

Public Access to Digital Content project  
NARA, Office of Innovation

Phase 2 Interview Script

Interviews to be conducted by Dara A. Baker, Digital Format Specialist or Deborah Gayle, Project detailee, Archives Specialist, Electronic Records Processing. Interview done under the auspices of Office of Innovation, Digital Engagement Division (VE).

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this follow up interview for NARA's Public Access to Digital Content project. I will be asking the following questions and typing out your answers as we go. I will be happy to provide a copy of the document once the interview is completed. We can go back to any question at any time and you are free to not answer any questions.

The National Archives and Records Administration Office of Innovation is conducting a benchmarking project on Public Access to Digital Content. The project looks at how cultural heritage institutions and national archives with archives/records responsibilities in the US and abroad currently deliver their electronic assets to researchers through their main public access interface.

This series of questions is geared to gain information and insight on your institution's decisions and actions to make collections available to the public, what file formats and record/collection types are made available, and how the public can interact with your content. Our goal is to understand more about how our fellow cultural heritage and archival institutions are interacting with their public(s) through our primary means: our digital interfaces.

1. Institutional Mission and Policy
  - a. How does digital access help you reach your institution's goals and meet your institution's mission?
  - b. Who do you consider your main audience(s) for your content?
  - c. How many staff members work on digital public access?
  - d. How many staff members work to provide reference access to digital content?
  
2. What would you consider to be your main/primary public interface? What collections are included there?
  - a. Does file format or record type influence your decision to make content available?
  - b. Has your institution designated a specific location to find digital objects, digitized content, and/or born-digital materials?
  - c. Have you specifically identified born-digital formats and digitized formats (e.g. email, digital photographs, social media)?

3. Does your institution's collection development policy address/include specific guidance regarding digitization and/or digital formats?
  - a. Who makes the decisions about what is visible to the public and what goes into which digital public interface?
4. What file formats/digital record types do you have in your collection? What digital file types/formats do you currently provide for public access? Do you have plans to change/increase this within the next 12 months?
5. On file formats:
  - a. Does your institution have an official policy about file formats and image resolution for content made available through online public interfaces? Is this policy public? Is there a difference between access through the "main" catalog and any speciality websites?
  - b. Does the file format/resolution differ based on format/record type?
  - c. How does your institution provide access formats? Are they created on the fly, stored with/within the access system, created from preservation or reproduction masters?
  - d. Who makes the decision about what file format to provide? At what point is that decision made? Ingest? Processing? Reference?
  - e. What file formats are available to researchers (on site or remote reference) that may not be available on the public interface?
  - f. Ideally, how many formats would you make available to your public? Does this differ based on which public is included/intended?
6. What born-digital content do you consider to be most critical to your public?
7. What digital content (digitized or born-digital) is most challenging to present to the public?
8. What is the process for providing access to email, databases, and other born-digital content that does not have an analog equivalent?
9. What analytics/metrics do you collect and keep on interactions with/access from your main public interface?
10. What level of processing do you apply to born-digital content? Is the same metadata created/required for born-digital content and digitized content?
11. Metadata
  - a. Descriptive metadata:
    - i. What metadata schema does your institution follow for digital content?

- ii. How do you manage the difference in vocabulary for analog processed material and born-digital digital content?
  - iii. What level of metadata do you require, at minimum, for inclusion in your Catalog/system?
  - iv. What would be an ideal level of metadata?
- b. Technical and administrative metadata
- i. When do you collect technical metadata? Is this technical metadata available to researchers? Is metadata maintained with access copies?
  - ii. What metadata, if any, associated with digitization do you collect? What do you make available to the public?
12. Does your institution indicate whether content is born digital or digitized? Have your users/public indicated any interest in knowing whether content is born-digital or digitized? How important do you think this information is to your public?
13. What delivery methods do you have available to researchers?
- a. Is bulk download of digital content and associated metadata something your institution does/is considering/hopes to offer?
  - b. What value added tools (e.g. IIIF viewer, researcher lists, return to previous search) have you incorporated into your public interface?
  - c. Is emulation of interest to your institution for access to digital content?
14. What process do you have in place to prevent the addition of duplicative content or duplicative metadata within your system?
15. How do you communicate to your public about digital preservation?
16. What functionality do you wish you could provide to users? What functionalities have users requested?
17. What decisions about file formats and digitization would you make now knowing how your systems interface/interact?
18. Would your institution follow best practices for public access to digital content if such best practices existed?