypes; significant development versions of software; rare items produced in low-production runs; odd products which never made it to market; or homemade items from someone who went on to contribute in a significant way.
2. The *artifact* was mass-produced but has a low serial number (for example, between 1 and 10) or is an early version of a commercial software product.
3. Personal papers, documentation and media that support objects or software in the collection or that show the inception and development of an important idea in computing or its impact on human activity.

database – one collection

dublin core



**digital assets have filenames that contain metadata,
i.e. Google model**

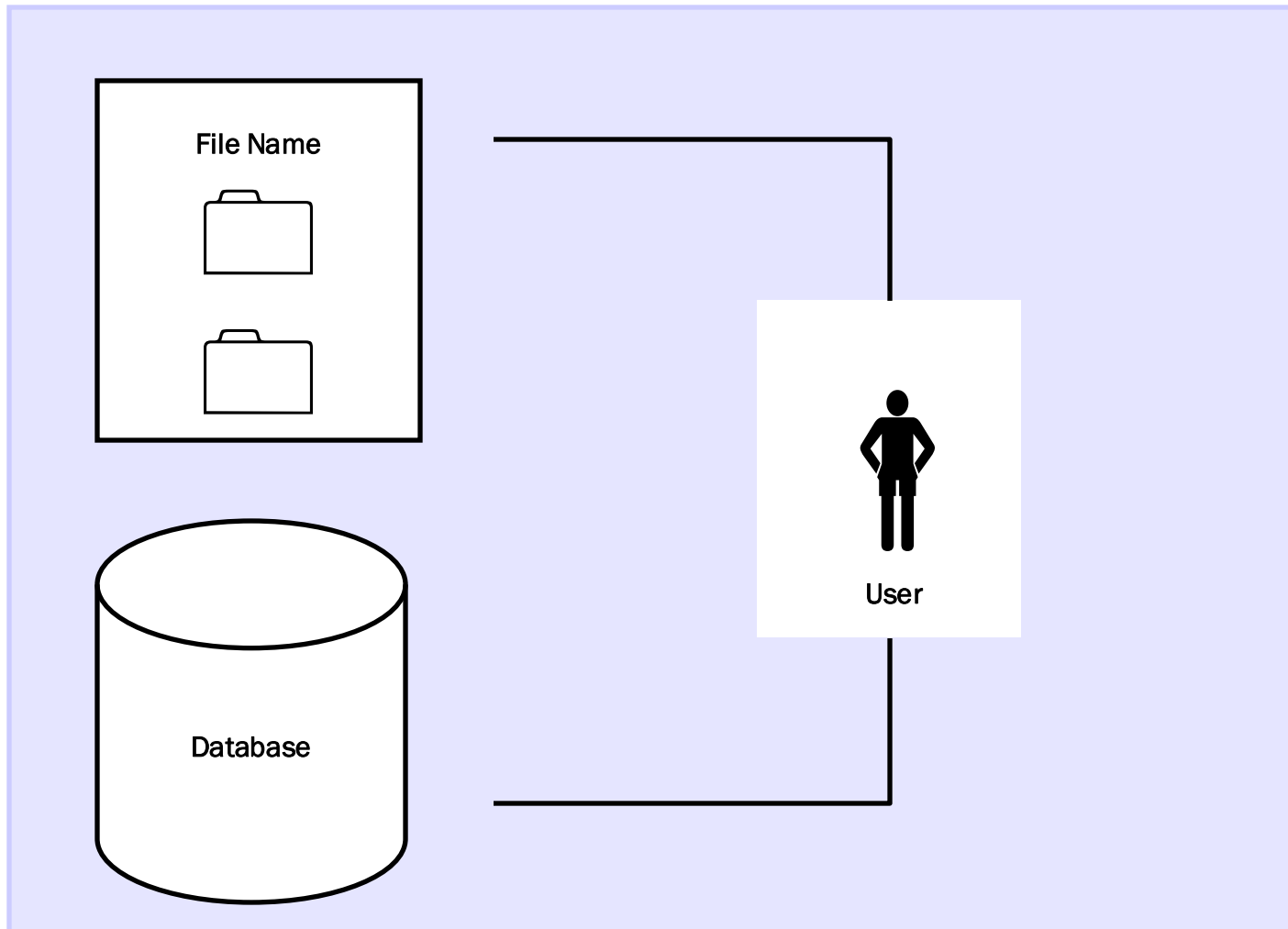
examples:

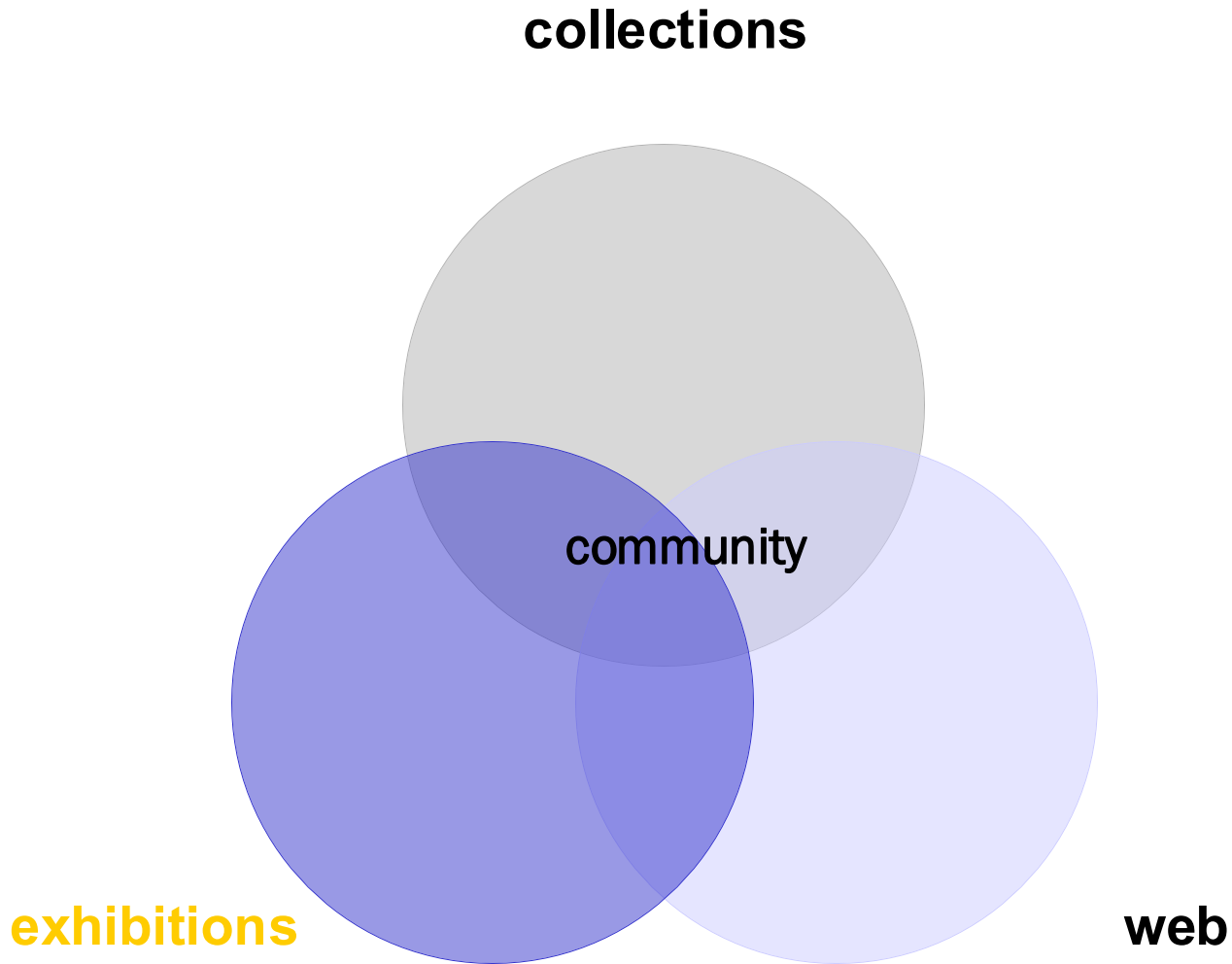
dec.pdp-1_printer.X126-84.jpg

dec.pdp-1.bell_kotok.1964.102525404.tif

dec.pdp-1.principles_of_operation.102535503.pdf

data approach





exhibitions



Visible Storage

- Opened Spring 2003
- 9,000 square feet
- Object-based display
- Chronological/thematic layout



exhibitions



MASTERING THE GAME: A History of Computer Chess

- Opened Fall 2005
- 1,000 square feet
- Narrative driven display



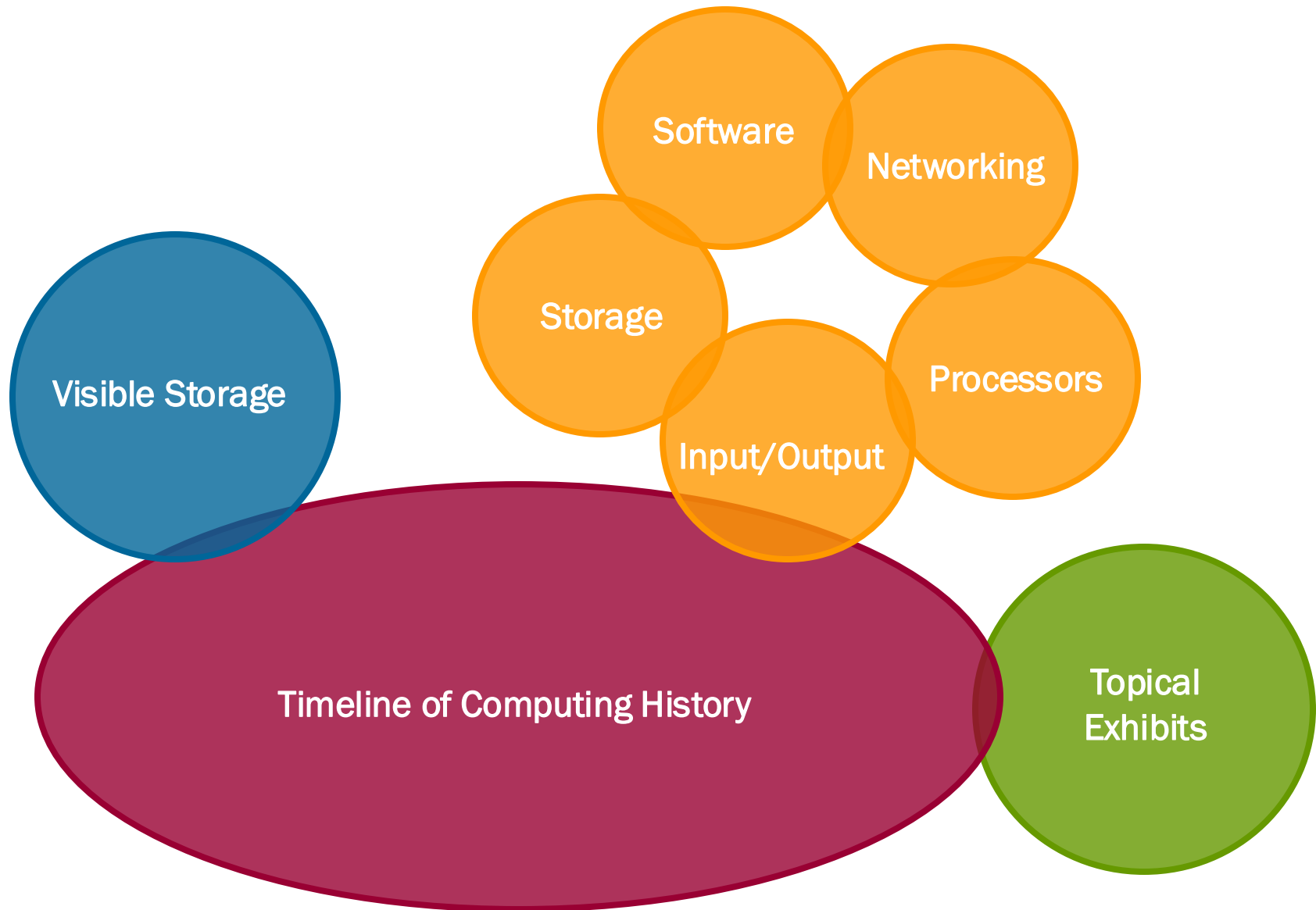
timeline exhibit



TIMELINE OF COMPUTING HISTORY

- Opening Fall 2009
- 14,000 square feet
- Narrative driven display

exhibition plans



web

collection

community

exhibition

web

web – catalog search



Search

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Search the Collection

The Computer History Museum maintains the world's largest collection of materials related to the history of computing. Here you can search a portion of the Museum's collection, including over 20,000 records for objects, documents, software, photographs and films. Don't forget to visit our online [Reading Room](#) and [Exhibitions](#).

SEARCH BY KEYWORD

Search

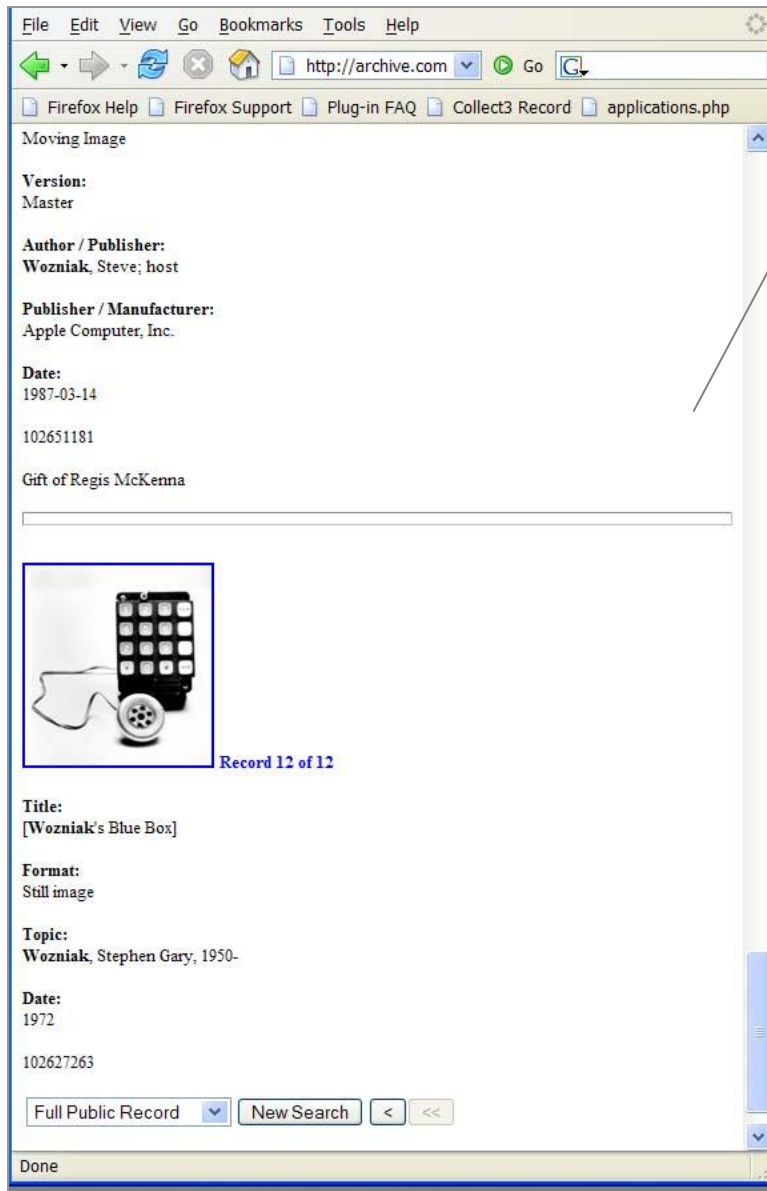
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The Computer History Museum catalogs and digitizes its collections continuously, so check back often. We hope you enjoy learning about computing history through our collections.

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web – catalog search



Search 25,000+ catalog records

Approx. 50% of the collection has been catalogued

Related media or digital assets are linked to the database and viewable online

www.computerhistory.org/search

online collections

COMPUTER HISTORY MUSEUM

Search

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Collection Reading Room

The Computer History Museum collection includes over 4,000 linear feet of documentation related to the history of computing. Here you can search a small portion of the document collection by subject-specific categories. To search a larger portion of the Museum's document collection as well as objects, software, photographs and films go to: www.computerhistory.org/search

To conduct on-site research please visit: www.computerhistory.org/research

NEW Selling the Computer Revolution
250+ digitized marketing brochures, representing some of the important technologies, companies, and applications in computing from 1948 to 1988.

Stretch Collection
900+ digitized historical materials related to the IBM 7030 ("Stretch") computer project from 1955 to 1961.

Reference Library
3,000+ records in the Museum's reference library.

The documents on this site are for research purposes only, for use please refer to: www.computerhistory.org/copyright

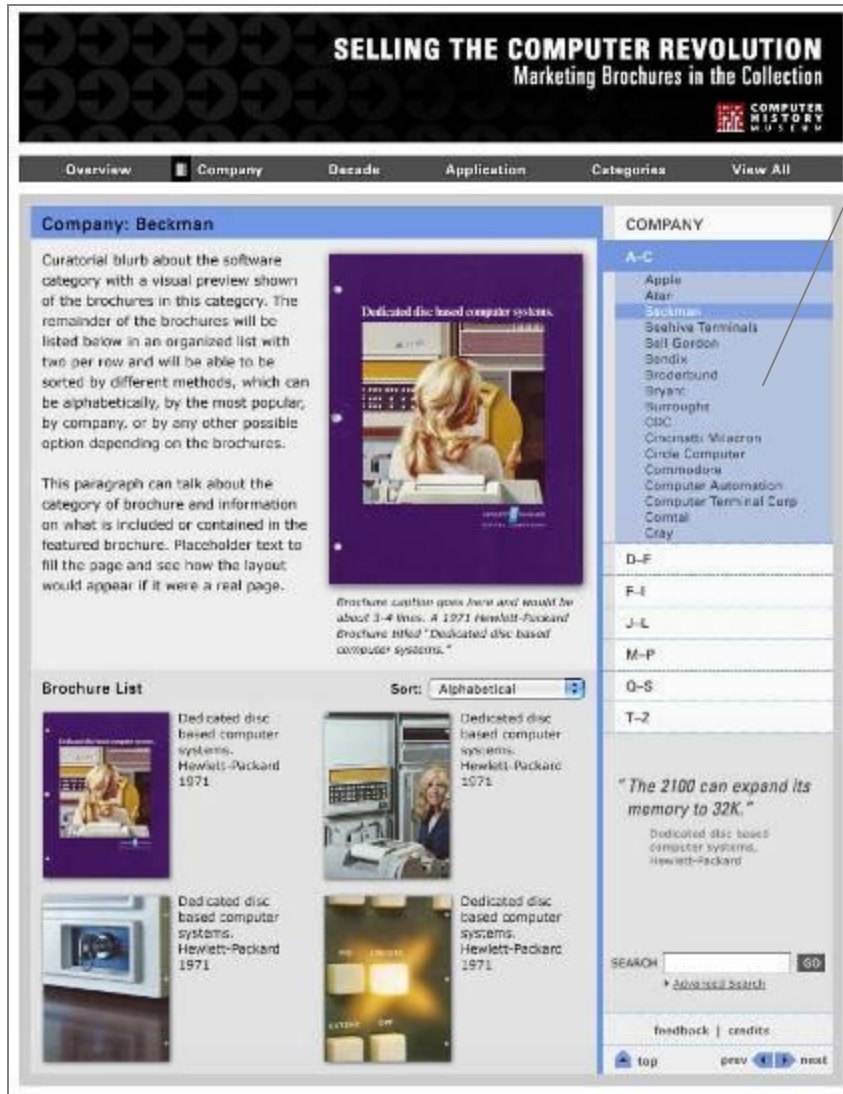
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The reading room provides access to special archival collections

www.computerhistory.org/collections/readingroom

online collections



Selling the Computer Revolution

Launched March 2006

261 brochures or 2,800+ digitized pages

Visitors can view catalog record or launch PDF

www.computerhistory.org/brochures

online exhibitions



MASTERING THE GAME

A History of Computer Chess

Home Opening Moves Middle Game Chess for Everyone Endgame Collection Forum

Opening Moves: Origins of Computer Chess

The late 1940s was the era of the first primitive electronic computers, initially developed for wartime applications. As more powerful machines were built, scientists realized that they could apply them to other complex problems. Rapid progress led to predictions that computers would think, speak and perform human, or even superhuman tasks.

"Thinking machines" excited the popular and scientific imagination. If a computer could play chess, then other problems that seemed to require human intelligence might also be solved. In a 1949 paper, computer pioneer Claude Shannon said of programming a computer to play chess that "Although of no practical importance, the question is of theoretical interest, and it is hoped that this problem will act as a wedge in attacking other problems of greater significance."



enlarge | caption

Because computing power was limited, programs in the late 1950s could only play at a basic level. It was in this environment, however, that scientists developed the fundamental techniques for evaluating chess positions and for searching possible moves and counter-moves. By the end of the 1960s, computer chess programs were good enough to occasionally win against amateur players.

Related Collection Materials

Documents



A short descriptive caption can fit here and include the most important information

view pdf (3 MB)



A short descriptive caption can fit here and include the most important information

view pdf (2 MB)

more documents

Images



A short descriptive caption can fit here and include the most important information

view



A short descriptive caption can fit here and include the most important information

view

more images

Artifacts



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view



A short descriptive caption can fit here and include the most important information

view

more artifacts

Oral Histories



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listen read



A short descriptive caption can fit here and include the most important information

listen read

more oral histories

Moving Images



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watch read



A short descriptive caption can fit here and include the most important information

watch read

more moving images

Software



A short descriptive caption can fit here and include the most important information

view pdf (3 MB)



A short descriptive caption can fit here and include the most important information

view pdf (3 MB)

more software

feedback

credits

email this site

top

2.6 OPENING MOVES

- 2.1 Early Theorists
- 2.2 First Tests
- 2.3 Minimax and Alpha-Beta Pruning
- 2.4 Getting Going
- 2.5 Chess Software Basics

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SEARCH GO

Advanced Search

"Machines will be capable, within twenty years, of doing any work that a man can do."

Herbert Simon, psychologist and artificial intelligence pioneer in 1955

Complementary online version of chess exhibit with in-depth content; prototype for future online exhibits

www.computerhistory.org/chess

how do you exhibit software?



not like this

object display – low budget



object display – high budget



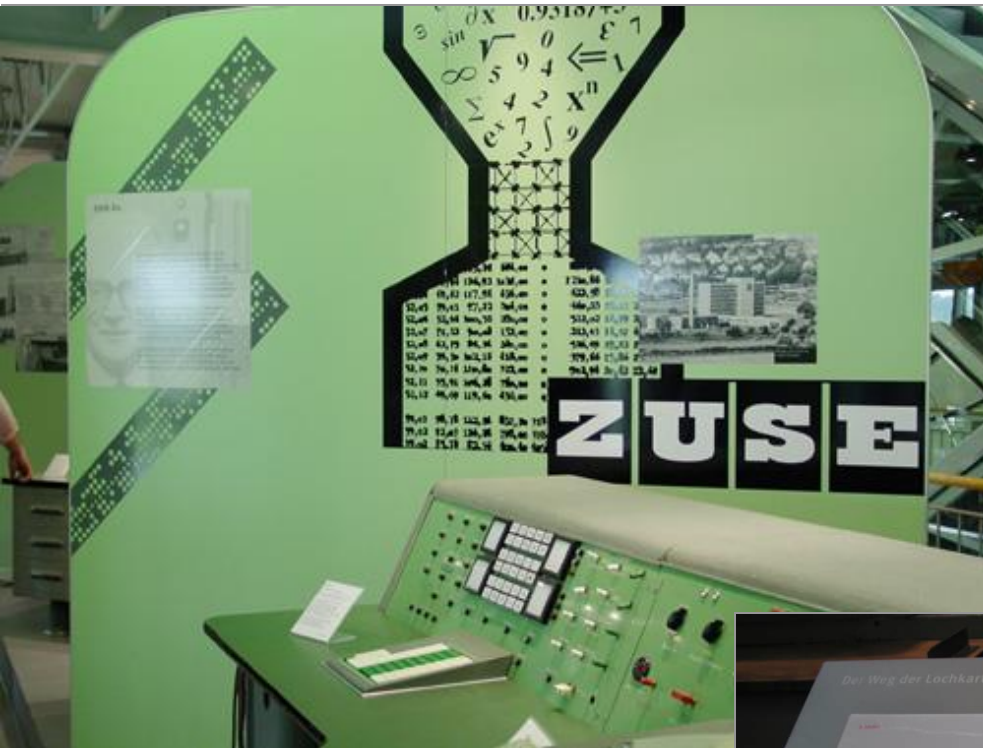
concept-based exhibits

Is this problem unique? There are plenty of narrative or concept-based exhibition topics that don't rely on objects as the primary mode of communication, like....

- Ecology
- Pollution
- Human Biology
- Civil Rights
- News/Media
- Tolerance
- Einstein

Good exhibitions tell stories; we need to tell the story of software

graphics/context



recreated environments



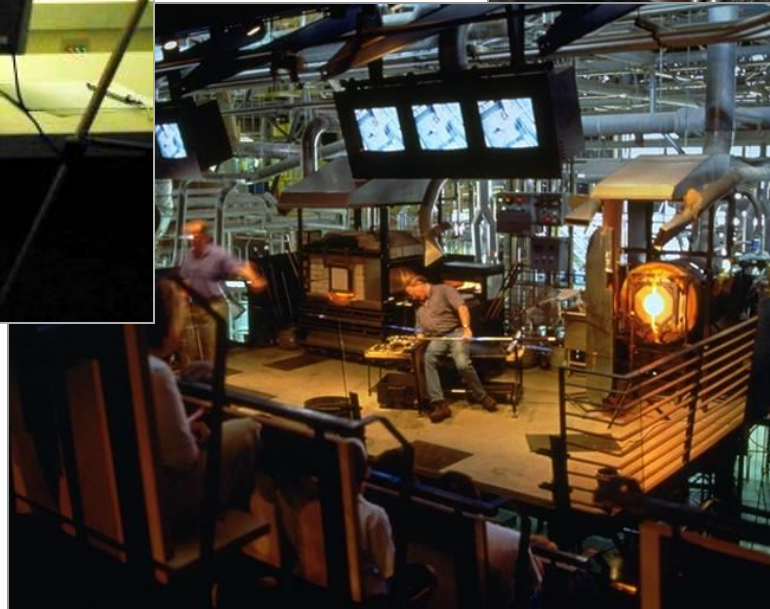
hands-on interactives

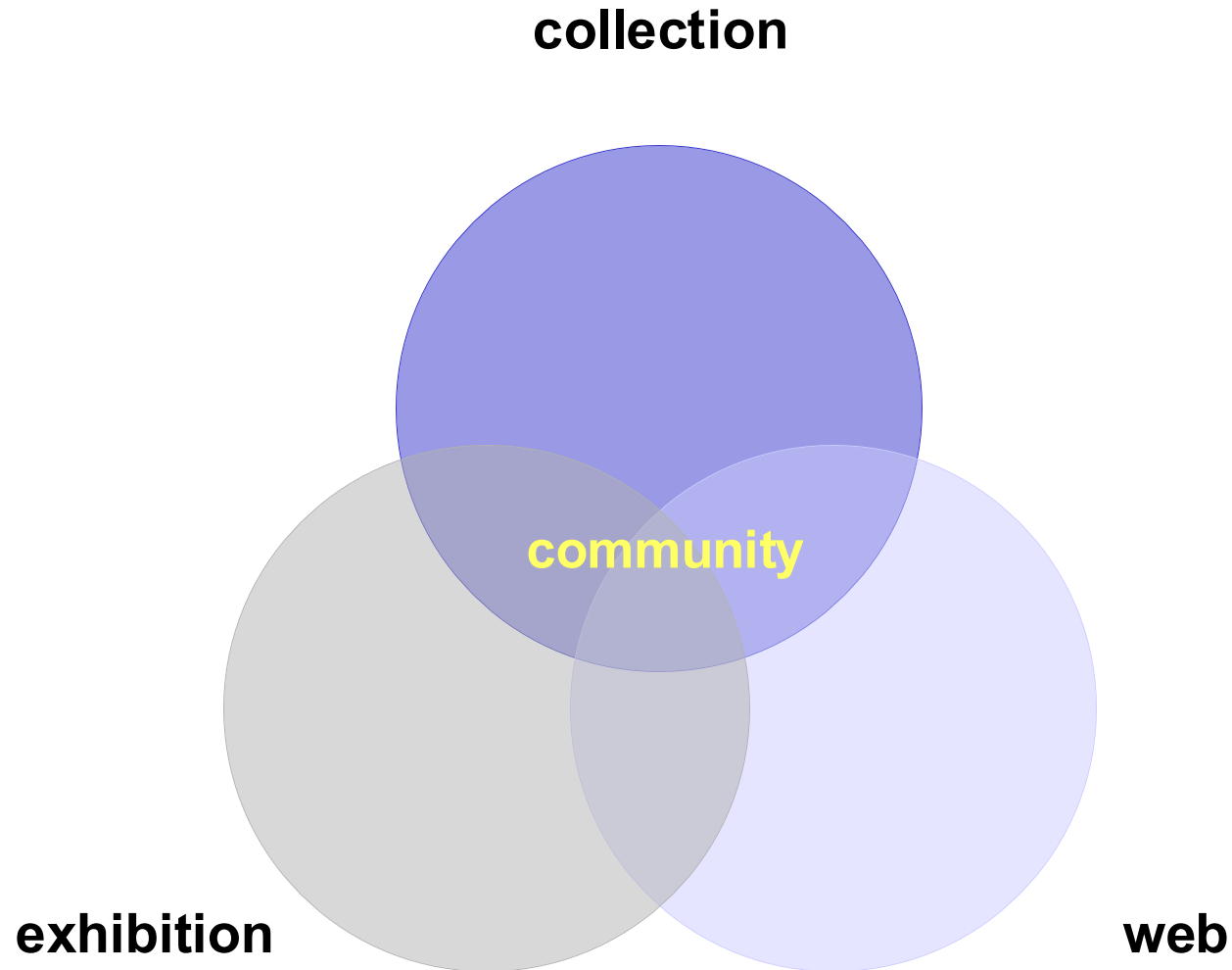


multimedia



demonstrations





CHM Mission:

To preserve and present for posterity the artifacts and stories of the information age.

But for whom....specifically? Posterity is a vague sort of audience.

Our audience or community are people high-school age and above; this captures a broad range of people from the general public, some with little knowledge of computing history to experts and researchers with a deep and diverse understanding of our story.

However we can't be all things to all people; my question today is how do we best serve our community given our resources are not unlimited?

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Finally, what does this mean specifically for software preservation and access?

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