Collaborating Across Communities:
Leveraging Our Strengths for Sustainable Programs and Services

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I am an archivist responsible for digital preservation in a library.
Community

Community in this context: “a feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals” source: http://bit.ly/2tbthPR

Community affiliations depend on context - examples of my communities:

• archival community
• digital preservation community
• digital practice community
• LGBTQIA community
• dog owners
• ...

Digital Practice

to continually work
to bring content and lessons from the past
for the benefit of the present
on behalf of the future
Collaborate

to work jointly on an activity or project [OED]
to work jointly with others or together especially in an intellectual endeavor
to cooperate with an agency ... with which one is not immediately connected
Latin: to work together

In this context: rely on others to do agreed upon things for or in concert with you and to do agreed upon things for or in concert with others

Rather than letting people know what you did, actively engage and inform
More than asking for feedback or help with your idea/project, include in the framing
Adapt Radical Candor ...

An approach for encouraging constructive feedback

Explanatory video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yj9GLeNCgm4
To Radical Collaboration

Exclusive Interactions

Engage Personally

Participate Directly

Updates After Action

Radical Collaboration

Dominant Coordination
Inclusive Inclusion

Social and demographic inclusion
i.e., not excluded based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, or on any other characteristic or preference

Showstopper: first and foremost ensure that people are safe

Professional inclusion
People from all impacted or related professions and domains are included openly and equitably

Technical inclusion
Technical is not limited to technological
Technology (skills, tools, capabilities) should be available to all
Digital Practice + Collaboration

Who would you bring to the table?

- examples of domain strengths
- round table (with no head)
- stronger together
- professional inclusion
- common interests
- overlapping members
- overlapping objectives

Who’s not at the table and why?
Digital Practice + Diversity and Inclusion

- Individuals and institutions engaged in digital practice are not diverse
- Some efforts to expand opportunities for experience and training
- Consider archival practice vs institutional policies
- Common acquisition models don’t meet needs of communities
- Collection policies for repositories
- Technical Inclusion (conference example)
- Different professions have different issues
- Engage in discussion…
Building (an Inclusive) Community

Common stages of organizational maturity model:

1. **Acknowledge**: understanding that this is a local concern
2. **Act**: initiating projects
3. **Consolidate**: segueing from projects to programs
4. **Institutionalize**: incorporating larger environment; rationalizing programs
5. **Externalize**: embracing inter-institutional collaboration and dependency

Kenney and McGovern, 2003

Organizations reach these stages through community building
- set objectives, engage community members, build towards critical mass
Act (Stage 2) to Consolidate (Stage 3) Transition

Popularizers: Consolidate

build expertise (Stage 2)

Early Adopters: Act

expand community (Stages 2-3)

Pioneers: Acknowledge - initiate community (Stage 1)
Archives in context – words are important …

To an archivist:

Archives are an **organization** that collects the records of individuals or organizations; the professional **discipline** of administering such archival collections and organizations; the **building** (or portion thereof) housing archival collections. The archival community refers to archivists anywhere who have training and expertise in **archival principles and practice** (e.g., SAA [Code of Conduct and Ethics](#)).

IT use of “archives” and “archiving”: often refers to **aggregations** of content, storage of content – is typically not archival from an archivist’s perspective and does not equate to preservation (a more robust and collaborative concept)

- e.g., Twitter archives

Non-archivists use of “digital archivist” may refer to work by anyone on digitized or other digital content of any kind
Disambiguating digital archives and digital preservation

DAP Stack

Collaborative Services
- for creators/users
- long-term access/re-use
- build on DPM & IT stacks
- should leverage strengths...

over-time (digital preservation) layer (digital archives) real-time

- DP program, policies... Governance Collections, policies, ...
- how to preserve Collections Scope what to preserve
- compliance, audit Acquisition quality control
- compliance, packaging Workflows quality assurance
- preservation objects Lifecycle Storage dissemination objects
- respond, anticipate Monitoring metadata, content

sustainable, compliant technological foundation

Preservation and Access

Preservation – actions, agents, and infrastructure to ensure ongoing access to content
Access – means of enabling discovery, delivery, and use of content

90% + of the world focuses on access – and that’s okay if preservation is supported

Renewed interest in post-custodial and recent (mis)understandings of preservation

Pre-custodial period: between creation (actual or expected) and long-term custody

Preservation view: opportunity to determine retention and build relationships
Access view: perception that preservation is absent or not working

Perceived immediate access (or lack) is not an indicator or measure of preservation
Generations of Practice...

...follow generations of technology – a distributed world leads to distributed practice

emerging: distributed digital practice
(hybrid collections, modularity, flexibility, scalability, independence...)

recent: connected digital practice
(homogeneous collections, monolithic providers, common services)

early: individual digital practice
(limited collections, offline, handcrafted)
Emerging Distributed Digital Practice

to continually work
to bring content and lessons from the past
for the benefit of the present
on behalf of the future

... achieved through radical collaboration
across all domains
that are interested, engaged, reliant upon, or willing to help
to continually devise, implement, and improve
solutions in response to ongoing technological change

Examples: OO-IO model, DP storage
what will a distributed practice look like for ... archives? storage?
Considerations for collaborating across communities

• Raise awareness through open discussion – listen and assume good intent balance advocacy and inquiry; use inclusive terms (e.g., digital practice) and adjust ...

• Remember that digital archives may refer to aggregations of archival records or to any digital content an individual or institution may be managing, whether preserving or not ...

• Be aware that people often conflate digital archives and digital preservation these are distinct and co-dependent domains

• Revisit institutional policies and practices need review, revision, re-engineering, re-thinking to encourage not hinder collaboration and inclusion

• Be aware of using our own lens and our cumulative progress in viewing our past like saying: “those dratted people in the 90’s refused to use social media!” ???

• Balance advocacy and inquiry determine when to make your case, when to listen and learn

• Continue from now – facing forward (informed by lessons learned) look for opportunities – especially the unexpected ...
See you in Boston!

Save the date: 24-27 September 2018

https://ipres2018.org/
"It is harder to crack a prejudice than an atom”

Albert Einstein

Thank you!

Questions?

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