If it’s been broken, why should we fix it?

Technical Debt, Stakeholder Engagement, and Emotional Labor

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A Little Background:
25 Years of Digital Projects

Heinz Electronic Library Interactive Online System

- Launched in 1997
- 800,000 digital images

State of the Art

- 400 DPI, black and white, TIFFs
- No accepted metadata standards
- Everything “custom”
Flash Forward:
The Song Remains the Same

But we liked the old system...

- 400,000 objects
- 24 collections

“State of the Art”

- 600 DPI, black and white, TIFF
- Still no accepted metadata standards
  - EAD “like”, Dublin Core “like”
- Finding aid browse structure, item level description
Problem 1  WE’VE CREATED A MONSTER
Problem 2  A WEED IS STILL A WEED
Solution IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME