

Working Together Revisited: Diverse Skills for Sustainability

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Working Together Revisited...

- Asked to address “internal collaboration”
 - Suggests collaboration across disciplines within an organization
 - Also suggests collaborations with creators

Separate disciplines/common interests

- Libraries have archives/assets
- IT professionals have archives
- Museums have archives
- But archives are not a core business of any of them!

Separate disciplines/common interests

- Each of these professions have knowledge and skills that add value to digital preservation activity
- Because they are often separate administrative units, they compete for resources instead of collaborating on solutions

Separate disciplines/common interests

- Librarian skills:
 - Develop and apply descriptive metadata standards
 - Description of the “item in hand”
 - Experience with integrating complex system functionalities
 - Experience with human-computer interfaces

Separate disciplines/common interests

- Curatorial Skills of Museum Professionals:
 - Description and representation of objects (3D digital)
 - Authenticating and contextualizing objects through documentary sources
 - Experience with multimedia development and preservation

Separate disciplines/common interests

- Information Technology Professional Skills:
 - Manages large scale and redundant storage
 - Builds or maintains sophisticated applications
 - Evaluates software and conducts data migrations
 - Conducts backup and quality control (checksum)

Separate disciplines/common interests

- Archivist Skills:
 - Experience selecting valued materials
 - Organizes diverse information
 - Maintains hierarchical relationships and documents provenance
 - Manages rights for unpublished content
 - Establishes ownership through legal agreements

Collaborative models

- Movement toward Schools of Information
 - Offered archives programs and library automation classes
 - Explosion of HTML and XML encoding led to applications and descriptive standards development by librarians and archivists working with IT professionals
 - IT community moving toward Informatics programs

Collaborative models

- Working Together (1998)
 - Coalition for Networked Information/NHPRC
 - Archivists and Technology Professionals
 - 1.5 day workshop to jointly develop electronic records project proposal
 - Program presented at SAA 2006 by Fynnette Eaton

Collaborative models

- Working Together (1998)
 - “There is a growing body of technical art and knowledge that is common among museum curators, librarians, archivists, and others that relates to information technology (IT) and can be enhanced by new developments in IT, making it fertile ground for collaboration.”

Gerry Bernbom, Joan Lippincott, and Fynnette Eaton, “Working Together: New Collaborations among Information Professionals”, *CAUSE/EFFECT* , 22(2), 1999

Collaborative models

- ECURE Conference (1999-2006)
 - Marketed to archivists, records managers, librarians, IT professionals
 - All professions represented in program
 - Attempted to engage digital content creators
 - Interdisciplinary project incubator/evaluator

Collaborative models

- Open Archival Information Systems (OAIS)
Reference Model Functions (1999):
 - Submission and pre-ingest
 - Ingest
 - Archival storage
 - Data Management
 - Preservation Planning
 - Archive Administration
 - Access/Dissemination

Collaborative models

- Arizona State ETD Working Group (2001)
 - 23 faculty, librarians, archivists, IT staff, Graduate College (GC) administrators
 - Proposed:
 - PDF requirement and optional multimedia
 - Student self-submission process
 - Multimedia format standards
 - Funding for IT and Graduate College staff

Collaborative models

- Arizona State ETD Working Group (2001)
 - Standards committee to receive format standards proposals from students via GC advisors
 - IT staff to research migration paths and test migrations
 - Librarians to review and enhance author-provided metadata
 - Archivists to evaluate preservation and recordkeeping requirements

Collaborations with Creators

- Increasing recognition that choices of creators impact chances for preservation
 - Depocas, Alain, Jon Ippolito and Caitlin Jones, *The Variable Media Approach: Permanence Through Change*, New York: Guggenheim Museum, 2003.

Collaborations with Creators

- What should we discuss with creators?
 - Articulate the preservation challenge
 - Identify sustainable production technology or archival form for preservation
 - Discuss production workflow
 - Documentation of ownership (collaborations?)
 - Transfer to archival system/reliable infrastructure

Need for Collaboration?

- National Science Foundation
Cyberinfrastructure Report (2003?)
 - Cites development of digital libraries by *investigators*
 - Focuses on scientist collaborations with information technology and information science

Need for Collaboration?

- "Creating this integrated, networked cultural record will require intensive collaboration among scholars as well as cooperation with librarians, curators and archivists..."
- *Our Cultural Commonwealth: The final report of the American Council of Learned Societies Commission on Cyberinfrastructure for the Humanities & Social Sciences, 2006 (p. 18)*

Conclusions

- Survival of digital assets depends on collaboration between creators and interdisciplinary teams of custodians
- Interdisciplinary collaboration is increasingly expected
- Obstacles to collaboration still exist

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