

TRENDS IN  
**ARCHIVES**  
PRACTICE

# ENGAGEMENT IN THE DIGITAL ERA

*Edited by* NICOLE J. MILANO and CHRISTOPHER J. PROM



SOCIETY OF  
**American  
Archivists**

CHICAGO

SAA Preview

**Society of American Archivists**  
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# Preface to Trends in Archives Practice

Trends in Archives Practice is an exciting publishing initiative of the Society of American Archivists (SAA), but one that is firmly tied to our publishing history and to the other publications that SAA offers. For more than forty years, SAA has published manuals, guides, and other resources that provide core knowledge concerning archival theories, practices, and procedures. Students, archivists, and people in related information professions have used publications like those in our Archival Fundamentals Series to hone their skills and to build forward-looking archival programs.

Trends in Archives Practice both complements and extends the core archival knowledge and practice that SAA has provided for these past decades. At its heart, it is an open-ended series of modules featuring brief, authoritative treatments that are written and edited by top-level professionals. Each module treats a discrete topic relating to the practical management of archives and manuscript collections in the digital age, and modules are available in both print and electronic formats.

The goal of this approach is to build agile, user-centered resources that fill significant gaps in the archival literature and that are too specialized for deep treatment in other volumes, such as those in our Archival Fundamentals Series. Many modules are planned, and readers are invited to mix, match, and combine modules that best satisfy their needs and interests. Modules in this series should be regarded as essential reading for students and practicing archivists alike, as well as

for anyone who wants to begin applying archival practices to information management problems.

Trends in Archives Practice builds upon SAA's publishing traditions during a time when archival work has grown increasingly complex and fluid. In light of rapid changes to communication and documentation patterns, students, archivists, and other information professionals need to continually refresh their knowledge and skills.

Yet a simple problem confronts anyone wanting to build competence in the areas covered by this series: an ever-growing and sometimes intractable literature. Technical standards, research reports, and case studies multiply with each technological advance. New concepts, approaches, technologies, and services emerge at a rapid pace. The ground shifts rapidly. It is easy to become unbalanced amid the complex writings and confusing acronyms, and it is SAA's firm conviction that students and practicing archivists need access to the kind of filtered and synthesized information provided by Trends in Archives Practice.

Each module will offer a convenient point of departure into a difficult area of practice, providing a general introduction to a specific field based on the following guiding principles:

- The information provided will represent the best of current practice and will make only limited reference to debates about the more theoretical aspects of archival work.
- Each module will (1) review issues related to a discrete topic; (2) discuss relevant standards, policies, practices, procedures, tools, technologies, and services; (3) describe current activities; (4) provide practical recommendations; and (5) point to other resources of value, both within the new series and in the broader literature.
- The advice provided will be appropriate for implementation in a wide range of repositories (in terms of size, focus, and available resources).
- Modules will stand on their own but may be grouped with other modules to constitute a book-length cluster.
- The content of all modules and clusters will be thoroughly peer reviewed and edited and will make an enduring contribution to the profession.

Taken as a whole, SAA's Publications Program seeks to help students, practicing archivists, and other people to develop the perspectives, knowledge, and skills that advance archival goals, both personal and corporate. We are proud that you have become part of that story by purchasing a module or cluster in Trends in Archives Practice, and we look forward to serving as your first stop for professional development, now and in the future!

CHRISTOPHER J. PROM  
SAA Publications Editor (2014–2020)

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**ESTABLISHING  
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