What about Swivel?

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What is Swivel?
Typical Situation

- Consumer Expenditure (CEX) Survey
- Very small part of regular management and marketing class assignments
- Native presentation sub-optimal for comparing CEX columns, e.g. expenditure patterns for different age groups for different products
CEX Table Output

- Each column is separated into a different table
- To create a single table with all selected columns will mean time spent with a spreadsheet program by librarian/instructor/students
- Effort far exceeds points in assignment
- Can Swivel bypass this part of the process?
Swivel Upload Requirements

- By “data”, they mean “table”
- All relevant information must be in a single table, with representation on each row or column
- Additional content, like footnotes, have no space in Swivel
Foreshadowing

• Data files should contain data
• http://blog.plover.com/misc/census-data.html
CEX Flat Files Look Like This

- CEX files are relational, e.g. not all relevant information is in one table
- Footnote codes are stored as numbers, but they aren’t data and they are in the file
- Wackiness in the series_id makes cleanup on this file more hassle than it should be.
What if the data were ready/easy?

Cons
• Layout, labeling
• Retaining changes to graphs
• Export of graphs
• No API (yet)
Graph Example 1

- Title becomes “Qtr3”
- Metadata separated from graph image
Graph Example 2

- Changes to graphs aren’t retained
- This one always reverts to bar graph
- KML file loses data; only keeps colors
So, what about Swivel?

• As is, extremely limited application in an academic context
  - Too large a gap between what Swivel accepts and what is available
  - Swivel positions itself as a destination; academic institutions need tools that can be integrated into their environment
  - Metadata and export problems with graphs
What might make a difference?

- Swivel API that integrates with course software like Moodle
- Data files that contain only data
- Semantic markup of data
Thank You

- Amy West
- IM: umdatalib (AIM, MSN, Yahoo, Jabber.org)
- http://www.lib.umn.edu/data