

Preserving Electronic Records in the States

Digital Preservation 2012 Session Notes

Wednesday, July 25, 2012

3:00 p.m.

Presenters: Cal Lee (UNC Chapel Hill); Jim Corridan (Indiana Commission on Public Records); Matt Veatch (Kansas State Historical Society); Butch Lazorchak (Library of Congress), facilitator

Attendees: 10

Highlights of the topics covered during the meeting.

The three presenters each discussed initiatives relating to the management of electronic records by state governments, both within individual states and as part of collaborative projects.

Cal Lee discussed his review of the four projects originally involved with an NDIIPP initiative to preserve states' digital information: Persistent Digital Archives and Library System (PeDALs), A Model Technical and Social Architecture for the Preservation of State Government Digital Information, Geospatial Multistate Archive and Preservation Project (GeoMAPP), and the Multi-state Preservation Partnership. After analyzing project deliverables and documentation, visiting partner worksites, and monitoring communications such as mailing lists and conference calls, Lee compiled the "States of Sustainability" report, published in May 2012.

Among Lee's findings was the importance of lead partners in each project. He found that lead partners took on different roles in the projects, acting as digital preservation service providers, digital preservation enablers, or digital preservation facilitators. Projects were successful in part because they built on the strengths of the partners involved, and also due to their engagement with non-library/archives professionals.

Matt Veatch's presentation focused specifically on the Kansas Enterprise Electronic Preservation (KEEP) System, a repository developed for Kansas state government records with long-term value. Although initially intended for the state of Kansas, the system is meant to be able to facilitate exchange with other partners, both within the state government and outside it. A prototype was accepted in 2011, and sample documents (for dark archive) are currently being tested in the system. The next phase will include access and preservation planning, and ingesting content that is available for public access.

Veatch discussed the ways that ERM projects can make themselves appealing to outside parties. He argued that professionals must be flexible and pragmatic, capable of articulating the importance of ERM in ways that are tailored to a variety of audiences.

Jim Corridan discussed the State Electronic Records Initiative (SERI), currently in its initial stages. The initiative conducted a survey of ERM in state governments, finding that most have little or no ERM program, and few have any long-term strategies or relationships with

IT. The Digital Preservation Capability Maturity Model was used to evaluate programs' maturity and show areas of possible improvement.

Action Items/Advice for ERM Projects.

Veatch presented several findings that, paraphrased here, encompass much of Lee and Corridan's points as well:

- Partnerships are essential for sustainable projects, both intrastate and interstate
- Influencing system design is essential, but difficult
- Financial sustainability is essential, but very difficult
- It is essential to have champions/leaders, but people retire or move on
- Education and training are essential
- Providing tangible ERM and digital preservation services is essential for making programs visible and proving their worth

Similarly, the SERI project has four major areas of focus moving forward:

- Education and training
- Standards, tools, and implementation
- Governance and sustainability (increasing buy-in and widening staff involvement)
- Awareness and outreach