Incentives for Data Producers to Create "Archive/Ready" Data: Implications for Archives and Records Management

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Abstract: We have completed a three-year project called "Incentives for Data Producers to Create 'Archive-Ready' Data. "Archive-ready data" are data that meet the minimum requirements for data quality, metadata, and documentation of the repository or archives where they will be preserved. We will report on the results from two research projects: 1) a survey of researchers who are required to deposit data in a data archives and 2) from an experiment with users to assess the differences between processed and unprocessed data files. We found that researchers often are unaware of data deposit requirements, but that they would be more willing to deposit "archive-ready" data if they knew it would be used and have a broader public benefit. Our research has identified barriers that data producers face when preparing data for deposit in an archives and quantified the value that archivists add to the data when they process data files and compile adequate documentation. In addition to presenting the results of these two studies, we will discuss implications of the findings for data producers and archivists in a variety of different settings and suggest ways the archivists and records managers might use incentives to encourage data producers to create "archive-ready" data.

Biography:

Margaret Hedstrom is an Associate Professor at the School of Information, University of Michigan where she teaches in the areas of archives, electronic records management, and digital preservation. Her current research investigates incentives for producers to create "archive-ready" data. She was project director for the CAMiLEON Project, an international research project that investigated the feasibility of emulation as a digital preservation strategy. Her research interests include digital preservation strategies, the impact of electronic communications on organizational memory and documentation, and remote access to archival materials. She is a member the National Digital Strategy Advisory Board to the Library of Congress, and the Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic Documentation, U.S. Department of State, and she served on the ACLS Commission on Cyber-Infrastructure for the Humanities and Social Sciences. Before joining the faculty at the University of Michigan in 1995, she was Chief of State Records Advisory Services and Director of the Center for Electronic Records at the New York State Archives and Records Administration for ten years. She earned MA degrees in Library Science and History, and a PhD in History from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Hedstrom is a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists and recipient of a Distinguished Scholarly Achievement Award from the University of Michigan for her work with archives and cultural heritage preservation in South Africa.

Jinfang Niu has Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in Library Science, from Wuhan University, China. She is a doctoral student in the School of Information, University of Michigan.