Cultivating Community: Cross-Institutional Development of Digital Preservation Learning Materials for Smaller Cultural Heritage Organizations

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Impetus for developing digital preservation webinar series

● Call for facilitators by Andrew Leith, Conservation and Collections Program Manager for the Chicago Cultural Alliance - late April 2020
  ○ COVID-19 pandemic - remote work / professional development
● Previous discussions or efforts among collaborators:
  ○ Laura and Tracy:
    ■ Separate notification of Andrew’s call for experts
    ■ Prior discussion regarding lack of digital preservation training
  ○ Laura and Dan:
    ■ Digital preservation workshop submission to Midwest Archives Conference (cancelled)
● opportunity + convergence = collaboration
Can we rapidly develop an effective high-level and practical digital preservation curriculum geared toward professionals working in smaller (under-resourced) cultural heritage institutions?
Methods

Rapid lit review/environmental scan... of adult learning styles

Characteristics of Adult Learners
○ Need to know why they are learning something
○ Learn through doing
○ Are problem solvers
○ Learn best when the subject is of immediate use
○ Prefer social interaction
○ Want to use their life experiences in the classroom
○ Want to integrate new ideas with existing knowledge

Rassmusen, 2015. [https://www.leadingagemn.org/assets/docs/15_Workforce_103_CreatingEffectiveOrientationPrograms-CRasmussen.pdf](https://www.leadingagemn.org/assets/docs/15_Workforce_103_CreatingEffectiveOrientationPrograms-CRasmussen.pdf)

of existing digital preservation educational tools/resources

- Digital Preservation Outreach and Education program (Library of Congress)
  [http://www.digitalpreservation.gov/education/call.html](http://www.digitalpreservation.gov/education/call.html)
- Digital POWRR - [https://digitalpowrr.niu.edu/](https://digitalpowrr.niu.edu/)
- * Carpentries instructor training
  [https://carpentries.github.io/instructor-training/](https://carpentries.github.io/instructor-training/)
Workshop Design

Practical and goal-driven

- “meet learners where they are”
- High-level, actionable digital preservation
- Activities draw from participants’ experiences and relate to their collections
- National Digital Stewardship Alliance - Levels of Digital Preservation used for goal setting
Topics Covered

Topics drawn from

- NDSA Levels of Digital Preservation
- MAC Workshop proposal
  - Digital Preservation Introduction
  - Storage
  - Metadata
  - Capacity Building
Themes

- DON’T PANIC!
- Start somewhere
- Flexibility
- Avoid prescriptive language
- Customize to meet institutional needs and resources (following a specific implementation not as crucial as long as it is effective and successful in terms of safeguarding digital content)
- Digital preservation is not access

Welcome!
Everything is fine.
Activities

- Storage
  - Digital Storage Assessment
- Metadata
  - Create an Inventory
- Capacity building
  - Goal Setting
  - Elevator Pitch
Length and Delivery

- Four, one-hour webinars delivered via Zoom every other week
  - Avoids content overload
  - Allows for contemplation
- Zoom Etiquette
  - Muting
  - Video off
- Audience Participation
  - Breakout rooms
  - Text chat in Zoom - synchronous
  - Audio questions in Zoom - synchronous
  - Document questions in session Google Doc - asynchronous
  - Contact Andrew and/or facilitators between sessions - asynchronous
Assessment - Workshop Effectiveness

- Surveys
  - Pre-workshop
  - Post-workshop
- Virtual Environments
  - Pros:
    - Allowed facilitators from several regional academic institutions to work together and present
    - In person may have been cost prohibitive without grant funds
    - Same for attendees: less travel and time away from work
    - Gave the presenters time to develop the presentations
    - Gave attendees time to digest the information
  - Cons
    - In-person allows for facilitators to gauge engagement more clearly
    - More difficult to get people to collaborate and speak up
    - Technology challenges
Future Work

- Refine
- Teacher Training Tool
- Recorded Toolkit
Thank you!

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