**Digital Preservation Assessment**

What is it and why does it matter?

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| **What is digital preservation?**  Digital preservation combines policies, strategies, and actions to ensure long-term access to content that is born digital or converted to digital form, regardless of the challenges of file corruption, media failure, and technological change. Digital preservation is an ongoing process, not a one-time activity, and must be addressed programmatically. Digital preservation involves more than creating backups of files. (*Definitions of Digital Preservation*, Association for Library Collections & Technical Services, <http://www.ala.org/alcts/resources/preserv/defdigpres0408>) | **Why do we need digital preservation?**  Digital files become inaccessible over time unless they are managed and migrated to new technology as needed. Even content that resides on a website or social media site is at risk. |
| **What is a digital preservation assessment?**  The digital preservation assessment helps an institution assess and document its digital preservation needs through a site visit and report completed by a consultant. The site visit involves discussions with digital preservation stakeholders at the institution, which may include IT staff, collections managers, administrative staff, and other interested parties. Following the site visit, the consultant records observations and recommendations in a report intended to guide the institution in improving their digital preservation practices. The assessment focuses on preserving digital objects, which may in part address digitization practices and techniques, but digitization is not the main focus of the assessment. | |
| **Institution responsibilities**   * Work with the consultant to schedule a site visit * Schedule with relevant staff that may be needed to participate: IT staff, collection manager(s), administrative staff, others * Attend meetings and discussions about digital collections and digital preservation practices and needs | **Consultant responsibilities**   * Work with the institution to schedule a site visit * Facilitate meetings and discussions about digital collections and digital preservation practices and needs * Provide a written report documenting findings in the visit and making digital preservation recommendations |

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| **Digital Preservation Assessment for [Institution]** | |
| **Assessment Date** |  |
| **Consultant** |  |
| **Assessment Primary Contact Name** |  |
| **Assessment Participant Names**  List all staff members participating in the assessment. Which staff participate depends entirely on the institution and its structure, but participants may include:   * Administration * Archivist * Collection Manager * Digital Collection Manager * IT Staff (in-house or contracted) * Preservation Librarian |  |