Harvard University Archivists' Toolkit Multiple Extent plug-in

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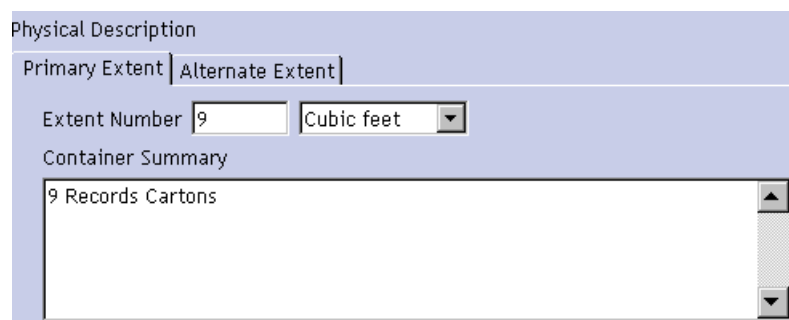
Introduction

Description of Multiple Extent functionality

Independent of collection size, archivists count and report on a variety of container and media types as they manage, store, and seek to understand the nature of their collections and meet preservation and access challenges.

In answer to this need, Harvard developed a two-fold approach in the Archivists' Toolkit. First, we re-labeled the AT default extent as "Primary extent." Second, we developed a plug-in* to allow multiple alternate statements of extent and labeled this "Alternate extent." (Figure 1) The alternate extent statements have the same data elements as the default AT extent statements, but the alternate extents have a separate drop-down list of extent types. (Figure 2) Alternate extents are not required, but multiple alternate extents (Figure 3) may be applied to an accession or resource record.

 Figure 1.

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* Harvard adopted a plug-in created at Brigham Young University (BYU); we are grateful for their contribution.
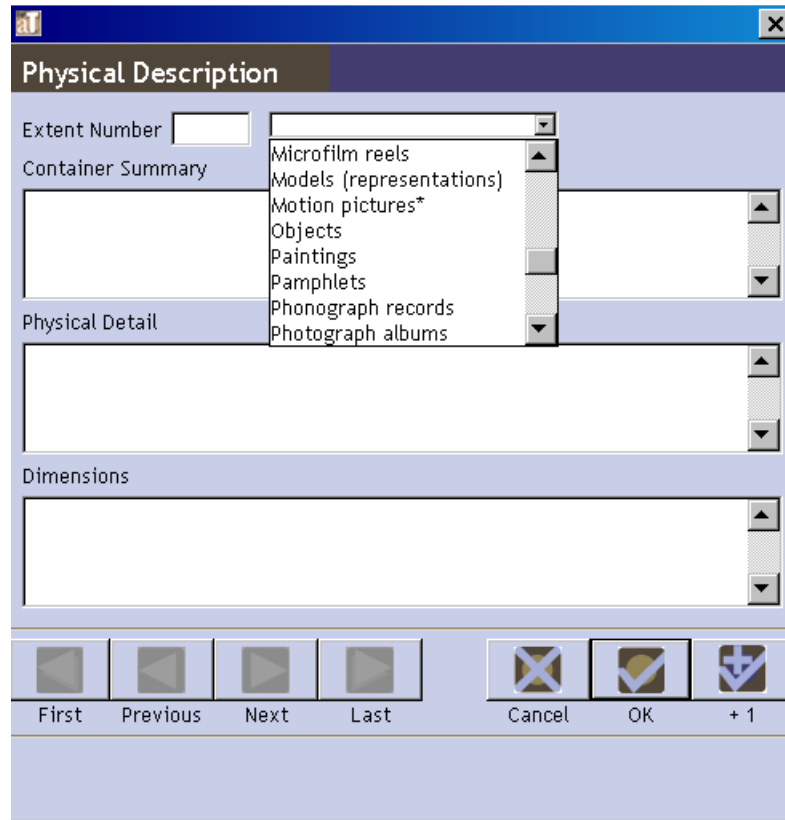
Figure 2.

Figure 3.

Origin and Rationale

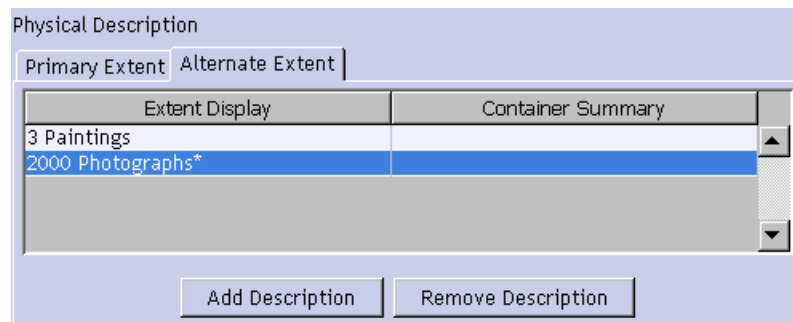Harvard University began using the Archivists Toolkit as a production system in January 2009. The focus of early implementation by five repositories was accessioning. Sharing one database required agreement on a variety of metadata constraints.

The most significant agreement was on units of measurement. Without compatible collection metrics, cooperative projects and planning would be impossible. Each

repository had its own methods: some recorded volume in cubic feet or linear feet, and many maintained container or item counts such as number record cartons, document boxes, folders, volumes, rolled items, audiocassettes, videorecordings, etc.

Harvard AT implementers agreed on the importance of recording a single physical extent--in a word--footage. The rule governing expressions of this extent is that they must be convertible to linear feet. Initially, we had only two values in the AT drop-down menu for "extent type," linear feet and cubic feet. The addition of a repository located in Europe prompted us to add "linear meters" to this list.

Our discussion of extent made it clear that that we needed to record both aggregate extents and aggregate counts of other physical aspects of collections. While the original AT functionality provided a free text area called "container summary" in which archivists could record alternative expressions of extent, we needed a more controlled and reportable home for this data.

Community discussion among archivists and preservation specialists resulted in a list of alternate extent types (see appendix A) that can be amended through the AT client as needed. Some items on this list, such as photographs, are starred, indicating that Harvard archivists have agreed to record at least an estimated count of these media in all new accessions. Other items on the list were requested by at least one participating repository. The rule governing whether or not items may be included in this list is very broad--some repository needs to count it. As for rules on the form that items in this list take, we consulted controlled vocabulary lists (AAT, LCSH) and decided on the simplest controlled form to resolve conflicts.

Counts are not exclusive. That is, the same material may be counted in two different categories. For example, a collection that includes 10 photograph albums each of which contains 100 photographs could result in two alternate extents: 1000 photographs and 10 photo albums.

Section 1: Database administrator tasks

Follow these 3 steps for prepping the AT database for the multiple extent plug-in:

1. Insert a new row in the LookupList table in your AT database for the new "Alternate Extent type" list, as follows:

   insert into LookupList

   (version,lastUpdated,created,lastUpdatedBy,createdBy,listName,listType,pairedValues,restrictToNmtoken)\

       VALUES ('14',CURDATE(),CURDATE(),'','','Alternate Extent type','1','b','b');

2. Add a new list to the lookupListValues.xml as follows:

   <list name="Alternate Extent type" listType="1">

       <usage className="org.archiviststoolkit.model.ArchDescriptionPhysicalDescriptions"

   field="extentType"/>

       <value>Audiocassettes</value>

       <value>Audiotapes</value>

   ... your other values go here ...

   </list>

3. Run the Archivist's Toolkit Maintenance Program

   - Select "Utilities" under "Choose Operation"
   - Supply db admin username/password
   - Supply superuser (with level 5 access) AT user
   - Select "Import Lookup Lists" from the "Select Utility" dropdown (you will be prompted to browse to a file to upload)
   - Choose "LookupListValues.xml" in your AT conf directory.

Section 2: Client configuration tasks

Once the lookup list is established by the system administrator, it can be configured through the client just like any other lookup list.

1. Log in as a level-5 (superuser)

2. Add or remove values from the list

   - Click on "Setup"
   - Select "Lookup lists" from the drop-down menu
   - Select "Alternate extent type" from among the list names
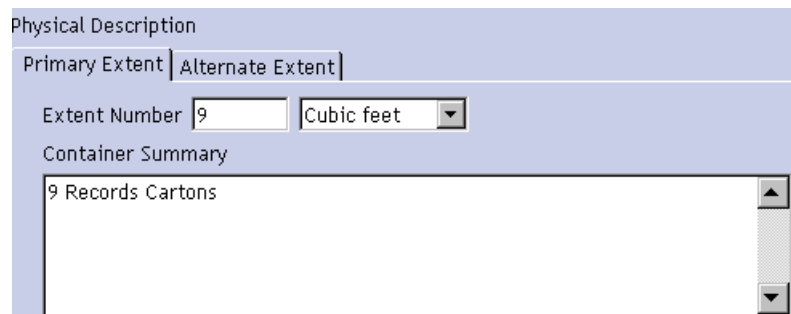   - Use the buttons to add or remove items from the list

Section 3: Client installation tasks

There are three separate plug-ins related to the multiple extent functionality, each with its own purpose. Depending on your local implementation and use of the multiple extent data, the first may be the only plug-in you need.

1. Save the "Alternate Extent" tool to your computer
   Purpose: Provides a place for repositories to count selected formats, genres, media, and types of containers in accession and in resource records.
   - Download: multipleExtent.zip
   - Save it in the plug-in subdirectory of your Archivists Toolkit program files. For most users, this will be C:\Program Files\Archivists' Toolkit 2.0\plugins
   - There is no need to extract the zipped files

2. If you will want to include multiple extents in EAD exported from the AT, save the "Multiple Extent Import/Export" tool
   Purpose: Enables inclusion of multiple extent information in EAD exports of resource records.
   - This is BYU's [import/export plugin](#) from the Archivists' Toolkit web site
     (Text version of link:
     http://archiviststoolkit.org/sites/all/modules/pubdlcnt/pubdlcnt.php?file=http://archiviststoolkit.org/sites/default/files/MultipleDateAndPhysDescImportExport.zip&nid=164)
   - Save it to the plug-in subdirectory of your Archivists Toolkit program files. For most users, this will be C:\Program Files\Archivists' Toolkit 2.0\plugins
   - There is no need to extract the zipped files

Section 4: Sample user documentation for multiple extent in accessions

If the multiple extent enhancement has been correctly installed on your computer, you will see two options for entering extents.

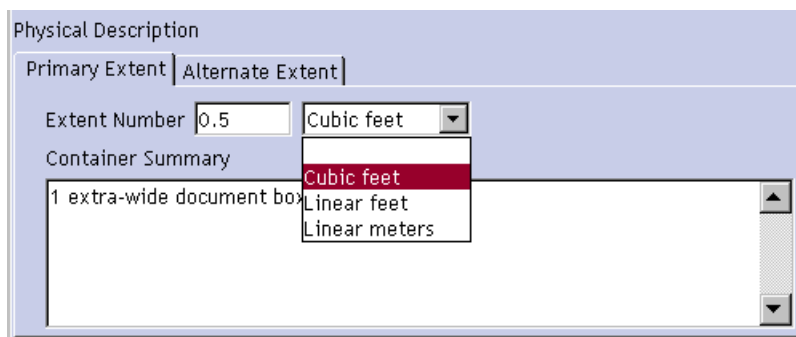Content of Primary and Alternate Extents for Accessions

Analog material:

- In all instances, include a primary extent. If any of the accession contains computer storage disks, reels of motion picture film, photographs, sound recordings, or video tapes, count or estimate the number of items. You may choose to count or estimate more specific formats (e.g. phonograph records instead of sound recordings, hard drives instead of computer disks).

Electronic resources:

- If computer files were received on media, include the physical footage of the media in the overall size of the accession. Additionally, count or estimate the number of media (i.e. count of computer disks) and record this as an alternate extent. Optionally, include the size of the data, or an estimate of the size of the data, in gigabytes as an additional alternate extent.
- If the files or data were transferred electronically and there is no analog (and therefore physically measurable) part of the resource or accession, record a negligible extent (e.g. .001 foot). This is necessary because AT will not permit a physical extent of 0. One-one thousandth of a foot will not have an impact on overall statistics.
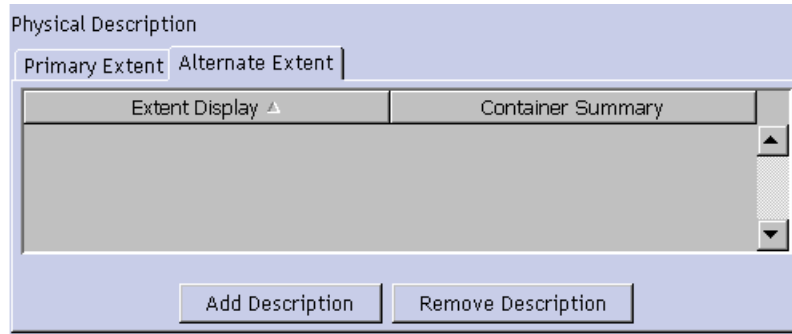
Data Entry of Primary and Alternate Extents

1. Enter a whole or decimal number for the primary extent.
2. From the drop-down menu, select the type of measurement.
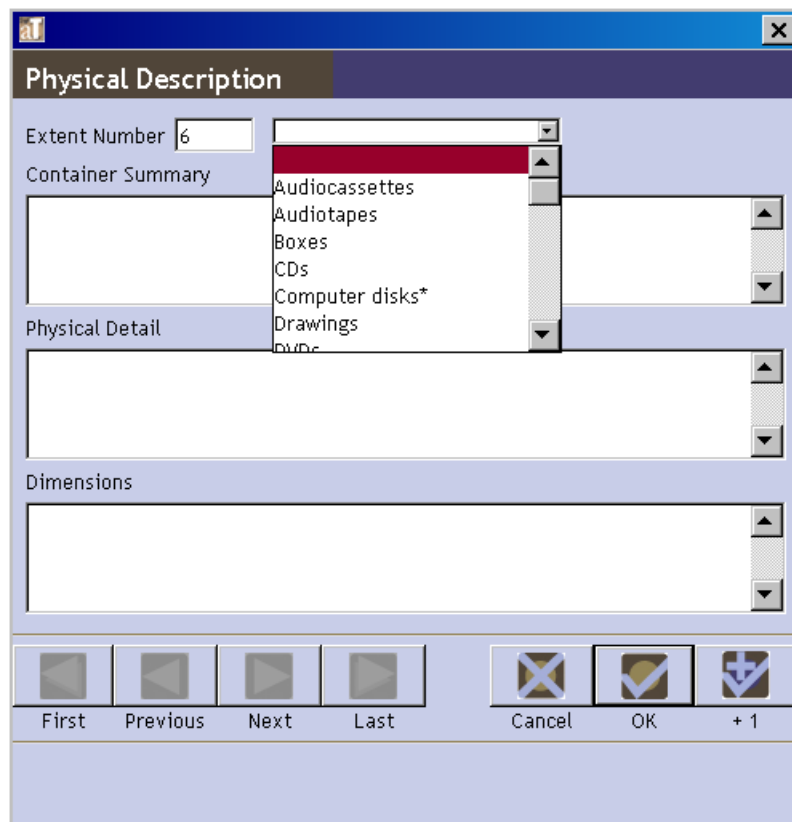3. You may note additional specifics about the material or its housing in the "Container Summary" area.
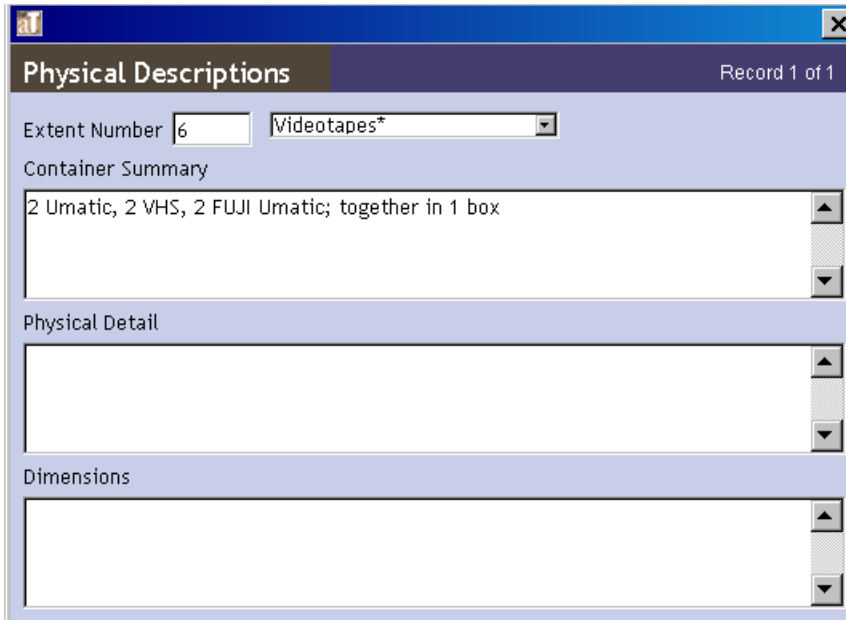

4. Click on the "Alternate extent" tab

5. Click on the "Add Description" button
   An input window will open
6. Enter a whole or decimal number for the first alternate extent
7. Select the type of measurement from the drop-down list

8. You may note additional specifics about the material or its housing in the "Container Summary," "Physical detail," and "Dimensions" areas

9. Click on "OK" if there are no more alternate extent measurements
10. Click on "+1" to add additional extent measurements
11. You can open and edit the alternate extent it by selecting it and double-clicking on it
12. You can add more alternate extents by clicking on the "Add Description" button
13. You can delete and additional extent by selecting it then clicking on "Remove Description"
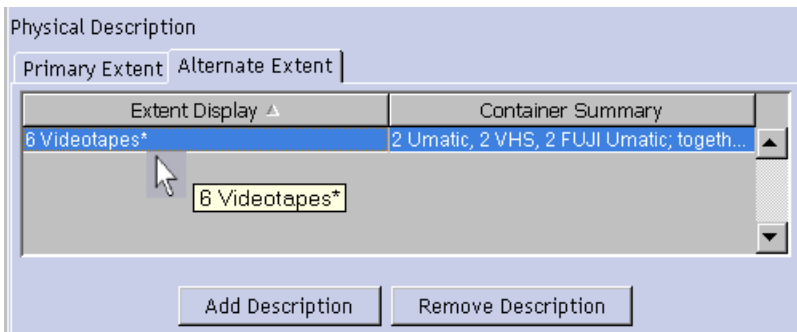
Appendix: Harvard alternate extent types as of July 2011

Audiocassettes
Audiotapes
Boxes
CDs
Computer disks*
Drawings
DVDs
Envelopes
Feet of textual materials
Floppy disks
Folders
Framed items
Gigabytes*
Glass negatives
Hard drives
Lantern slides
Microfiche
Microfilm reels
Motion pictures*
Objects
Paintings
Pamphlets
Phonograph records
Photograph albums
Photographs*
Portfolios (groups of works)
Posters
Prints
Rolls
Scrapbooks
Slides
Sound recordings*
Square roll storage boxes
Tubes
Videotapes*
Volumes