The WebERA Project: Environmental Risk Assessment with a web-based Preservation Management System

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Abstract: In response to the key finding of the *Heritage Health Index* that environmental control is the highest need for collections preservation, the Image Permanence Institute has been investigating a novel, web-based system for environmental monitoring and preservation management. Using a representative pilot group of ten museums and five libraries, the WebERA project seeks to determine if the web-based system, MyClimateData, can make collection risk analysis tasks easier, environmental management more effective and long-term preservation more sustainable. The project makes use of IPI's extensive laboratory and field experience with environmental management issues, incorporating IPI's new temperature and relative humidity datalogger and IPI's preservation metrics for quantifying the preservation quality of storage environments.

It is hoped that the project will help overcome the obstacles that most often prevent archives from managing their environments effectively and efficiently:

- lack of staff time and in-house expertise
- the difficulty of determining the degree of risk (or benefit) to collections
- the challenge of organizing, maintaining, and reporting on large amounts of data

The purpose of this poster presentation will be to update the archives community on the status of the WebERA project, as well as to provide exposure to the emerging web-based tools that will make preventative conservation easier and less expensive to incorporate into their institutional work-flows.

About the author:

Since joining the Image Permanence Institute in December 2007, **_Kristin Smith_** has specialized in environmental monitoring and preservation management strategies for libraries, archives and museums. She directed the development of IPI's newest online tool for preservation management, PEMdata.com, where archivists and collection care staff create accounts to store, graph and analyze the environmental data of their collection spaces. Kristin also assists with presentations, publications, and education for environmental management projects and writes articles for IPI's environmental newsletter, *Climate Notes*.