Government Records and Information: Real Risks and Potential Losses

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BORN-DIGITAL U.S. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT INFORMATION: PRESERVATION AND ACCESS

PREPARED FOR THE CENTER FOR RESEARCH LIBRARIES GLOBAL RESOURCES COLLECTIONS FORUM

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3stages.org/crl
Two Themes

(1) This is Not about Technology

Technology is a tool
Two Themes

(2) This is about Value of Libraries

Value ≠ “Assets”

Value = (Collections + Services)
Gaps in what we know

• no list of born-digital government information

• no list of all government websites

• no list of preserved born-digital gov-information
What we know (1)

FDLP libraries successfully preserved millions of volumes of non-digital government information
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Life-cycle</th>
<th>Responsible Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creation</td>
<td>Individual agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>GPO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preservation</td>
<td>FDLP Libraries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What we know (2)

Most born-digital government information is not held, managed, organized, served, or preserved by libraries
1983

INS v. Chadha, 462 U.S. 919

- Keeping America Informed
The U.S. Government Printing Office
150 Years Of Service To The Nation.
1993

Public Law 103-40
The Government Printing Office
Electronic Information Access
Enhancement Act
What we know (3)

The scope of born-digital government information being produced far outpaces what is being preserved.
The simple fact is:

no one knows how much born-digital U.S. Federal government information has been created, or where it all is, or how much of it is being preserved.
Issues

• Versioning
• The need for persistent URLs
• The need for temporal context
• E-government issues
• Relying on government for preservation (and free access)
• Selection
• Collections need Services
Who Should Preserve?

• Government alone
• Government with non-government partners
• Non-government without government cooperation
Methods of selection

• Broad web harvesting
• Focused selection
• Digital Deposit
Framework

- Preservation and Access
- Collections and Services
- Focus on user-communities first
- Unique collections for unique communities
- Participation of every library
- Cooperation and Collaboration
Summary

• We can:
  – Preserve born-digital government information (the technology exists)
  – Every library can participate (the entry-cost is low)
  – We can add value to the information by building collections of use to our communities.
  – We can add value to our libraries by providing collections + services for our communities.