

# **Picking up the Thread: Implementing New Digital Imaging Targets at the National Archives**

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**Abstract:** New tools and shifting priorities have made large-scale image digitization projects commonplace, yet how do sponsoring institutions adopt quality metrics appropriate to the scale and complexity of these projects? Using the National Archives and Records Administration as a case study, the author identifies challenges and opportunities in implementing new imaging targets and quality standards. The Digitization Services Branch of NARA is currently transitioning from using a custom grayscale/color separation target based on the Tiffen/Kodak Q13 to the Image Science Associates Golden Thread target and software package. The new system was designed specifically for digital imaging and allows for finer-grained assessment of both image output and device performance -- yet for each new potential metric, new decisions must be made about appropriate standards, what data to collect and how to monitor that data. This study highlights differences between image target systems and the impetus for NARA's changeover; it describes the changes required in the current workflow and the effect of those changes on organizational use of resources; and it considers the effects of image quality assessment on designated communities.

## **About the author:**

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