Beyond the Repository: Exploring Integration Between Local and Distributed Digital Preservation Systems

LAURA ALAGNA

Abstract:
Many institutions have established digital repository systems in order to preserve the valuable scholarship and cultural heritage that is either generated or collected by their constituencies. In addition, many of these same organizations have distributed copies of these materials to various locations in order to mitigate the risks associated with lack of geographic diversity, lack of technological diversity, and loss of data related to human activities and systems failures. Services like APTrust, DPN, and Chronopolis have developed to provide this geographical diversity. As these services have matured, the problem of tracking data from a local repository to a distributed preservation service has not been resolved. Northwestern University and the University of California, San Diego were awarded an IMLS Planning Grant (LG-72-16-0135-16) to explore the integration between local repositories and distributed digital preservation systems. This grant seeks to answer questions like, "How does one curate objects to ingest into a long-term dark preservation system?" as well as problems that arise from managing multiple copies and versions of digital objects in multiple systems. This talk will describe the research methodology used in this project as well as preliminary findings, highlighting results regarding criteria used in curation decisions, versioning practices, common workflows and workarounds, and the use of preservation policies.

About the Author:

Laura Alagna is the Digital Preservation Librarian at Northwestern University Libraries. She works to implement a campus-wide vision for digital preservation and to integrate digital preservation into Northwestern's "next generation" repositories. Laura previously was the Digital Accessions Specialist at the University of Chicago, where she developed and implemented policies and workflows for managing born-digital content. Laura has an MLIS with a specialization in data curation from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, as well as degrees from the Amherst College and the University of Chicago. She is currently co-chair of the Chicago Area Archivists Events Committee, member of the BitCurator Consortium Program Committee, and is an appointed member of the Illinois State Historical Records Advisory Board.