How do you preserve a million records when everyone has a million other things to do?

Development of Policy and Procedures for the Long-term Preservation of Digital Records

InterPARES 3 Case Study: BCIT

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Research Methodology

Abstract

How do you preserve digital records in a million-dollar organization when everyone has a million other things to worry about? This case study uses the InterPARES 2 Framework for Policy Development and the InterPARES 2 Creator Guidelines to find pragmatic solutions to the integration of archival requirements into a dynamic and complex environment. Challenges include integrating with existing policies and procedures, respecting institutional culture and adhering to best practice requirements and standards.

Background

British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) is the province’s largest post-secondary institution, offering certificate, diploma and applied bachelor’s degrees. Over 3,600 faculty and staff have created more than 800 million digital records in need of management, disposition and long-term preservation. www.bcit.ca

The InterPARES 3 Project is the third phase of the International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems, which aims to develop the knowledge essential to the long-term preservation of authentic digital records. www.interpares.org

Objectives

To create a policy and procedures for the long-term preservation of authentic, reliable digital records, that will integrate with existing BCIT records management policies and be implementable within BCIT’s organizational culture.

Challenges

- Existing records management policies (RM, Archives & Special Collections);
- Established procedures to ensure long-term preservation of analog records;
- 800 million digital records and growing;
- No policy or procedures for long-term preservation of digital records;
- Digital records subject to classification & retention, not fully implemented;
- Records at risk of loss due to technological obsolescence;
- FDI and privacy requirements.

Next Steps

- A generic template for the development of procedures based on the matrix developed for this case study will be created for use in other sites;
- Implementation of policy and procedures will be tested in key business units throughout BCIT;
- Review existing records management and archives policies and procedures and update as necessary to align with new policy and procedures.

Procedures Development Tool

IP2 Creator Guidelines

- Accessibility
- Fixity
- Identity
- Integrity
- Organization
- Authentication
- Protection
- Backup
- Obsolescence
- Awareness

Research Outcomes

Creation of procedures development tool to:
- synthesize existing policy and procedures with research data;
- respect existing organizational culture;
- adhere to the IP2 Framework for Policy Development;
- incorporate IP2 Creator Guidelines.

Policy & Procedures that incorporate existing instruments, are supported by management, and are easily adapted by all business units, and support the long-term preservation of authentic, reliable digital records.

References & Acknowledgments

InterPARES Project: International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic System (new) http://www.interpares.org Dr. Luciana Duranti, Director. Corinne Rogers and Elizabeth Shaffer, graduate research assistants (current). Helen Callow and Brian Sloan, graduate research assistants (graduated).


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