

Looking After The Bits: Sustaining Your Digital Community Archive

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Introduction

- What's in your Digital Archive?
- How to Keep it Safe?
- Web Archiving
- Other "Digital Stuff"
- Questions



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What's in your Digital Archive?



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The Stuff (Formats)

- Probably the usual suspects
 - MS Office documents, PDFs, JPEGs etc.
 - Digital Audio or Video recordings
 - NOTE - VHS and Audio Cassettes are not digital and need special and separate consideration.
- Also consider context as well as content
 - Email, Social Media Accounts, Blogposts
 - NOTE Social Media can bring challenges
 - No such thing as a free lunch.



How to Keep it Safe?



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Core Digital Preservation Principles

- Be organised
 - Can someone understand it in your absence?
- Know what you have got!
 - Know what it is (describe content or subject matter).
 - Know what it is (identify type or format).
- Keep the stuff safe!
 - Know where it is (what media, and where stored).
 - Multiple copies, different storage, different places
 - E.g. Hard Disk on main PC, Removable Drive and Cloud



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Practicalities.

- Organise and Arrange Content
 - Store centrally (if you can) makes management easier
 - Structure storage, good folder names, “self describing”
- Multiple Copies
 - LOCKSS (Lots Of Copies Keeps Stuff Safe) Principle
 - Manage Media - Check health of copies periodically
- Example
 - Copy on PC, Copy on Laptop, Copy in cloud (Dropbox)
- Local copy of core Social Media content



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Web Archiving



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Web Archiving (1)

- Web presence is now ubiquitous.
- Design your Web presence for preservation
 - See [NRS Guidance](#)
- Select your platform carefully
 - Social Media Platforms are VERY hard to preserve
 - Sophisticated CMS can be a barrier (meaningless URLs)
 - Think “WordPress” rather than “Facebook”, “SharePoint” or “Drupal”



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Web Archiving (2)

- From Andy Jackson (British Library - Web Archive team)

“One aspect of digital preservation is helping people use more sustainable foundations for their digital creations. You can get a long, long, way with static HTML these days.”
- Nominate website(s) to be archived (for free)
 - [Internet Archive](#) and/or [British Library](#)
 - Ideally both – remember LOCKSS!
 - You can see *what* has been preserved



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Other “Digital Stuff”



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File Formats

- The Digital Preservation mantra “It Depends”!
- Beware the format that solves all problems
 - PDF(a) - NOT a panacea (but it is good for some things)
- Migration - discard the original at your peril!
 - Migrations always loose data
 - “You don’t what you’ve got till its gone.”
 - E.g. Word -> PDF loses edit history & internal metadata
- Look at the economics of scale and simplicity of format when choosing (if you can).



Thank You

Questions



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