

MDOR and ERS Surveys

MDOR /ERS Survey Results

Jody DeRidder, 3 June 2013

The results are in. I've made screen captures and column charts which are all available, with the complete results spreadsheet, here:

http://jodyderidder.com/service/ERS_MDOR_survey2013/

A synopsis of results:

There were 84 respondents. 18 (21.4%) are ERS members, 25 (29.8%) are MDOR members, 27 (32.1%) are members of both, and 14 (16%) don't know.

Top primary areas of interest for MDOR:

93.8% (75) digital documentation and metadata

70% (56) preparing and managing digital content for long-term access

61.3% (49) digital special collections

56.3% (45) digital curation

Top primary areas of interest for ERS:

88.9% (72) electronic records management for institutional records

75.3% (61) preparing and managing digital content for long-term access

54.3% (44) digital curation

When asked which group should manage what area,

75% (63) thought BOTH should cover preparing and managing digital content for long-term access (which fits with what's above)

66.3% (55) thought BOTH should cover digital documentation and metadata

57.1% (48) thought BOTH should cover digital curation

86.9% (73) thought ERS should cover electronic records management for institutional records

43.4% (36) thought MDOR should cover digital special collections (this was followed closely by 39.8% (33) who thought BOTH should cover this

For both groups, what's most important to provide is guidance on standards, best practices, and techniques and tools, followed by software systems.

The comments (in the spreadsheet) that I found most interesting are quoted below.

1) I think there is going to be a lot of overlap between these two sections, but I also think that the general idea of dividing them along the lines of 'platform' (ERS) versus 'content' (MDOR) might help. For instance, if you want to talk about OAIS and TDRs, I would expect that to fall under the guise of ERS. If you want to talk about choosing what to put into a digital archive, and then how to extract/create metadata for that, then I would expect that to fall under MDOR. Maybe one approach would just be to merge the two sections and be done with it. Or, just leave them separate - as long as programs and initiatives clearly explain the focus of any given program - is this program going to focus on metadata standards? or are we going to talk about OAIS? Or both? – then it doesn't really matter how the topics are divided between the two. The more people working towards improving digital preservation, the better.

2) I see the Electronic Records section as the big mack daddy of digital archives topics at SAA with MDOR as a roundtable under the umbrella of ERS with a more specific and detailed focus on the very

important topic of metadata for digital objects - all kinds of digital objects. I would like to see ERS take more of this big picture initiative and coordinate with the MDOR roundtable and new Web Archiving roundtable to insure every SAA conference is covering a breadth of electronic (digital) records (objects) topics. I'd also be in favor of changing the title of ERS to Digital Archives to reflect this change. Electronic Records is an outdated term and doesn't help scope ERS as the big picture organization. I'd also like to see the relationship between ERS, MDOR and Web Archiving to be documented, published online at SAA and required reading for all incoming steering committee members. Political wrangling about who does what is nonsense. Instead we need to all work together to see that all current and upcoming facets of digital curation and preservation are addressed. A little redundancy is OK but a lot is a waste time and energy. Thanks for the opportunity to give feedback!

3) If you are deciding where the two groups should be merged, I think it would make sense. Merge the groups, and then make a subgroups. It sound annoying, but it means that from a holistic standpoint, people can get all the information (because they may be missing out) and if they wish to focus or contribute on a specific topic or group, then that option is available. Think of it as tag-team wrestling (I'm sorry--it just popped in my mind)--it's a team, but you can root for one player or the other—or both. Either way, they win as a team.

4) I see MDOR providing information on the preparation of metadata for submission information packets (SIPs). In my mind MDOR would cover metadata creation and standards like METS, MODS, Dublin Core, etc. I see ERS as providing information about procedures and processes for the systems and workflows that handle electronic records (for example, tasks performed by DSpace or Archivematica). I see ERS handling issues surrounding standards for file formats and normalization, tools for weeding duplicate files, things like that.

Further analysis

To further add to the discussion, I've filtered the responses 4 ways: by who's only an MDOR member, only an ERS member, is a member of both groups, and by who didn't know what they belonged to. The screenshots of these can be found in the MDORonly, ERSONly, ERSandMDOR, and unknown directories under http://jodyderidder.com/service/ERS_MDOR_survey2013/

I think the most telling differences are in the roles. It looks like most of the respondents from ERS are in managerial capacity, whereas most of the respondents from MDOR are in the trenches (see Q1 below).

Variations observed:

Q1) top roles in the organization:

MDOR only: metadata creation (96%), digitization (84%), organization & description (76%), accessioning (64%)

ERS only: assist with funding and policy decisions (73.3%), inform funding and policy decisions (66.7%), accessioning (60%)

MDOR & ERS: organization & description (70.4%), metadata creation (66.7%), accessioning (63%)

unknown: accessioning (71.4%), digitization (64.3%)

Q3) ERS areas:

MDOR only: Electronic institutional records: 100%; long term access: 60.9%

ERS only: Electronic institutional records: 83.3%; long term access: 77.8%

MDOR & ERS: Electronic institutional records: 88.9%; long term access: 85.2%

unknown: Electronic institutional records: 76.9%; long term access: 76.9%

Q4) ERS purpose:

MDOR only: Best practices: 94.7%; techniques and tools: 89.5%

ERS only: techniques & tools: 100%; best practices: 94.4%

MDOR & ERS: Best practices: 100%; techniques and tools, standards: 88.9%

unknown: Best practices: 100%; techniques and tools, standards: 76.9%

Q5) ERS applicability:

MDOR only: 50% yes

ERS only: 77.8% yes

MDOR & ERS: 70.4% yes

unknown: 78.6% yes

Q6) MDOR areas:

MDOR only: digital documentation/metadata: 100%; digital special collections: 96%; long term access: 88%; digital curationL 76%

ERS only: digital documentation/metadata: 86.7%

MDOR & ERS: digital documentation/metadata: 92.6%; long term access: 70.4%

unknown: digital documentation/metadata: 92.3%; long term access: 53.8%

Q7) MDOR purpose:

MDOR only: standards: 100%; techniques and tools: 96%; best practices: 92%

ERS only: techniques & tools, best practices: 90%; standards: 80%

MDOR & ERS: Best practices, standards: 92.6%; techniques and tools: 77.8%

unknown: Best practices: 92.3%; standards: 84.6%

Q8) MDOR applicability:

MDOR only: 79.2% yes

ERS only: 40% yes

MDOR & ERS: 70.4% yes

unknown: 78.6% yes

Q9: What should be covered where?

MDOR only: both MDOR and ERS should cover long-term access (88%), digital documentation and metadata (72%), and digital curation (60%);

MDOR should cover digital special collections (60%), and ERS should cover electronic institutional records

ERS only: both MDOR and ERS should cover long-term access (61.1%), digital documentation and metadata (76.5%), and digital curation (61.1%);

and ERS should cover electronic institutional records (72.2%)

MDOR & ERS: both MDOR and ERS should cover long-term access (74.1%), digital documentation and metadata (55.6%), and digital curation (59.3%), and digital special collections (51.9%); and ERS should cover electronic institutional records (92.6%)

unknown: both MDOR and ERS should cover long-term access (71.4%), digital documentation and metadata (64.3%), and digital curation (42.9%); MDOR should cover digital special collections (64.3%), and ERS should cover electronic institutional records (85.7%)