

# Moving Forward with Born-Digital Manuscripts

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# “Electronic Records Planning in ‘Collecting’ Repositories”

- 125 collecting repositories surveyed
- 80+ institutions actively collecting electronic records
- 30 institutions have an acquisitions policy that governs ‘born-digital’ decisions
- 15 institutions have a digital preservation policy

# Congressional Electronic Records

- 36 of 46 institutions surveyed have born-digital material in congressional collections
- Most have no policies
- Most cannot access records
- Less than half can estimate the size (in bytes) of born-digital in these collections



# American Heritage Center (AHC)



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- Similar to special collections departments:
  - Manuscripts repository
  - Rare books library
  - University Archives
- No organizational systems department—*we must rely on IT resources outside of our institution.*
- 11 archivists on staff—1 focused on digital

If we wait for the resources to move forward, we may wait forever.

You cannot address other born-digital issues until you resolve the disk-in-a-box problem.



# Getting Started

- Inventory existing material and estimate the number of bytes
- Implement a storage solution, engage IT personnel
- Move files from disks to storage, documenting actions + authenticity
- Develop policies, best practices for future acquisitions

# Inventory Existing Material

| Collection Title       | Accession | Media Format   | Label  | Location          |
|------------------------|-----------|----------------|--|-------------------|
| Williams, Elizabeth S. | 400041    | CD-R           | JWD 39(3) Figures Kreuder/Weiser             | Box 21, 099.02.07 |
| Williams, Elizabeth S. | 400041    | CD-R           | JWD Oct issue 2002                           | Box 21, 099.02.07 |
| Williams, Elizabeth S. | 400041    | CD-R           | JWD etc [indecipherable]                     | Box 21, 099.02.07 |
| Williams, Elizabeth S. | 400041    | 5.25" disk     | Documents BU 3/5                             | Box 21, 099.02.07 |
| Williams, Elizabeth S. | 400041    | zip            | Iowa State - edited                          | Box 21, 099.02.07 |
| Williams, Elizabeth S. | 400041    | zip            | not labelled                                 | Box 21, 099.02.07 |
| Williams, Elizabeth S. | 400041    | zip            | sidewrite SWIN2 files etc                    | Box 21, 099.02.07 |
| Williams, Elizabeth S. | 400041    | zip            | 486 backups                                  | Box 21, 099.02.07 |
| Williams, Elizabeth S. | 400041    | (13) 3.5" disk | unlabelled                                   | Box 21, 099.02.07 |
| Williams, Elizabeth S. | 400041    | 3.5" disk      | WDA talks                                    | Box 21, 099.02.07 |
| Williams, Elizabeth S. | 400041    | 3.5" disk      | WDA tables                                   | Box 21, 099.02.07 |
| Williams, Elizabeth S. | 400041    | 3.5" disk      | Focus On for Windows [system/software disk?] | Box 21, 099.02.07 |
| Williams, Elizabeth S. | 400041    | 3.5" disk      | ModelMaker Demo Disk [system/software disk?] | Box 21, 099.02.07 |

# Estimate the Number of Bytes

| Media Format | Total Disks | Maximum Bytes (per item)                         | Maximum Bytes (total for format) |
|--------------|-------------|--|----------------------------------|
| CD-R         | 26          | 700 Mb   | 18,200 Mb (17.8 Gb)              |
| DVD-R        | 71          | 4.71 Gb  | 334.41 Gb                        |
| 3.5" disk    | 16          | 2.88 Mb  | 46.08 Mb                         |
| 5.25" disk   | 2           | 1.2 Mb   | 2.4 Mb                           |
|              |             | <b>Maximum Amount of Data in the Collection:</b> | <b>352.2 Gb</b><br>(360684 Mb)   |

# Estimate the Number of Bytes

Redundancy required:

1. Archival Master
2. Backup of Archival Master
3. Access copy

# Implement a Storage Solution

1. Consider external hard drives.
2. Talk to IT personnel about network storage, and costs.

# Engage IT Personnel

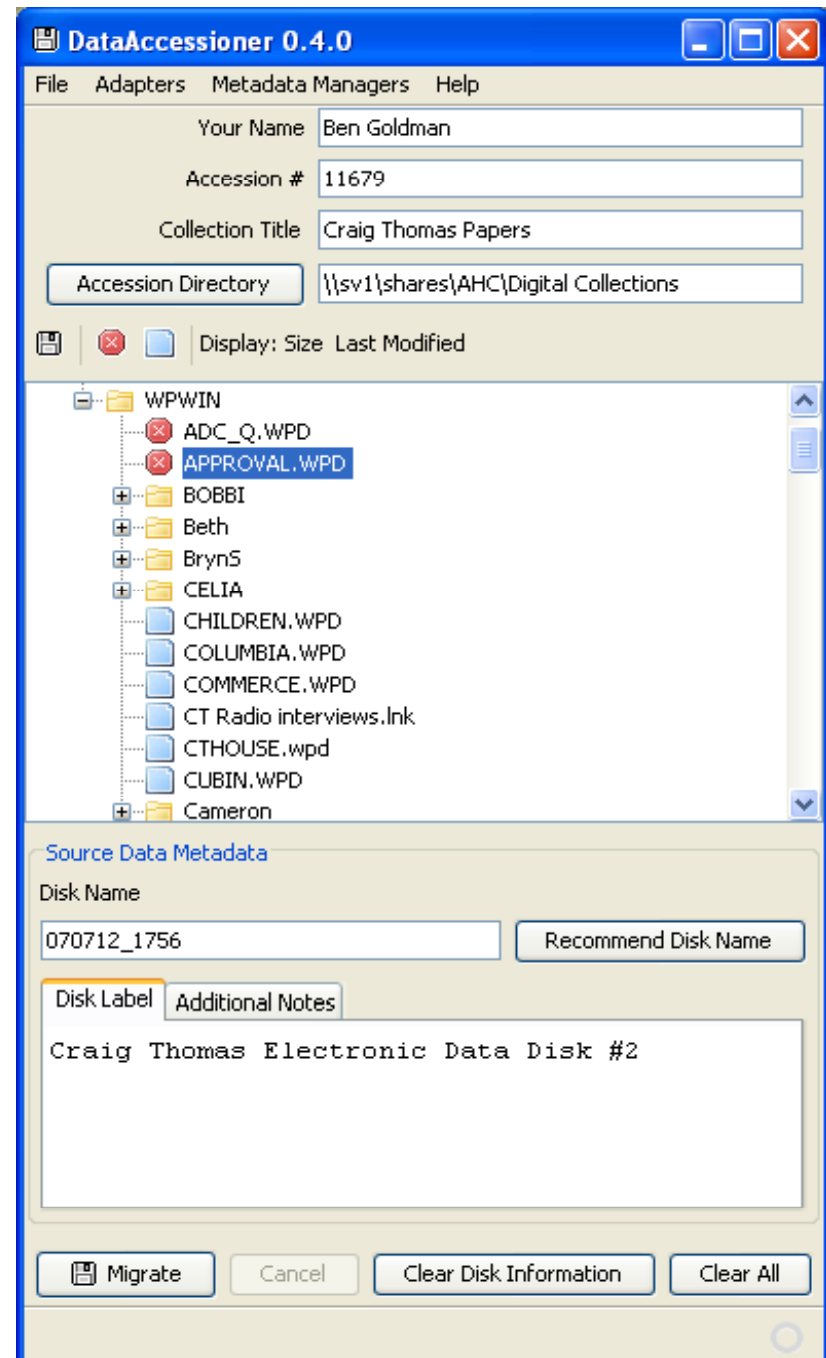


# Documentation

Document the work you do with born-digital material, even if just at the disk level.

Document authenticity information.

# Transfer Records





# Preparing for Future Acquisitions

- Consider transfer methods
- Communicate with creators/donors
- Consider file formats
- Update forms
- Keep iterating

# Consider Transfer Methods

- Creator's disks?
- Whole computers?
- Archive/Library's disks or drives?
- All at once or regular transfers?

# Communicate with Potential Donors

Recommending best practices:

*save old media and files,  
name your files consistently,  
organize your files*

# Communicate with Potential Donors

*The management of your digital materials can be enhanced if you handle them in groups and organize them in a logical manner. This structure should be consistent with the organization of any paper records you have, or records in other media, so that all records related to the same activity or subject, or of the same type, can be identified as part of one conceptual grouping.*

Yale's "Author's Guidelines for Digital Preservation,"

# Consider File Formats

| <b>NAME</b>            | <b>EXT</b> | <b>LAST_MODIFIED</b> | <b>FORMAT_NAME</b>                      | <b>FORMAT_VERSION</b> |
|------------------------|------------|----------------------|---|-----------------------|
| CHILDREN.WPD           | WPD        | 1997-06-12T13:09:08  | WordPerfect for MS-DOS/Windows Document | 6                     |
| FORESTME.97            | 97         | 1997-05-15T16:48:56  | WordPerfect for MS-DOS/Windows Document | 6                     |
| MEMBER.COS             | COS        | 1997-11-06T12:58:06  | WordPerfect for MS-DOS/Windows Document | 6                     |
| senator.email.list.wb3 | wb3        | 2001-03-02T09:35:04  | OLE2 Compound Document Format           |                       |
| WOOLGRO.ESA            | ESA        | 1997-11-12T09:27:42  | WordPerfect for MS-DOS/Windows Document | 6                     |

# Update Donor Forms

*I give consent to the Center to digitally reformat the collection or migrate existing digital content to new technical environments as appropriate for preservation and/or access purposes.*

Keep iterating!

We need the initiative and drive...to dive in and begin working with digital materials... We cannot wait until we have everything figured out.

Whatever we do, we may fail; but if we do nothing, failure is guaranteed.

Let us celebrate the reality of what we can accomplish, rather than bemoan the dream we did not fully realize.

Pearce-Moses, Richard. "Janus in Cyberspace: Archives on the Threshold of a Digital Era." 2006. Available at:

<http://www.archivists.org/governance/presidential/pearce-moses.asp>.