

DETERMINING THE NEED FOR A DIGITAL PRESERVATION SYSTEM

Public and private institutions are facing the mounting challenges of preserving their institution's digital records. A digital preservation system for the growing number of permanent/long-term digital records may be a necessary step for many of these institutions. This tip sheet will guide how to start thinking about preserving digital records.

TALK WITH YOUR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT:

- Determine if there are in-house data management programs for your institution's departments.
- Are these programs feasible in the future? Will they still be supported by the institution's IT Department? Note: these are data management programs, not digital preservation systems.

SURVEY DEPARTMENTS REGARDING THEIR DIGITAL NEEDS/WANTS:

- Discuss with departments if they want to go all digital for their records or a hybrid style. Ask them for an estimated inventory of how many born-digital records, CDs, microfilm rolls, and electronic records they have.
- If records are only on microfilm and your rolls of microfilm are only supposed to be preservation copies, then digitizing your microfilm is a huge benefit.
- Liability by not having public records easily accessible.
- Digitizing is cost-saving in regards to the lack of microfilm supplies, lack of microfilm viewing equipment, and less accessibility with microfilm.

DISCUSS WITH THE DEPARTMENTS ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF A DIGITAL PRESERVATION SYSTEM:

- Digital preservation system that preserves long-term/permanent records.
- Addresses hardware and software obsolescence through migrations.
- Protects digital records from degradation/corruption of formats by monitoring the fixity of records.
- Converts records to open formats based on archival standards.
- Secure/Controlled digital environment – backed up on five different Cloud servers around the world multiple times.
- 24/7 monitoring
- Encryption of all files
- Can add metadata to make records searchable

**DISCUSS WITH THE DEPARTMENTS ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF A DIGITAL PRESERVATION SYSTEM
(CONTINUED):**

- User Security Settings
 - Public User – public records
 - Internal User – Public and Confidential records
 - Internal Administrative User – Public and Confidential records
- Cannot accidentally or intentionally delete records without the action being reviewed by the Records Manager. Records Manager can deny a deletion request if the Office /Department has not signed off on an RC-3 or if the records do not meet the retention schedule.
- Meets standards-based OAIS ISO 14721 repository. Public or controlled password access for the departments and the public.
- You can zoom in or pan out for each image/document.
- For the Court Offices (if applicable), it is important to note that OnBase is not a digital preservation system, it is a digital document management system.
- Find out if your institution's departments have in-house data management systems. Collaborate with your IT Department to determine.
- Ask departments if they would be willing to contribute to the cost of a digital preservation system.

COLLABORATE AND WORK WITH YOUR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT:

- Discuss survey findings with the IT Department.
- Discuss future goals for digital records preservation.
- Ask the IT Department if they are willing to help with the digital preservation system's set-up process. You may need some tech skills if your IT Department is not going to collaborate with you.

NEEDS BASED ON THE VOLUME OF RECORDS AND COST:

- Private Cloud server
 - Pros - you do not have to share a Cloud server with several other institutions in your region. This is helpful especially when you are going to be uploading and preserving a large percentage of active records, i.e., Court records.
 - Pro/Con - You would have to perform your own security and fixity checks.
 - Cons - More expensive
- Shared Cloud server
 - Pros - More cost-effective
 - Pros - You can start with this edition and as your needs increase, you can move up an edition in a few years.
 - Cons - Sharing the Cloud limits how much you can upload. Since you are sharing the Cloud server with other institutions, you have to be able to limit how much you upload at a time so you don't monopolize the Cloud server.

WORK ON A PROPOSAL PACKAGE FOR THE DEPARTMENTS AND YOUR INSTITUTION'S ADMINISTRATION:

- Provide administrative staff with a list of the benefits of a digital preservation system.
- Showcase how it works.
- Discuss long-term record goals for your institution.
 - Saving on your institution's server space/cost
 - Easily accessible records instead of CDs and microfilm
 - Liability by not having public records accessible - Sunshine Laws
- Discuss with the institution's legal counsel contract agreements.
- If still not convinced, schedule a meeting with an institution that already has the digital preservation system and they can discuss their experiences with the digital preservation system with administration and/or other departments that may not be on board with the proposal. Also, include the digital preservation system's representative for the meeting.

APPROVAL TO PURCHASE A DIGITAL PRESERVATION SYSTEM:

- Who will be your first departments to onboard?
 - What departments have the most pressing need? Digital Preservation should only be for long-term records or permanent records.
 - Is your department going to take care of uploading the digital records along with their corresponding metadata into the digital preservation system or is the specific department going to do this?
- Meet with individual departments. Show them how the system works. Provide lessons on how to do certain functions such as: adding metadata, deleting records, creating a folder, creating a new representation, moving records into a different folder, and searching for records.
- How are they storing their digital records?
 - Keep in mind server space if records are stored on CDs and you are uploading the CDs to eventually be put into the digital preservation system.
 - Create an inventory of the digital record backlog. Also, create a timeline for the digital record backlog – how long do you think it will take you to upload certain departments' digital records with metadata into the digital preservation system?
 - Will need to develop a workflow for how this will work smoothly. Who is doing what and when?
 - Create a workflow and timeline for digital records that you will be receiving in the future
 - Are the case files individual TIFF images? If so, you will want to have the TIFF images saved and you will want to make combined PDF documents out of the TIFF images. You should OCR the PDFS for search capabilities. Some of these cases can be 500 pages and court staff need to find a specific page.
 - PDF can serve as the access copy in your digital preservation system whereas the TIFF images can serve as the preservation copy.
 - Minimum metadata for Court Cases (if applicable) – such a large volume of cases. Metadata at the folder level is sufficient for large volumes of court cases.

APPROVAL TO PURCHASE A DIGITAL PRESERVATION SYSTEM (CONTINUED):

- If using the Dublin Core Template:
 - Title field - Case Number
 - Subject field – Names of individuals, case number, type of case
 - Date field – Case Opened and Closed
- How are you going to obtain the metadata? Will the department create the metadata in a spreadsheet? Can you export the metadata from the Court's data management system?

ASSIGNING SECURITY ROLES:

- Discuss with departments security roles.
 - Do you want certain employees with basic security roles such as a search capability or do other employees need more advanced security roles such as: deleting records, creating a folder, moving a folder, and adding metadata?

RETENTION MANAGEMENT:

- Does your digital preservation system have a retention management feature?

UTILIZE YOUR DEPARTMENT'S VOLUNTEERS (IF APPLICABLE):

- Your volunteers can work on adding metadata for your digital records. This can be done virtually or in-house.

OPEN HOUSE:

- After 6 months, hold an Open House with the departments that are using the digital preservation system.
- What do they like about the system? What do they not like about the system? What features would they like to have added? What features do they not understand?

