Appraisal

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Overview and objectives

- PERICLLES appraisal task
- Background on appraisal
- Case studies
- Breakout session
PERICLLES appraisal task

- Runs for 22 months from November 2014

- Objectives
  - Identification and modelling of key decision factors
    - e.g. authenticity, unique information content, technical feasibility
  - Modelling of decision processes
  - (Partial) automation or computer-assisted guidance
    - What can be automated and what should be?
  - Monitoring evolution of the interests of user communities
Background on Appraisal
Objectives of appraisal

- Appraisal
  - Identify digital objects of continuing business value
- “Value” may include
  - Historical, aesthetic, scientific, financial, social judgements
  - Relevance to a community
  - Frequency of use, reuse, creation of derived works
- Further factors
  - Increasing size and complexity of content
  - How faithful a representation is it of what was originally intended?
  - Technical feasibility
  - Relationship to other items in collection
Why is appraisal difficult?

- Hard to define criteria precisely
  - Often relies on human judgement

- Result depends on context of appraisal
  - e.g. time, appraiser, organisation, current trends (e.g. artistic tastes, research), user communities, technologies
  - These are subject to change

- Manual appraisal is costly
  - (Manual) item-level appraisal impractical for large collections

- Risks
  - Bias – when looking at content in future, need to know under what assumptions it has been selected (chain of evidence)
  - Potential that valuable content can be lost
“Traditionally”, appraisal is carried out at or beyond end of active life

Post–custodial models
- Not based on physical custody of non–current records by an archival authority
- Digital content is continuously evolving over time
- No concept of “end of life”
- Preservation occurs “in the wild”

Appraisal performed at multiple points in lifecycle – including at creation
Approaches to appraisal

- Top-down approaches
  - Legal compliance
  - Policy and organisational objectives
  - Functional/macro appraisal – based on business function

- Bottom-up approaches
  - Item-level appraisal
    - Extraction of metadata from content and environment
  - Inventory
Science case study

- Space science data originating from the ESA and ISS
- For example
  - Experiments that monitor the sun's spectral variability to understand its effects on climate (SOLAR)
- Includes
  - Science data – calibrated observations
  - Operations – raw data, telemetry, logs, documentation
  - Engineering documentation
- Durations
  - Missions – last decades
  - Experiments – 1–10 years
User communities in science case study

Issues

- Changing science communities
- Complex dependencies
- Cross-domain
- Volume of data
- Erroneous experiments
- Different perspectives of stakeholders on what is valuable
- Staff turnover
Main objectives
  ◦ Identify items of ongoing historical value
  ◦ Maintain capability to display items in an authentic manner (e.g. in line with artist intent)
PERICLES Media case study

- **Issues**
  - Fragility of content
  - Usability
  - Ephemeral nature
  - Subjectivity
  - Determining audience and context

- **Appraisal supports acquisition and retention decisions**
  - Often made at a senior level
Breakout session
Aims for the breakout session

- Group discussion and analysis of appraisal in specific examples relevant to PERICLES
- We make use of motivating scenarios to establish competency questions
  - Using these, we are able to explore the consequences of appraisal processes
- Participants are welcome to contribute their own relevant experience and problems
Goals

- Gain understanding of:
  - Where is there value in performing appraisal?
  - What criteria should be applied?
  - Which appraisal approaches are most appropriate?
  - Where is there value in (partial) automation and what are the technical enablers?
  - When in the lifecycle should we appraise?
  - How can we account for changing user communities and their interests?
Group activity

Within groups, choose between the space science and video art use cases.

1. Study the use case, and consider the appraisal criteria provided on the attached sheet.
   a. What do you consider to be the main reasons for performing appraisal in this use case?
   b. What appraisal criteria are the most relevant for this use case and why? Do you think that the criteria provided in the attached sheet are sufficient?
   c. Do you need further information about the object itself (or its surrounding infrastructure) to make these appraisal decisions?
   d. When in the lifecycle should we appraise against these criteria?
   e. What aspects of appraisal using these criteria could/should be automated and what are the enablers?
   f. How can we account for changing user communities and their interests?

2. Select one or more scenarios from the examples provided.
   a. What does this scenario tell you about the appropriate appraisal practices in this context?
   b. Does successful completion of this scenario depend on expert knowledge or information, and if so, how much of the relevant expert knowledge is currently captured?