

Who's Minding the (Data) Store?

Results of the NDSA Digital Preservation Staffing Survey



<http://www.digitalpreservation.gov/ndsa/index.html>

Andrea Goethals, Harvard University, andrea_goethals@harvard.edu
Jimi Jones, Library of Congress, jjones@loc.gov
Carol Kussmann, Minnesota Historical Society / State Archives, carol.kussmann@mnhs.org
Kate Murray, National Archives and Records Administration, kate.murray1@nara.gov
Meg Phillips, National Archives and Records Administration, meg.phillips@nara.gov

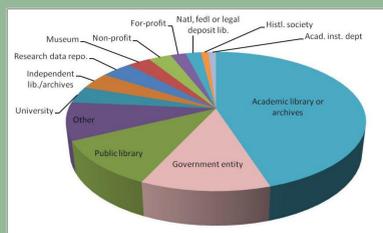
Survey Goals

Businesses, cultural memory institutions and government bodies that want to responsibly preserve digital assets face significant staffing challenges. The National Digital Stewardship Alliance (NDSA) Standards & Practices Working Group conducted a survey of organizations worldwide responsible for digital preservation to gain insight into how organizations worldwide are addressing staffing, scoping and organizational questions.

Respondent Characteristics

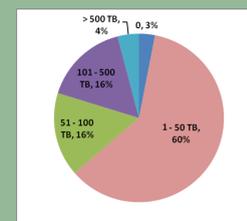
Completion Rate

The survey was started 131 times, and completed 85 times (a 65% completion rate).



Institution Type

47% (highest percentage) of the respondents were academic libraries or archives followed by government entities (11%) and public libraries (10%).

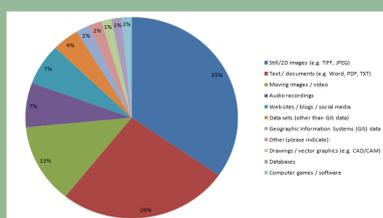


Data Storage Amount

Most respondents (60%) are preserving 50 TB or less while 36% are storing over 50 TB. A small percentage (4%) are storing more than 500 TB.

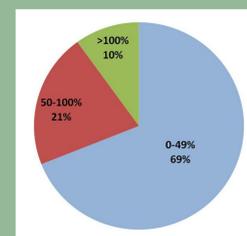
Respondent Location

86% of the respondents were based in the United States, but 8% came from Europe, 4% from Canada, and 1% each from Japan and Australia.



Content Type

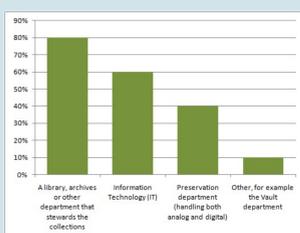
Still images are the most common content type being preserved, followed by textual documents. As reported, databases and computer games/software are among the least preserved content type.



Expected Data Growth

31% of respondents expect a 50% or more increase in the amount of digital content in the next year.

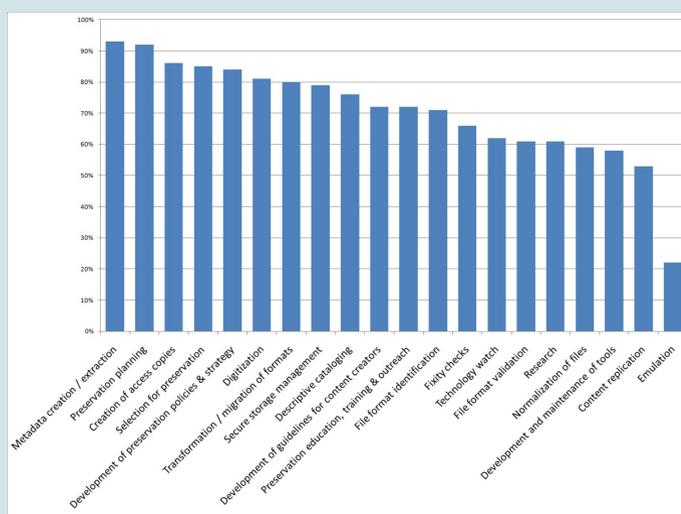
What We Have



Where is In-House Work Done?

Libraries & Archives tend to take the digital preservation lead within our institutions.

Another question found that 33% of respondents have a dedicated digital preservation department while 59% do not.

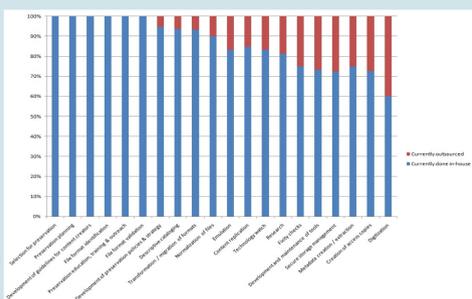


How Do We Define Digital Preservation?

Out of 20 possible options, 19 were considered in scope for over half of the respondents.

Metadata creation/extraction and preservation planning are considered within the scope of digital preservation for over 90% of the respondents.

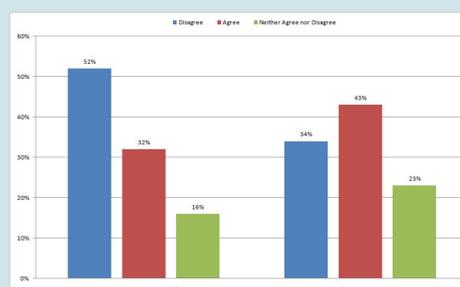
Emulation was only considered in scope for 22% of the respondents.



In-house vs Outsourced Functions

Most institutions do all their digital preservation functions in-house. Preservation planning, selection for preservation, development of guidelines for content creators, and development of preservation policies and strategy are done in-house by over 98% of the respondents who are currently doing these functions.

Outsourcing of tasks is infrequent but is used for functions such as digitization, secure storage management, and creation of access copies.

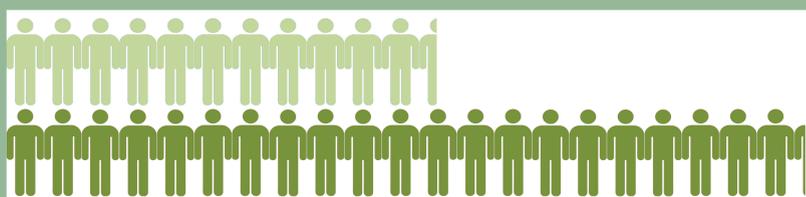


Is What We Have Working Well?

When asked if their current organizational model for digital preservation worked well, respondents who were expecting significant data growth in the next year (>=50%) were far more dissatisfied than those with less expected data growth.

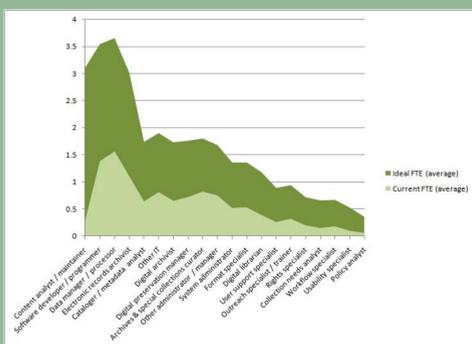
The relatively high response rate for the "neither agree or disagree" option may be an indication of respondents' uncertainty about how success in digital preservation is defined and measured.

What We Want



We Need More People!

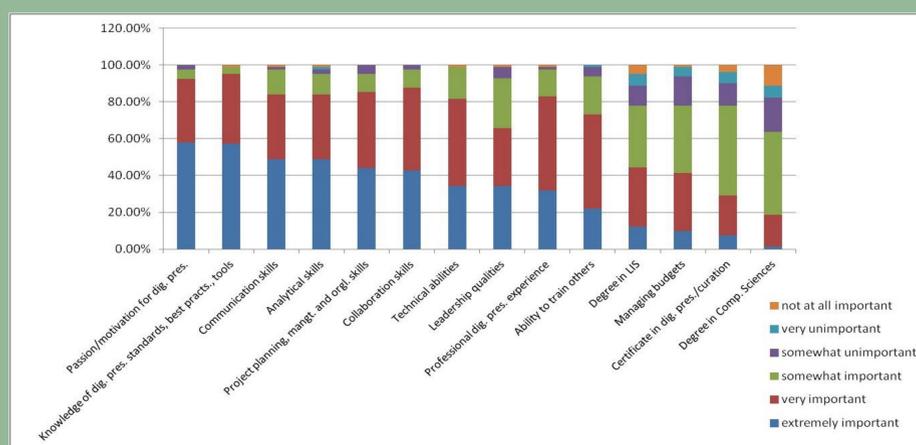
Most respondents do not think they have the appropriate level of FTE to do digital preservation work successfully. Taking all the positions together, on average institutions have 11.4 FTE doing digital preservation work, but ideally they would like to have 21.14 FTE - a gap of 9.73 FTE.



But Not Just Any People: We Need the Right People in the Right Place!

Respondents identified positions whose duties have a direct correlation to content as being the most understaffed. As content increases, the amount of staff also needs to increase.

Positions that do not have a direct correlation with the amount of content generally showed a lower desired number of FTEs.

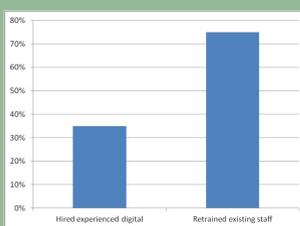


What Makes Them the Right Person?

The qualification rated the highest when hiring a digital preservation manager is passion/motivation for digital preservation (58% said this is extremely important; 34.57% said it's very important).

The second highest rated qualification is knowledge of digital preservation standards, best practices and tools (57.32% said this is extremely important; 37.8% said it's very important).

Surprisingly degrees in LIS, Computer Science and/or digital preservation/curation were not rated as highly.



How Do the Right People Gain the Right Skills?

Retraining is the trend. The large majority (75%) of respondents retrained existing staff to perform digital preservation work while 35% said they hired new experienced staff.