



They say we can't do affordable digital preservation ourselves. We're doing it anyway. Here's why.

AN OPEN STATEMENT TO THE DIGITAL MEMORY COMMUNITY

Collaborative, community-owned, community-governed approaches to digital preservation strengthen the traditional role of libraries as stewards of the public memory while extending it into the digital age.

The community-owned approach to long-term digital preservation offers greater local control of resources and encourages sustainability through shared costs and commitment. Recent experiences with scholarship, scholarly communication, and licensing materials underscore the importance of retaining local control and continuing to ensure broad access to traditional library resources.

In surveying the landscape, library directors and other administrators will encounter an array of both community organized and commercial digital preservation solutions. They may be tempted to outsource this crucial portfolio to third-party vendors. For reasons of cost, simplicity, and efficiency, they should think twice.

Community-owned approaches to digital preservation are proven, efficient, and effective solutions. How are they managing such concerns as resources, sustainability, scalability, the build vs. buy dilemma, and cost?

RESOURCES

Adding DP to your library's mission is challenging. Fortunately, community-owned networks can show you how to capitalize on your existing infrastructure to accomplish this goal (and some of them are at this meeting—ask them how!).

SCALABILITY

Can DP scale up and across different types of institutions? A growing body of experience confirms that it can. Community-owned DP networks are bringing different institutions and approaches together to preserve data sets, newspaper collections, and other large collections.

SUSTAINABILITY

Building a DP network is just the first step. The challenge is keeping it going. Many networks are meeting this challenge with strong organizational models. Ask them how.

BUILD VS. BUY

Over time, building a community-owned DP network will be more cost-effective than buying a commercial solution...and through embedding infrastructure and knowledge in your local environment, you retain control over the process and over your digital content.

COST

Community-owned DP networks are up-front about costs. You know exactly what you're paying for and why, *and* you have a voice in setting the price. Experience has taught us that we do not have a similar voice in commercial pricing.

BACKGROUND

In October 2010, a working group formed to create an open statement to the digital memory community--especially library directors and other administrators--regarding the value of collaborative, community-owned, community-governed approaches to long-term digital preservation.

We are sharing this statement with the NDSA community in hopes that folks who share its sentiments will take this opportunity to number among its initial signatories.