

Maximizing Use of TMG

Lessons Learned (Discussion by Meeting Participants)

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If you had to go back, what would you do differently in TMG?

- Select a simpler program to suit needs (didn't realize the learning curve involved)
- Learn to use sources before entering data
- Not bring in files by other people, cleanup a nightmare
- Migrate data into a separate project and use as a reference guide. Enter this data manually into a new project

With your experience now, what do you consider important from the get-go?

- Getting sources sorted out
- Use sources from the beginning
- Decide what aspects of TMG you want to use as it is one of the most powerful programs
- Keep on learning and determine what new features to incorporate
- Learn before doing

With your experience now, what do you consider important from the get-go?

- Get a handle on TMG's terminology to avoid confusion
- Use TMG's Learning CDs
- Make use of experience by other TMG user group members (on site visits, etc.)

If you started out using TMG by migrating your data from another program, what tasks would you do first?

- Create flags to indicate what data needs cleaning
- Note that data can be cleaned up in stages
- Start with sources. Also use source value to determine which ones you want to go back and look at
- Make note of information to be cleaned up in reminder field (a field that can be edited)
- Make use of description in Flags so that you know how the flag was used

What have you had to go back and redo? Should this have been set up carefully at the beginning?

- Would have paper documents numbering in filing cabinet correspond to the TMG Reference Field
- Scan all paper documents and link in TMG so that you have everything with you
- Use a systemic method of organizing material such as the one promoted by Jane Down or Rick Roberts
- Suggestion made that family trees from other individuals be put in a separate project and cite information from this globally. The project would be gotten rid of when this data is incorporated with valid sources

What have you had to go back and redo? Should this have been set up carefully at the beginning?

- Remember that any family trees brought in will need sources. Make sure it's what you want before bringing it into your project. It can be a lot of work to add sources to this additional information
- Make note of the last ID number used before bringing in someone else's data so that you know where it began

If you are using Second Site, what would you do differently in TMG to improve SS

- Comment made that it was so long ago that they started with it they weren't sure what they'd change in TMG
- Most were using SS to identify what needed to be cleaned up. It was easier to see on one screen. In TMG you would need to run reports to see data and then read through.
- Examine exhibits page so they don't show up as captions
- Point made that SS was an excellent way of sharing data with people (on CD, via Drop Box, etc.)

What recommendations would you make on handling images?

- Make them all external
- Use David Walker's standard for sizes
- Prefix exhibits with TMG's individual ID numbers
- Have different sub-folders for baptisms, deaths, etc.
- Incorporate a letter code for different kinds of images (Vital data, photos, newspapers, etc.) in combination with individual IDs as part of the filename
- Avoid the use of accents, dashes, etc. in filenames. Initially caused problems in Website server where site resided and files had to be renamed

What recommendations would you make on handling sources?

- Take a course on sources/citations before starting to use TMG
- Remember that sources set the pattern for everything
- Make use of citation tools like Elizabeth Shown Mill's works such as "Evidence Explained"
- Important to use sources in a way so that you can find the source again and so that someone else can trace where you found the data
- Mistake to add people without sources. Can't trust the data

What recommendations would you make on handling sources?

- When using websites or databases such as Ancestry, indicate the date you accessed the data
- Make sure emails receive source information
- Some people placed emails in supplementary source and scanned the image in
- Keep images of your source information in TMG so that there is no ambiguity on the actual source

Is it necessary to consider how data is structured in TMG so that data can be exported (into another program, etc.?)

- Most haven't worried about it
- Most imported files from another program so it wasn't a consideration
- Point made that you always lose some data by importing it
- Most didn't think they'd be exporting it into another program. They would work with the current version of TMG that was available