



RLG Programs

# Digital Curators: Who, What, & How

**A Perspective from  
OCLC Programs &  
Research**

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# Libraries and Curation Responsibilities

"I am prepared to predict that in the next 20 years only 25% to 40% of libraries resources will go into purchasing collections and 40% to 60% will go into curating digital content."

David W. Lewis, *A Model for Academic Libraries 2005 to 2025*

# Who, What, & How: a glimmer

. . . the **digital curator** is store-keeper but he is also closely linked to promoting new [research], making sure that his user-base is solid, sufficient, and looking forward to identify new ways to serve present and future researchers.

The **digital curator** should take an active role in promoting and adding value to his holdings, hold exhibitions, run joint events; he should manage the value of his collection.

*From Data Deluge to Data Curation,*

Philip Lord, Alison Macdonald, Liz Lyon, David Giaretta

# Potential Responsibilities Focus On . . .

- Digital Collections
  - Enable data discovery and retrieval
  - Maintain/ manage quality
  - Enable use, reuse, new use, new collections
  - Provide advice on building new collections
  - Promote and preserve interoperability
- Collections Management
  - Preserve viability
  - Preserve renderability
  - Preserve understandability
  - Preserve authenticity

# Digital Curators Will Work With . . .

- Products of mass digitization
- Products of digitized special materials contributed by institutions
- Products of data-intensive research
- Products of “new scholarship” activities
  - Web archive collections
  - Personal research collections
  - E-only research
    - Datasets & databases
    - Reports, papers, theses, dissertations, etc.
- Repositories, writ large

# Curation and Collection Building

- Collection building
  - Large data aggregations
  - New scholarly collections
    - Web archiving
    - Research data
    - Data collections
- Supporting this will require knowledge of . . .
  - Metadata
  - Appraisal
  - Use expectations (and possibly a crystal ball)
  - Tools
  - Repository options and functionalities
  - Frameworks

# Curation and Management

- Management
  - Preserve digital objects
  - Preserve renderability
  - Support long-term use and reuse
- Supporting this will require knowledge of . . .
  - Metadata
  - Data structures
  - Significant properties of formats
  - Software tools
  - Repository infrastructure
  - Sustainability models
  - Digital preservation strategies

# Past RLG Curation-Related Activities

- *Trusted Digital Repositories*
- Technical metadata for digital still images
  - NISO Z39.87-2007
  - Automatic Exposure (metadata extraction)
- Preservation Metadata: Implementation Strategies (PREMIS)
- *Trusted Repositories Audit and Certification: Criteria and Checklist*



# Curation Tools and Services (OCLC)

- CONTENTdm
  - Digital collections management software
  - Digital [virtual] repository architecture
- Web Archiving Workbench
- OCLC Digital Archive
  - Long-term management of digital files
  - Protects viability of digital files
  - Secure back-up

# Curation: OCLC Programs & Research Projects

- Curating the Collective Collection
  - Shared print collections
  - Harmonizing digitization
  - Data-mining for management intelligence
  - Shared infrastructure
  - Museum collection sharing
- New Modes of Research Teaching and Learning
  - Web archive collections
  - New scholarly aggregations
  - Personal research collections

Thank you.

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