DPC/PADI What's new in digital preservation

A joint service of the Digital Preservation Coalition and PADI

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This is a summary of selected recent activity in the field of digital preservation compiled from the digital-preservation and padiforum-l mailing lists and the Preserving Access to Digital Information (PADI) Gateway.

1. Organisations

1.1 The Digital Preservation Coalition

The Digital Preservation Coalition (DPC) launched its own web site on May 31, 2002. Formerly hosted by the Joint Information Systems Committee, the site provides an online edition of “Preservation Management of Digital Materials: A Handbook” by Maggie Jones and Neil Beagrie, developed by Neil Beagrie and Brett Scillitoe for the Digital Preservation Coalition and including Web Hotlinks and fully updated URLs. Also available is information about the DPC’s missions, goals and principles, its program of work, and its membership and affiliations. Related links, contact information and a list of recent events and events in progress organised by the Digital Preservation Coalition are available.

Among the meeting reports and presentations are those from the DPC forum with industry "Future Research and Development for Digital Asset Preservation," held at Prospect House, London, on 5th June, 2002.

DPC Web Site: http://www.dpconline.org/
Events, reports and presentations: http://www.dpconline.org/graphics/events/

1.2 OCLC/RLG Working Groups

Both joint OCLC/RLG Working Groups have produced final recommendations documents within the last two months.

The final report of the RLG/OCLC Digital Archive Attributes Working Group was released in May 2002. The Working Group’s deliberations and report is in response to the perceived need for "a definition and consensus on the characteristics of a sustainable digital archives for large-scale, heterogeneous collections held by research repositories."
Available in PDF format and entitled “Trusted Digital Repositories: Attributes and Responsibilities” the report may be obtained from the RLG web site: http://www.rlg.org/longterm/repositories.pdf

In June 2002, the OCLC/RLG Preservation Metadata Working Group produced a combined set of proposed metadata elements for OAIS-recommended "Content Information" and "Preservation Description Information" (PDI), sets which had been developed separately through the actions of the Working Group. Published in PDF format, the combined document is entitled "Preservation Metadata and the OAIS Information Model: A Metadata Framework to Support the Preservation of Digital Objects" and is available from the OCLC web site at: http://www.oclc.org/research/pmwg/pm_framework.pdf

1.3 Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC)


2. Projects

2.1 The US National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program (NDIIPP)

The NDIIPP recently launched its own web site at: http://www.digitalpreservation.gov/ndiipp/. The site provides information about the program's mission, advisory board, funding and the Digital Strategy Oversight Group, as well as links to the program's strategic planning directions and a number of papers and reports. Among the reports are a series of background environmental scans by recognised experts in six topic areas in which the Library of Congress "faces collection-management issues: large Web sites, electronic books, electronic journals, digitally recorded sound, digital film, and digital television." The collected papers, including a summary by Amy Friedlander, are also available as a Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) publication,"Building a National Strategy for Preservation: Issues in Digital Media Archiving" at: http://www.clir.org/pubs/abstract/pub106abst.html

2.2 Testbed Digitale Bewaring (Digital Preservation Testbed)

Part of a wider Digitale Duurzaamheid (Digital Longevity) programme, the Digital Preservation Testbed was established by the Dutch Government to research approaches for retaining long-term accessibility to government information. The Testbed's research focuses on four document types (text
documents, email, spreadsheets and databases) using three preservation approaches (migration, emulation, XML) and aims to examine the effectiveness, limitations, costs and potential for application of each approach. Maureen Potter, Experiment Operator with the project, recently provided an update on the project’s progress in RLG DigiNews, describing the work of the Testbed, outlining the aims, experimental methodology and expected deliverables of the project, as well as providing some preliminary findings for text documents and emails:
The web site for the Testbed, in either Dutch or English, may be found by following the links from the parent programme site: http://www.digitaleduurzaamheid.nl/

2.3 Kulturarw3: "New Decree for Kulturarw3"

A special decree by the Swedish government, accepted on May 8, 2002, authorises the Royal Library of Sweden to collect Swedish web sites from the Internet and to allow the public access to the archive within the Library premises. The Royal Library has previously rejected all requests to access the material it has been collecting from the Swedish Web since 1996, as it considered any right to acquire, preserve and make the material available to be only indirectly approved by legislation. A challenge to the legitimacy of the project in 2001 led to the further support and authorisation of the Royal Library's web-archiving operation.

The press release is available at:
http://www.kb.se/Info/Pressmed/Arkiv/2002/020605.htm (Swedish)
http://www.kb.se/Info/Pressmed/Arkiv/2002/020605_eng.htm (English)

3. Events

3.1 Recent Events:

3.1.1 DLM-FORUM 2002 - Access and Preservation of Electronic Information: Best Practices and Solutions
held at Palacio de Congresos de Cataluña, Barcelona, Spain, 7-8 May 2002.
Links to PDF version of conference conclusions, summaries of six Industry White Papers and a speakers book and abstracts is available at:
An event report by Rosilind Johnson was published in Cultivate Interactive, issue 7, July 2002: http://www.cultivate-int.org/issue7/dlm/


A meeting report and presentations from the Digital Preservation Coalition's
3.2 Forthcoming Events:

3.2.1 Society of American Archivists Professional Education Offering: Archival Perspectives in Digital Preservation
19 Aug 2002, Birmingham, Alabama (United States of America)
http://www.archivists.org/prof-education/workshop-detail.asp?id=320

3.2.2 ECDL 2002: 6th European Conference on Research and Advanced Technology for Digital Libraries
16 - 18 Sep 2002, Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome (Italy)
http://www.ecdl2002.org/

3.2.3 La Pérennisation et la Valorisation des Données Scientifiques et Techniques / Ensuring Long-Term Preservation and Adding Value to Scientific and Technical Data
5 - 7 Nov 2002, Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales (CNES), Toulouse (France)
http://www.mediatec-dif.com/pvdst/pvdstfr.html

3.2.4 European Expert Seminar on Methods of Digital Archival Description and Access
21 - 22 Nov 2002, Copenhagen (Denmark)

3.2.5 The 5th International Conference on Asian Digital Libraries - ICADL2002
11 - 14 Dec 2002, Nanyang Technological University (Singapore)

4. Other recent publications


Released as a Draft for Trial Use over the period 1 June 2002 to 31 December 2003, this NISO document (NISO Z39.87-2002 AIIM 20-2001) has been produced "to facilitate the development of applications to validate, manage, migrate and otherwise process images of enduring value" and "to facilitate interoperability between systems, services and software, as well as to support the long-term management of and continuing access to digital image collections". A corresponding XML schema to assist in implementation is available from the Library of Congress at:
http://www.loc.gov/standards/mix/

http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue31/eprint-archives/

Based on the experiences at the universities of Edinburgh and Nottingham in setting up pilot e-print servers, this article provides an account of several practical issues, including document types and formats, submission procedures, metadata standards and digital preservation issues, as well as
encouraging user participation in the archive. The archives were set up and operated using the principles and software tools of the Open Archives Initiative (OAI).

[http://www.dlib.org/dlib/may02/lefurgy/05lefurgy.html](http://www.dlib.org/dlib/may02/lefurgy/05lefurgy.html)

William LeFurgy of the US National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) outlines conditions governing persistence of digital objects, including system architecture and material specification, and suggests a model for future levels of service for digital repositories, considering three levels of tools and processes and three levels of persistence of materials.

[http://www.rlg.org/preserv/diginews/diginews6-3.html#interview](http://www.rlg.org/preserv/diginews/diginews6-3.html#interview)

Brewster Kahle, founder and director of the Internet Archive, discusses the organisational infrastructure, policies and processes of the Internet Archive and the Wayback Machine and touches on various aspects of technical, financial and legal issues in digital archiving.

[http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,7-281852,00.html](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,7-281852,00.html)

A news article from the Times Online, describing the British Library's establishment of a pilot digital store for web-archiving of material of British interest. It sets the initiative in the context of similar efforts in other countries and the technical, economic and intellectual property issues raised by such activity.


A team from the US National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) has produced this recent survey of ideas and practice in digital preservation. It first elaborates the various proposed strategies for digital preservation (including emulation and migration) before introducing a number of projects and case studies from Australia, Europe and North America. This section also describes some of NIST's own digital preservation projects. A final section recommends the development of preservation standards based on XML, and outlines some critical issues that still need to be resolved.


In this paper, Howard Besser of UCLA notes that many existing digital library developments are primarily collection based and that they often lack service or preservation components. He then discusses various ways in which we may be able to move from these isolated digital collections to a network of interoperable digital libraries. In doing so, he emphasises that libraries are
not just collections but organisations that provide a variety of services (including their long-term stewardship over collections) and uphold ethical traditions (e.g. on privacy and equal access).


Clifford Lynch is the Director of the Coalition for Networked Information (CNI) and this is a transcript of a keynote paper that he gave at the Web-Wise 2002 conference held in Baltimore on 20-22 March 2002. The paper is not uniquely concerned with digital preservation, but it provides a wide-ranging and thought-provoking look at the sustainability and reusability of digital content, the distinction between digital collections and digital libraries and many other issues.


This paper by Sarah Thomas of Cornell University is a general introduction to digital preservation issues with special focus on recent US-based developments, e.g. Cornell’s projects PRISM and Harvest.


A summary of the DPC forum on Web-archiving held in London.

5. Other links

5.1 DigiCULT.Info Newsletter
http://www.digicult.info/pages/newsletter.html

With its mix of news items, announcements and articles, this newsletter, produced by the Europe-based Digital Culture (DigiCULT) Forum, will provide a regular look into selected technology areas affecting the cultural domain, along with summarising the progress of DigiCULT Forum.

5.2 Creating and Managing Digital Content
http://www.chin.gc.ca/English/Digital_Content/index.html

Maintained by the Canadian Heritage Information Network, this web site provides guidance on creating and managing digital resources for heritage projects, including an overview of issues and resources in preservation of digital materials.

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