

*Digital Curation Vignettes*

# Archiving the electronic records of a private organization

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# Themes

Post-custodial archivist

formation process

Minimalist preservation

Evidence in hybrid systems

# Post-custodial archivist

- Environment of trust
- Coordinate the archiving process
- Research legal requirements and future access possibilities
- Preservation strategy to endure 10 year legal record retention period and beyond

# Appraisal

- Semi-centralized paper file system
  - Project files and area files
  - Contained official documents and exchange with beneficiaries and the public
- Shared directory
- Personal work records

# Legal aspects

- 10 year retention period for accounting and board records
- Lack of archiving enforcement for private archives of historical significance
- No legal provisions for electronic records



# Archiving the hybrid system

- Paper records carry the legal weight (in argentina)
- Self-archiving paper records
- Dichotomy, paper vs. electronic records
- Time to make decisions about electronic records

# Archive's Formation process

- Interviews
- Primary sources (accounting records)
- Examined records as cultural material
- Secondary sources
- Metadata timeline
- Preservation strategy

# Metadata timeline

- Reconstruction of the technical environment of the electronic records from 1987 to 2005
- hardware and software changes
- Two distinct eras (dos and windows)
  - [TIMELINE](#)



# Aleph's archive

- Records creation and keeping practices
  - Via shared network, bits and pieces of text
  - Printed and filed final versions
  - Different functions of a same record

# Minimalist preservation

- Preventive conservation
  - Create a protected, updated, environment adequate for access when needed
- Transfer protocol
- Access control
- Records integrity and authenticity

# Virtual migration

- Renderability is tested in subsequent versions (OS and software)
- Sample of representative (copies) files are migrated to the next software version
- Changes are recorded

# Reality

It is what there is

# Evidence

- Text mining
  - To measure the similarity between the records of every other staff member each year over 9 years
  - Similarity is conceptualized as inter organizational collaboration
- Visualization [See: <http://www.ils.unc.edu/digccurr2009/AppendixIII.mov>]
  - To understand the text mining results, discover collaboration changes or patterns over time
  - Make sense of the records
  - Non-consumptive research (contents are not known) but not totally anonymous
  - Access points
- Validation
  - Interviews
  - Statistical distributions of cosine similarities



# Reference

- For more detailed information and bibliography go to my dissertation:  
<http://hdl.handle.net/2152/3840>