

The background features a stylized network diagram with white lines connecting orange circular nodes on a mustard yellow background. Three hands are depicted in a dark brown color with white outlines: one at the top center, one at the bottom left, and one on the right side pointing towards the center.

Social Media Preservation in Times of Change

**A Workflow and Policy
Analysis Case-Study at
Towson University's Archives**

Emiel Brown & Jasmine S. Malone | SAA Research Forum 2025

Presenters

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What we'll cover

Introduce the Web
Archives at TU

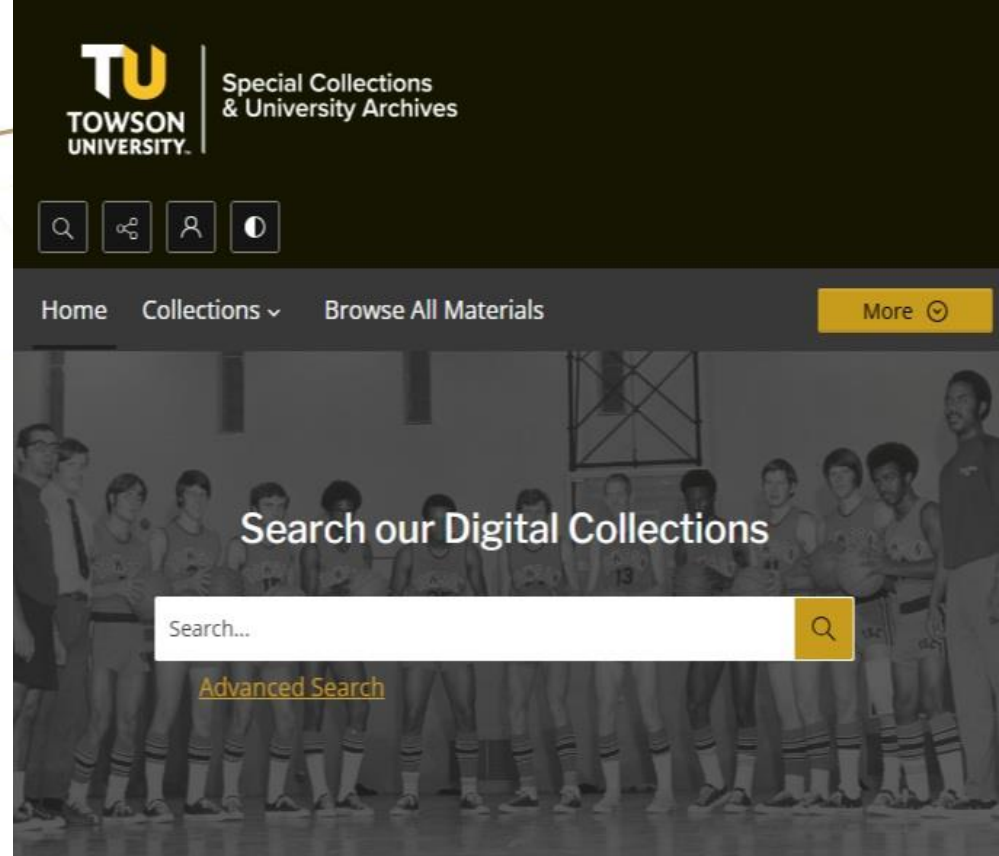
Provide background
on case-study
inspiration and
context

Discuss
reevaluating our
web capture
workflow

Share
recommendations
and next steps

TU Archives

- **Our role:** To preserve and document the history of the university, including voices not represented by "official" historical sources
- **Our collecting areas:**
 - TU and local history
 - Performing arts
 - Jewish history and culture
 - World War II
 - History of education in Maryland



Featured Collections



Unearthing Towson's History Project

An interdisciplinary, collaborative student-centered research project that connects alumni and the wider community to the history of the university.



Ideations of Potential

Web and Social Media Archiving @ TU

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The leading web archiving service
for collecting and accessing
cultural heritage on the web
Built at the Internet Archive



Explore >> Towson University



Towson University

Archive-It Partner Since: Sep, 2017

Organization Type: [Colleges & Universities](#)

Organization URL: <https://www.towson.edu/>

Description: Towson University (TU or Towson) is a public university in Towson, Maryland, eight miles north of downtown Baltimore. Founded in 1866 as Maryland's first training school for teachers, Towson University is a part of the University System of Maryland. Since its founding, the university has evolved into eight subsidiary colleges and over 20,000 students. This makes Towson one of the largest public universities in Maryland, and it still produces the most teachers of any university in the state. For information about this page or TU's use of Archive-It, please contact the Special Collections and University Archives at spcoll@towson.edu.

Narrow Your Results

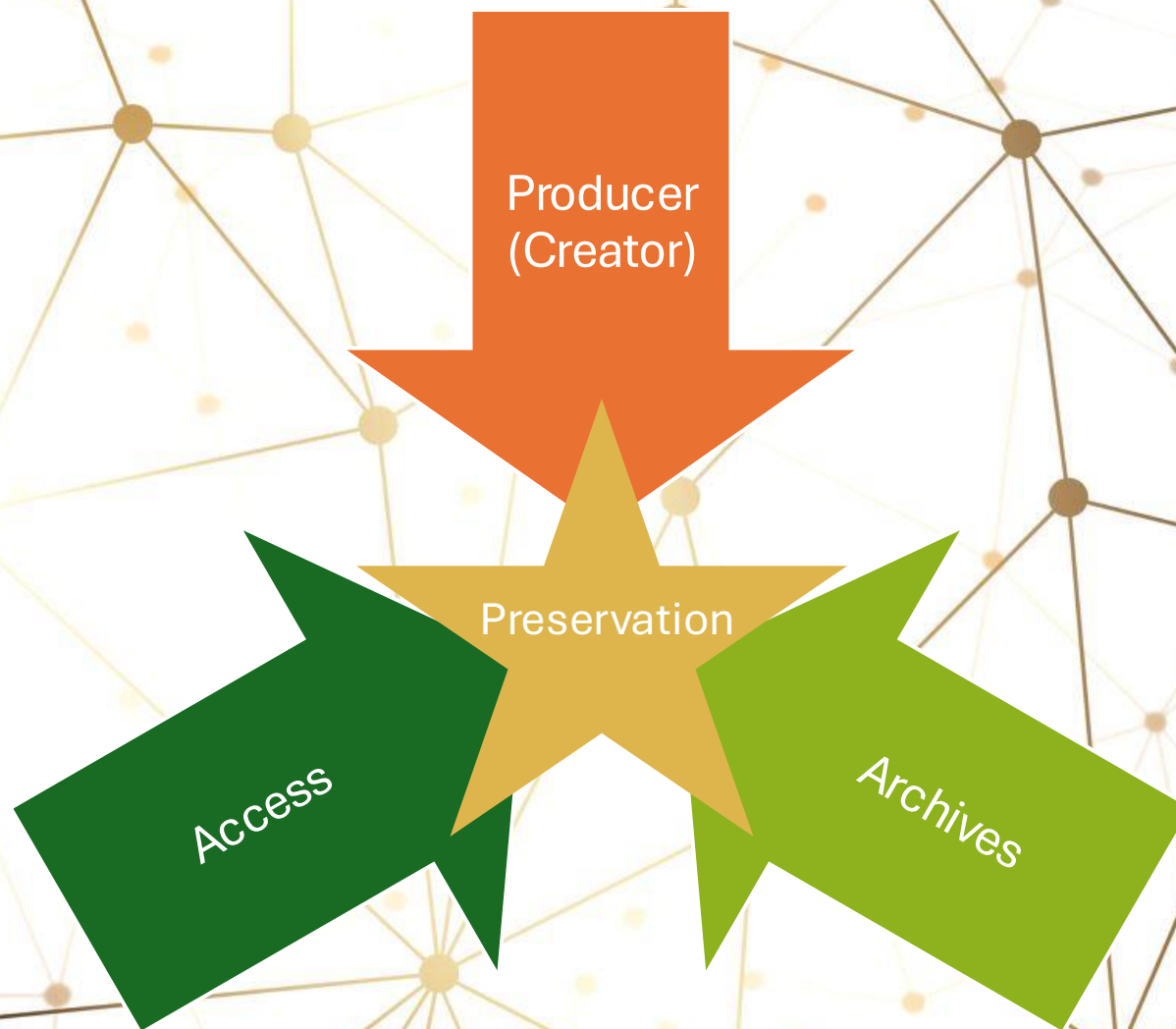
Subject

zations/1279

Sort By: Count | (A-Z)

- Towson web pages
- Student publications
- Alumni and TU-affiliated projects

As social media becomes an increasingly important mode of communication, how does this fit into our web archiving efforts?



Our case study seeks to evaluate how our archives can best gauge its capacity for social media preservation and how we determine “good” sustainable practices amidst platform evolution, retirement, and migration.



Evaluation Criteria

Crawling / capture process – How does it work? What can it do?

Expertise needed – What do we need to know? What support is available?

Type and capacity of storage – Where do our captured files go? How are they stored?

Interaction with login – protected sites – Can it capture things like X and Instagram?

Replay of captured sites – How can researchers use these resources in the future?

Cost – What do we pay for? How much? How often?



**Exploring
new tools**



Results

Archiveweb.page was unable to scale to meet our needs in terms of capturing pages that were complex or dynamic, or that needed to be captured regularly.

CivicPlus and **Pagefreezer** were not cost-effective based on the number of accounts we hope to preserve.

Archiveweb.page desktop app is unable to effectively bypass login screens, and **CivicPlus** and **Pagefreezer** required the personal login information of each account in order to access them.

Direct download of data from **X** required greater access to account information than we normally have.

Recommendations

Preserving individual pages

- **Archiveweb.page** allows logged-in, one-time capture of social media pages via free browser extension and local storage of data

Managing institutional social media accounts

- **CivicPlus** or **Pagefreezer** allow near-real-time management of accounts with individual login information

Ongoing dynamic crawls

- **Archive-It** or **Browsertrix** allow individual or scheduled crawls of sites and store data on a subscription basis

Recommendations



Policy



Updated accessions, appraisal, and reappraisal policy for web archives

Procedures



Update workflows to include regular quality assurance checks

Training



Staff training and development on web archives management

Next Steps

Tool Selection: deciding which tool is best for our needs and collections

Ongoing review: remain flexible and anticipate changes

Integrating workflows: determine how the tool can partner with our other web based platforms

Collection management updates: implementing policies and procedures to develop a plan and maintain our social media collection



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