Making Connections at Digital Preservation 2013

How do people outside of our community think about digital preservation? In her opening keynote for Digital Preservation 2013, Hilary Mason, chief scientist at bit.ly, posed this question, framing her talk from the perspective of computer engineers and those working in start-up businesses. She went on to talk about the evolution of bit.ly and data archiving, noting that preservation without access is useless.

Hilary was one of two dozen speakers, including Lisa Green of Common Crawl, Emily Gore of DPLA and Rodrigo Davies of the MIT Center for Civic Media Labs, invited to share their views and work during our annual summer meeting. Some of the speakers were not directly involved in the preservation or long-term access to cultural heritage, scholarly or scientific digital materials. But we like to invite speakers who expose our audience to the perspectives of those organizations creating, consuming and accessing digital information. Why?

Read on for the answer, and for more details about our annual event.

Announcing the National Agenda for Digital Stewardship

Since its founding in December 2010, the National Digital Stewardship Alliance has worked to establish, maintain and advance the capacity to preserve our nation’s digital resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

In late 2012 the NDSA Coordinating Committee began brainstorming ways to leverage the NDSA’s national membership and broad expertise to raise the profile of digital stewardship issues with legislators, funders and other decision makers. The National Agenda for Digital Stewardship became the vehicle to highlight, on an ongoing, annual basis, the key issues that affect digital stewardship practice most effectively for decision-makers. More about this landmark document is in the full blog post.
You Say You Want A Resolution…

Preserving digital stuff for the future is a weighty responsibility. With digital photos, for instance, would it be possible someday to generate perfectly sharp high-density, high-resolution photos from blurry or low-resolution digital originals? Probably not but who knows? The possibility invites the question: shouldn’t we save our digital photos at the highest resolution possible just in case?

In our Library of Congress digital preservation resources we recommend 300 dpi/pxi for 4x8, 5x7 and 8x10 photos, but why not 1000 dpi/pxi? Or, 2000 dpi/pxi? 10,000 dpi/pxi? Read the full post for some answers.

3 Things Needed For Personal Digital Archiving

What’s the future for personal digital archiving? A well-regarded expert who has spent years studying personal digital habits says that people just won’t invest time and effort to preserve their personal files. Individuals are said to be hopelessly passive in this space: they are content to let content spread helter-skelter among the shifting assortment of devices and services.

Photos pile up on smartphones. Social media platforms come and go. Passive dependency on technology that doesn’t care about the future is begging for a world-wide personal digital disaster. It can be improved. See the three things that can change the world of personal digital archiving.

Twisty Little Passages to a Career in Digital Preservation

A career path in digital preservation can be like a maze of twisty little passages. One of the managers here in NDIIPP thus describes the route to her current job.

Her original career goal was decided at age 13: to be an archaeologist and be a curator in a museum. While working at a museum, she found herself entering the entire museum accession history into a collection management system which ran on a Pick mini-mainframe as part of the project to inventory and pack the entire collection to move into a new building.

She was hooked. Here’s the full story about how this led to a successful career in digital preservation.