Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative

North American Pilot Project
ECAI Project Goals

North American Team

A long-term aim of the North American Team for the Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative is to develop and provide accessible resources for the study and teaching of U.S. religious history.

The resources developed will depict the history, spread, social environment, development of religious communities, and cultural context of religion in North America.
North American Team

Intended Products and Audience

Research and analysis resources will contain:
- Maps
- Text
- Images
- Animation

Targeted users will include:
- Scholars
- Students (both in higher education and K-12)
- Religious leaders, laity, and organizations
- General public
Pilot Project Goals

Evaluation of issues associated with development of ECAI standards and guidelines

- Cartographic
- Data development
- Metadata
- Compatibility with TimeMap
Lessons Learned

Data Issues

Data Availability

Basemaps

Non-digital data

Incomplete coverage

Data Quality

Source documents in multiple formats

Data categories often collected inconsistently

Examples:

- Membership data (reported at different levels of detail)
- Location (circuits vs. individual locations)
Lessons Learned

Data Issues

Quality Control

Accuracy of data entry

Availability of expert knowledge
Lessons Learned

GIS Issues

Scale
Change in reference geographies over time
Data representation
   Cartographic display
Normalization
Future Issues

Funding

Research assistance

Expert consultants

Technical expertise

Data processing

Many datasets of value to scholars are not available in digital form. Making them usable within the ECAI framework will require acquisition of significant resources.