BUILDING A COMMUNITY: DIGITAL PRESERVATION ASSESSMENT

APRIL 17, 2019

ANN MARIE WILLER, DIRECTOR OF PRESERVATION SERVICES
NEDCC NORTHEAST DOCUMENT CONSERVATION CENTER
NEH GRANT AWARD (JAN 2017 – DEC 2018)
APRIL 2017
TASK FORCE MEETING – DEVELOP FRAMEWORK

- Caitlin Christian-Lamb, Associate Archivist, Davidson College
- Nick Connizzo - VT State Archives, Digital Archivist
- George Coulbourne - LoC, Exec Program Officer OSI
- Dyani Feige - CCAHA, Director of Pres Services
- Frances Harrell, NEDCC
- Jenny Mullins - Dartmouth, Digital Preservation Librarian
- Annie Peterson, LYRASIS
- Tom Clareson, LYRASIS
- Leigh Grinstead, LYRASIS
- Jaime Schumacher - POWRR Director of Scholarly Communications at NIU
- Nichole Shea - BPL, Statewide Metadata Coordinator
- Lance Stuchell - Digital Preservation Librarian, Univ of Michigan
- Sam Meister - Educopia, Preservation Communities Manager
PRE-VISIT QUESTIONNAIRE

Digital Preservation Assessment

This questionnaire will prepare you for the Digital Preservation Assessment, inform the digital preservation assessor(s) prior to the site visit, and highlight areas that require specific attention during the visit.

Please fill out the questionnaire to the best of your ability. As you do so, you will need to identify appropriate staff members who can help you answer the questions. For this reason, we recommend that you begin filling out the questionnaire at least four weeks before the site visit. Please send the completed questionnaire to your assessor(s) one week before the visit.

Note: It is important for your consultant to have an accurate understanding of current practice at your institution. Please be as transparent as possible about practices and procedures on a daily basis.

Institution:

Contact person & title:

Street Address:
SITE VISIT

ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

• REVIEW PROJECT GOALS
• 1:1 TIME WITH KEY STAFF
• TOUR COLLECTIONS AND FACILITIES
• GATHER DIGITAL PRESERVATION HISTORY
• DISCUSS CURRENT PRACTICES
• CONNECT WITH KEY ADMINISTRATORS

ASSESSMENT FACETS

• THE ORGANIZATION
• STAFF AND RESOURCES
• POLICY INFRASTRUCTURE
• PROCESSES AND WORKFLOW
• TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES
I. The Institution

A. Organizational Structure

Creating and caring for digital materials and collections over time poses significant challenges and requires a commitment across departments and in all levels of the organization. Having an organizational home for strategic direction is a key first step towards responsible stewardship of digital materials.

An authoritative body that can prioritize and achieve short and medium term goals is important for any organization-wide program; however, the special challenges posed by digital preservation make having a centralized decision making group even more important. The inherent interdisciplinary approach required -- involving input from every group of stakeholders, from IT services to end-users -- and the multi-level decision making that underpins launching and managing a new program makes isolated efforts unsustainable.

Observations & Recommendations
OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Observation: Identifies the risk or good practice

- The mission of the organization does not include mention of collections or their preservation

Recommendation: Identifies a strategy to reduce risk or enhance good practice

- Include preservation, and specifically digital preservation, in mission
ASSESSMENT GOALS

- Validate and document current efforts
- Provide resources
- Involve range of internal stakeholders
- Spark internal change
- Provide a tool for shaping and supporting funding applications
- Help all stakeholders to see digital files as potential collections
SUMMER 2017
ROUND 1 – PILOT FRAMEWORK

- Chicago History Museum
- Denver Water Authority
- Grolier Book Club
- J.C. Smith University
Section 3: Glossary

**Access File**: A compressed version of a digital object intended for access and use by patrons.

**Access Point**: A means through which collections are accessed. In the case of digital collections, this may be a URL.

**Analog Object**: An object that is made of physical material. This term is often used in contrast to the term “digital object.”

**Authenticity Check**: The process of ensuring that a file is what it is expected to be and has not been altered, corrupted, or damaged in any way. Also known as “fixity check.” See: Fixity.

**Backup**: A complete copy of a file that is stored and preserved for the purpose of replacing the master file in the case of data loss.

**Born-Digital**: Describes an object originating in electronic form as opposed to an object originating in an analog, or physical, form.

**Checksum**: A numeric value that is generated and assigned to a digital object and used to validate the object’s integrity.
WINTER 2018
ROUND 2 – INCLUDES OBSERVER & WORKSHOP

• HUNA HERITAGE FOUNDATION
• FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA
• PHILIPS LIBRARY AT PEABODY ESSEX MUSEUM
• NEBRASKA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PEER ASSESSMENT PUBLICATION

WWW.NEDCC.ORG/FREE-RESOURCES/NEDCC-PUBLICATIONS

Or

WWW.NEDCC.ORG/DPA
JULY 2018
DPA TRAINING INSTITUTE
SUMMER – FALL 2018 ASSESSMENTS BY INSTITUTE COHORT

- Colorado College
- Denver Public Library
- Historic Newton (MA)
- Farnsworth Museum and Library (ME)
- Lincoln Center (NY)
- Oklahoma Department of Libraries
- Curtis Institute of Music (PA)
- Vermont Queer Archives
- Henry Sheldon Museum (VT)
- Ripon College (WI)
## Remote “Site Visit”

### Pros
- **No travel costs or limitations**
- **Less intense than a full-day site visit**
- **Easier to include more stakeholders**
- **Can record calls for later reference**
- **No need to see physical collections and spaces**

### Cons
- **Technology limitations – no video**
  - No input from facial expressions
  - Difficult to differentiate speakers
- **Scheduling over multiple days can feel like a longer time commitment for the client**
- **Difficult to know in advance who should be on which call**
- **Relied on consultant’s institutional knowledge**
DIGITAL PRESERVATION ASSESSMENT REPORT
IMMEDIATE IMPACT

• Prompted review and reorganization of all our digital assets
• Led to implementation of consistent back-up procedures
• Provided tangible validation of digital preservation urgency to our management
• Inspired the drafting of separate Mission, Vision, and Designated Community Statements
• Prompted drafting of Digitization Policies & Workflows
• Led to creation of inventory of digital assets on folder level
DIGITAL PRESERVATION ASSESSMENT REPORT
LONG TERM IMPACT

• **IMPLEMENTATION OF DIGITAL PRESERVATION POLICY FOR COLLECTING UNIT AND PARENT ORGANIZATION**

• **ALLOCATION OF SUFFICIENT STAFF TIME AND FUNDS TO DIGITAL PRESERVATION**

• **IMPLEMENTATION OF DIGITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

• **CREATION OF DEDICATED DIGITIZATION WORKSTATION**
NOVEMBER 2018
BUILDING THE COMMUNITY:
A DIGITAL PRESERVATION SYMPOSIUM
Available April 30, 2019

WWW.NEDCC.ORG/FREE-RESOURCES/NEDCC-PUBLICATIONS

Or

WWW.NEDCC.ORG/DPA
FUTURE PUBLICATIONS

Attn: Small or Mid-sized Institutions

Public libraries, historical societies, municipal offices, academic institutions, museums, community-based archives, or similar organizations, we welcome your input for our research project.

NEDCC INVITES YOU TO PARTICIPATE:
A Survey of Digital Activities and Preservation Trends at Small and Mid-sized Institutions - 2018

ABOUT THE PROJECT:
NEDCC is conducting a survey about the digital activities, equipment, and training at organizations with historic collections and permanent records. Your participation in this 20-minute survey will help us improve continuing education and training related to digitization and digital preservation and communicate your needs to grant funders and service providers.

SURVEY:
Available here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/K9G5VSF Please share!
2018 – 2019 PRESENTATIONS
2018 – 2020
WORKSHOPS & WEBINARS

LYRASIS Trending Topics - New Tools for Digital Preservation Assessment and Training

Moving to the Next Step with Digital Preservation: The Digital Preservation Assessment

Frances Harrell
Senior Preservation Specialist

https://www.nedcc.org/preservation-training/training-currentlist#ondemand
HUGE THANKS!

- **National Endowment for the Humanities**
- **LYRASIS**
- **CCAHA**
- **Jessica Bitely, Preservation Manager, Boston Public Library**
- **Frances Harrell, former Senior Preservation Specialist, NEDCC**
- **Annie Peterson, Program Leader, LYRASIS**
- **Kim O’Leary, Technology and Events Coordinator, NEDCC**
- **Our Task Force, Steering Committee, Consultants, and Clients!**