

Follow up Questions
Introduction to Caring for Digital Materials
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Questions

Q: Can we see some readable examples of inventories?

A: Yes, links to sample documents have been posted here:

<http://www.connectingtocollections.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Webinar-1-Sample-Documents.pdf>

Q: Advantages and disadvantages of using open source software for content management systems? In this case, for a small institution with limited IT staff and funding needed for customization?

A: Open source software can be good, or it can be frustrating, or both. It's important to look at how large the community of users is and whether you can get help from friends at other institutions. Also consider how well-documented the project is; some software is well written with great instructions for how to use it; other software is, well, not. For a small institution, doing extensive customization of any software is probably not a very good idea, as you may need to do it over again for the next version of the software.

One idea for saving money is to try to collaborate with another institution. Perhaps you can use their system; there are, for example, collaborative digitization projects in most states (see <http://www.lyrasis.org/Products-and-Services/Preservation-Services/Collaborative-Digitization-Programs-in-the-United-States.aspx> for some links). Or, do the math for both purchasing software and purchasing customizations and support, and make the case to your funders.

Q: We have DV-Cam tapes that were digitized. The tapes are cataloged. Recommend creating separate records for the digitized versions?

A: For the digital materials inventory, put them in the same record in the spreadsheet. I would put the digitized files as an entry, and in the description you can note where the originals are stored, when they were digitized, the original format, etc. You probably only need one catalog record for both the original and digitized copies, though it is great to have the link to the digitized copy in the catalog record, if possible.

Q: Perhaps a handout that shows how DUBLIN CORE metadata can be utilized and uploaded as a CSV file?

A: It is very useful to map Dublin Core metadata to your categories/spreadsheet columns. Everyone's categories will be a bit different, but I'll give it a shot with my inventory for example purposes. Try this with your homework question for a challenge! There will be more about this in session 3.

dc.title.collection ; dc.identifier.collection ; dc.title.series; dc.description ; dc.description.expanded ;
dc.location.boxfolder ; dc.date.created ; dc.rights

Q: As an academic institution, we have digital materials that are covered by FERPA. Preservation is important for these records, but due to privacy the records don't end up in the archives. Should archives still inventory these records?

A: Yes, all digital content should be included in the inventory. You can then include information about privacy, use, and disposition in the inventory --and use this info to inform decisions on how to handle the records, whether to put into digital repository, etc.

Now, if these records never come to you and are not your responsibility, you may decide they are outside the scope of your digital preservation program.

Q: Does anyone have legal resources for knowledge about copyright issues?

A: There's a very good free e-book that you can use for some information:

Peter B. Hirtle, Emily Hudson, and Andrew T. Kenyon, COPYRIGHT AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS: GUIDELINES FOR DIGITIZATION FOR U.S. LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES, AND MUSEUMS. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Library Press, 2009.

http://ecommons.cornell.edu/bitstream/1813/14142/2/Hirtle-Copyright_final_RGB_lowres-cover1.pdf

It also contains some information about privacy rights (see the FERPA question). Peter Hirtle frequently responds to answers on the Archives & Archivists (A&A) list run by the Society of American Archivists: http://www.archivists.org/listservs/arch_listserv_terms.asp. Note that copyright varies from country to country; you may need to consult with a lawyer or other legal representative who is familiar with your particular institution.

Q: Can you suggest resources for Digital Preservation Programs regarding accessibility standards (hard of hearing, blind) ?

A: This is an evolving area. A recent U.S. District Court ruling affirms that digitizing books for people with print disabilities and providing the content in an accessible format is not a violation of copyright law (<http://www.districtdispatch.org/2012/10/lca-comments-on-authors-guild-v-hathitrust-decision/>). The Internet Archive has done a great deal for making books and print materials available in the DAISY text-to-speech format used by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped at the Library of Congress. However, there is much more to be done.

If you work at a federal institution, you may need to consider Section 508 accessibility issues before making any material available over the Internet; many states have adopted similar rules. Ask the vendors who supply your systems if they are Section 508-compliant. Generally speaking, the best way to handle accessibility is to provide excellent metadata, including full descriptions of images, audio, and video, and to provide the full-text of books and other textual materials, even when all you have is uncorrected OCR.

Q: need \$ on my side

Q: staff is a challenge for an all volunteer organization that is often unskilled

Q: Re: the "dream team" poll. I would welcome any suggestions for coping when one doesn't have a dream team. What if IT and resource allocators aren't keen or don't understand?

Q: What are some of the Carrots we can present?

Q: What if your staff is only 4 people. Total. With no IT other than the contracted internet provider?

A: For all of these, this is where your creativity comes in to play. You must make your case to IT and resource allocators. Gather your information in your inventory to make this case. For example, we have 100 hours of oral history information that is fragile and may be lost. Or, we have legal requirements to keep documents, or they are central to the mission. Find what will sway them, then do the foot work to figure out what steps to take (even first steps are great! You don't have to figure out the whole plan; maybe get agreement that you do need a plan first.) For IT, that is a challenge. Be prepared to educate them as much as you can, and listen to what they may have to offer you. Develop relationships.

Also, The final session “Partner to preserve: Digital preservation networks and collaboration” may give more ideas about collaboration.

As for carrots, what will work for you? Do your resource allocators want to see things on the web? Insist when you do so that you also follow a preservation steps. Do they want to know that you are adhering to community best practices? Get that documentation under control. Digital preservation can be a very hard sell and involves lots of explaining to others, even if you are not an ‘expert.’ You can also try the ‘worst case scenario’ argument...everyone has lost digital camera photos, or has old floppy discs. Personalize the issue for them. Good luck!