


Closing the Digital Curation Gap's "Getting Started Guides": Tools for Research and Practice

Helen R. Tibbo & Christopher A. Lee, SILS, University of North Carolina

The Need: Curation of digital assets, whether cultural, educational, scientific, or economic, is one of the central challenges of the early 21st century. The last two decades have witnessed extensive progress toward robust repository architectures, preservation tools and strategies, and trustworthy and sustainable digital curation, yet the need for the dissemination of best practices, standards information, and training and support of digital preservation and curation professionals is more pressing than ever. A significant and troubling gap has emerged between the dramatic progress of research and development on digital curation, on the one hand, and professional practices of archivists, librarians, and museum curators, on the other. There are now many viable applications, models, strategies, and standards for long-term care of digital objects. However, many institutions with a mandate to do this work are either not aware of the options or do not currently have the ability to evaluate and implement them. This is why the Closing the Digital Curation Gap's (CDCG) "Getting Started Guides" were created.



www.digitalcurationexchange.org/guides

Built around 8 Essential Data Curation Functions

1. Prepare
2. Identify
3. Select
4. Get
5. Store
6. Protect
7. Manage
8. Provide

1. Prepare

- [What general information should I know before I begin a digitizing initiative?](#)
- [Why should I digitize?](#)
- [What project management skills do I need?](#)

2. Identify

- [What do I need to identify before I start digitizing?](#)

3. Select

- [How should I select materials for digitization?](#)
- [How should I deal with issues of trust and authenticity?](#)
- [What file formats should I use?](#)
- [What standards and best practices should I follow?](#)

4. Get

- [What digitization workflow is best for my project?](#)
- [How do I select equipment for digitization?](#)
- [How do I work with a vendor to digitize my materials if it is not feasible for my institution?](#)
- [How do I evaluate my project?](#)

5. Store

- [What storage media should I use?](#)
- [What kind of metadata do I need?](#)

6. Protect

- [How can I prepare for sustainability and for the future?](#)

Guide Topics Include:

- [Acquiring Data from Storage Media](#)
- [Analyzing Costs](#)
- [Building Institutional Repositories](#)
- [Cloud Computing](#)
- [Curating Digital Video](#)
- [Digitizing Collections](#)
- [Managing Data](#)

Project Partners:

- The School of Information and Library Science (SILS), University of North Carolina (UNC)
- Institute of Museum and Library Services
- Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC)
- Digital Curation Centre (DCC)

Digitizing - Planning

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Q. How do I prepare for a digitizing initiative?

There is much to consider when undertaking digitization work of any size but fortunately many successful projects during the past two decades have established best practices and clear workflows. Additionally, national and international organizations have published several data management standards relevant to digitization and the preservation and dissemination of the digital content you produce.

Examples of successful projects and long-term digitization programs range across libraries, archives, and museums; you may find the most compelling arguments for digitization or the most relevant models within your own type of repository, but you may also find it among use cases at other institutions. The fundamental tasks, workflows, and knowledge-base essential to successful digitization and provision of this material to your audiences is constant across all settings. The format of analog materials, however, does require specific knowledge and techniques to accomplish the basic digitization processes.

It is important to note that digitization projects or long-term programs always build on established practices in libraries, archives, and museums. Digitization does not replace other institutional tasks; rather it adds to existing funds.

Take action

Please note that there is not a strict order to these actions. Many will take place in parallel, and funding, and equipment are often decided in an iterative fashion until the project is complete.

- **Attend conferences, workshops, and courses to learn about digitization.**

Conferences

- [International Digital Curation Conference \(IDCC\)](#). Various cities in Europe

Q. What do I need to know about rights management?

Take action

Review case studies

- "Copyright and the Thomas E. Watson Papers Digitization Project: A Case Study." *From Investigation to Implementation: Building a Program for the Large-Scale Digitization of Manuscripts*. Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Libraries. Last updated December 2009. <http://www.lib.unc.edu/mss/archivalmassdigitization/index.html?section=legal#copyright>

Documents the process archival staff used in their extensive copyright research and concludes that such a process is not scalable.

Watch

- Hoving, Frans. Vimeo video. April 2010. <http://vimeo.com/13304914>

Interview: Frans Hoving, Netherlands Institute for Heritage
from Casa de Cultura Digital

