

TRENDS IN  
**ARCHIVES**  
PRACTICE

**MODULE 2**

PROCESSING  
DIGITAL  
RECORDS AND  
MANUSCRIPTS

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SOCIETY OF  
**American  
Archivists**

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CHICAGO

**Brigham Young University Archives:  
Sidney B. Sperry Photographs**

*by J. Gordon Daines III*

The following case study illustrates some of the challenges inherent to working with legacy digital-only collections. It highlights simple actions that repositories can take to apply best practices in arranging and describing legacy digital-only collections.

The Sidney B. Sperry photographs were acquired by the Brigham Young University Archives in 2003. Sidney B. Sperry was a faculty member who taught at Brigham Young University from 1932 until 1971. The Sperry photographs collection consists of ten compact discs containing digital scans of photographs of Sidney B. Sperry. The images were gathered from Sperry's descendants for use in a family project. The responsible family member felt that the materials would be of use to a wider community and donated the digital images to the Brigham Young University Archives.

The compact discs contained several hundred TIF images with no discernible organization. The donor provided a spreadsheet listing the file names and a brief description for each of the images. After the discs were accessioned, a virus check was completed to make sure that the files were not infected with a virus or other malware. Each image was viewed and checksums were generated for each file.

Initial review revealed no problems with either the files or the discs, and they were described at a collection level in our library's catalog. The disks were then placed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections cold vault. They were retrieved from the cold vault periodically and checked to ensure that the images were not deteriorating. This was done by comparing the checksums generated at acquisition of the materials with the checksums generated when the files were reexamined.

When it was discovered that images on one of the discs were failing, the entire collection was copied to new media. In 2010 a networked storage space was made available for digital preservation. The digital files were moved from the compact discs to network storage and were again checked for any problems associated with the files. None were found. In 2012 the Harold B. Lee Library acquired Ex Libris's Rosetta, a digital preservation system. In mid-2012 the archivist began importing

the digital files into the library's pilot installation of Rosetta. As part of the import process, a validation stack was run against the digital files to determine if the files were the formats that they purported to be and to verify the checksums. Using Rosetta, additional descriptive metadata was added to the files and they were packaged as an AIP for long-term preservation.