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Archiving Approach (Information Management Life Cycle)

By ILS Internal Publication

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Stages of archieving

Archieving goes through following stages during information management

Information creation

All past studies/ experts are of the view that the archiving decisions and parameters should start at this stage. Assessment of the long-term value can be pinned down and way forward articulated based on the same. The preservation and archiving process is made more efficient when attention is paid to issues of consistency, format, standardization and metadata description in the very beginning of the information life cycle.

Acquisition

Acquisition is the stage in which the created object is "incorporated" physically or virtually into the archive. Acquisition mainly comprises of the following:

- 1) Collection policies :
 - a) Selecting what to archive
 - b) Determining Extent
 - c) Archiving link
 - d) Refreshing the Achieved Contents
- 2) Intellectual Property Concerns: Intellectual property concern remains a key issue in the acquisition process and the approaches to intellectual property vary based on the type of organization doing the archiving.

Identification and Cataloging

Once the archive has acquired the digital object, it is necessary to identify and catalog it. Both identification and cataloging allow the archiving organization to manage the digital objects over time. Identification provides a unique key for finding the object and linking that object to other related objects.

Storage

Storage is often treated as a passive stage in the life cycle, but storage media and formats have changed with legacy information perhaps lost forever. Block sizes, tape sizes, tape drive mechanisms and operating systems have changed over time. Most organizations that responded to the question about the periodicity of media migration anticipate a 3-5 year cycle.

Preservation

Preservation is the aspect of archival management that preserves the content as well as the look and feel of the digital object. It includes the following aspects –

- Hardware and Software Migration
- Preservation of the Look and Feel
- Transformation vs. Native Formats
- Standards and Interoperability

Access

The previous life cycle functions that have been discussed are performed for the purpose of ensuring continuous access to the material in the archive. Successful practices must consider changes to access mechanisms, as well as rights management and security requirements over the long term.

Challenges to Archiving

Some of the challenges faced during archiving are listed below-

- Technological Obsolescence
- Migration of Digital Information
- Legal and Organizational Issues
- The Need for Deep Infrastructure