

Legal Information Archive

THE CHESAPEAKE PROJECT

H3: Here's to Your (Digital Archive's) Good Health:

Applying TRAC and Other Evaluation Parameters to a Local Digital Preservation Project

102nd AALL Annual Meeting & Conference
Washington, D.C.

July 28, 2009

Speaker: Sarah Rhodes

Agenda

- Introduction & Overview of The Chesapeake Project
Legal Information Archive
- Self-Assessment Evaluation Parameters & Findings
- TRAC Assessment & Findings
- Discussion of Costs & Lessons Learned

About The Chesapeake Project

- The Chesapeake Project is a shared Legal Information Archive
 - Two-year pilot (2007-2009) to investigate the feasibility of establishing a collaborative digital archive, shared by multiple institutions in the law library community, for the preservation of Web-published legal materials
 - Pilot Participants:
 - Georgetown Law Library
 - Maryland State Law Library
 - Virginia State Law Library
 - Affiliated with the [Legal Information Preservation Alliance \(LIPA\)](#)

Digital Preservation System

- Began harvesting/archiving Web content in early 2007 using OCLC Digital Archive
- July 2008 = migration of archived files to a new two-tiered digital-preservation and access system
 - Access copy in CONTENTdm + archival masters in dark Digital Archive (similar to original OCLC Digital Archive)
 - Added point of access through CONTENTdm interface at www.legalinfoarchive.org, Web search engine discovery

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AUTHOR [Stephanopoulos, Nicholas.](#)

PUBLISHER [Washington, D.C.] : American Constitution Society for Law and Policy, 2007.

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[Washington, D.C.] : American Constitution Society for Law and Policy, 2007.

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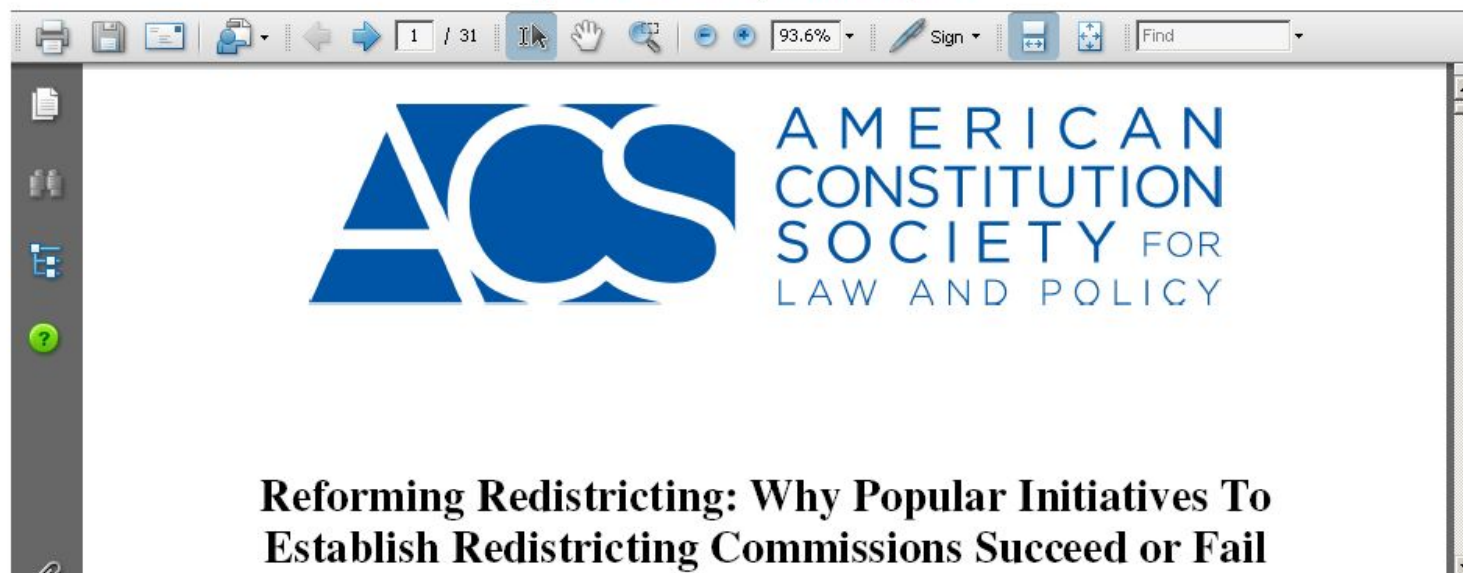
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Project Evaluation (Self-Assessment)

- Evaluation to occur at one-year mark and two-year mark (end of pilot phase)
- Quantitative/Objective Evaluation Parameters:
 - No. of items/titles archived during project's first year
 - Analysis of archiving activity
 - Access statistics
 - 'Link rot' analysis, a count of archived items altered/removed from original locations on Web



Project Evaluation (Self-Assessment)

- Qualitative/Subjective Evaluation Parameters:
 - Staffing requirements
 - Time committed to project activities
 - Challenges & problems encountered
 - Progress toward the realization of the project's mission, vision

Preparation for Final Pilot Evaluation

- First-Year Evaluation (self-assessment) conducted in March 2008
- Follow-up 2009 Second-Year Evaluation based upon same quantitative/qualitative parameters
- Also enlisted Center for Research Libraries (CRL) to conduct independent assessment based on criteria set forth in *Trustworthy Repositories Audit & Certification (TRAC): Criteria and Checklist*

Final Pilot Project Evaluation, June 2009

- Findings:
 - 4,306 digital items archived over two years
 - Usage spiked following migration to CONTENTdm/Digital Archive system:
 - March 2007-June 2008 = 6,612 instances of access
 - July 2008-February 2009 = 177,152 instances of access, 73,614 terms searched

Final Pilot Project Evaluation, June 2009

- Link Rot Analysis:
 - 2008 sample:
 - Link rot found in **8.3%** of titles
 - Same sample, one year later:
 - Link rot found in **14.3%** of titles

Final Pilot Project Evaluation, June 2009

- Qualitative analysis:
 - 2-25 hours devoted per week; task requiring most time = cataloging
 - Challenges: change of system, loss of our project's visionary, Bob Oakley
 - Strong sense that mission accomplished throughout two-year pilot phase; vision is within reach

TRAC Assessment Parameters

- Three aspects of the project assessed, based on TRAC:
 - Organization (financial and operational framework and policies)
 - Preservation Strategy (processes and procedures governing management of archived digital objects)
 - Technology (assessment of OCLC's system architecture, hardware, and software)
- Areas of risk identified, recommendations provided

TRAC Assessment Process

- Comprehensive collection of project documentation provided to CRL Analyst
- CRL Analyst site visit to Washington, D.C., and participant observation during February 2009 quarterly meeting
- Two-day site visit to OCLC facilities in Dublin, Ohio, by CRL Analyst and Repository Architecture Technology Advisor

TRAC Assessment Findings

- Project organization commended
 - “Overall, The Chesapeake Project provides good stewardship of the Web content it has identified and collected.”
 - Project addresses a real need
 - Project activities are “cost-effective and focused”
 - “Project decision- and policymaking apparatus is relatively lean and structured in a way that should ensure the archives’ responsiveness to the law library community.”

TRAC Assessment Findings

- Three areas of risk identified:
 - “Bit preservation” service may result in future difficulties associated with long-term preservation
 - Selection criteria and preservation strategies must evolve to adapt to dynamic “Web 2.0” as well as future Web-based technologies
 - To accommodate growth of project size and scope, base of support should be broadened/diversified, and commitments formalized

TRAC Assessment Findings

- Recommendations fell within two general categories:
 - Relating to collaboration, e.g.:
 - Enlargement of participant population
 - Formalization of the partnership
 - Relating to “life cycle” management, e.g.:
 - Exploration of “current and future uses” of digital archive collections and “life-cycle” model of information preservation

TRAC Assessment Costs

- Scaled to accommodate smaller project, modest cost divided equally by three participating institutions
- Did not include comprehensive technical audit of OCLC systems, but did include assessment of:
 - self-reported information from OCLC
 - third-party information about OCLC systems, and
 - an examination of a 10% random sample of preservation metadata records for archived digital objects



Response to TRAC Assessment

- Overall, very pleased, a worthwhile investment
- Feel that some risks applied to the entire field of digital preservation and could be put into larger context
- On-site OCLC visit, documentation review, and archive metadata test sample results affirm choice of OCLC for the project
- Project expansion and diversification has been incorporated as a major goal in the post-pilot phase

Lessons Learned

- Define self-assessment parameters based on your project's unique mission and goals; explore objective as well as subjective assessment measures
- *TRAC Criteria & Checklist* provides significant and detailed guidance about best practices in digital preservation and should be consulted in self-auditing exercises

Lessons Learned

- Maintain thorough documentation relating to project policies, staffing, budgets, procedures and workflows, decision-making processes, and meetings
- Maintain monthly reports of project activity and usage statistics
- Keep and document data and samples used for evaluation purposes. These can be revisited in future assessments to measure change, progress

Lessons Learned

- Be flexible in the reporting and presentation of your statistics. Technology is rapidly evolving, and inconsistencies in what you can and cannot measure are likely to occur
- An independent, third-party assessment is a worthy investment, and can be especially helpful in identifying risks associated with offsite vendor systems. Negotiate scaled assessment costs to meet the needs of your project

Lessons Learned

- Understand and attempt to meet established standards and best practices – while also making independent decisions and adjustments appropriate to your project, preservation system, mission, priorities, and parent institution

More Information

- The Chesapeake Project Legal Information Archive:
www.legalinfoarchive.org
- Final Pilot Project Evaluation:
www.legalinfoarchive.org/policies/legal_twoyearprojectevaluation_june2009.pdf
- The Legal information Preservation Alliance (LIPA):
www.aallnet.org/committee/lipa
- TRAC Criteria & Checklist (from CRL):
www.crl.edu/PDF/trac.pdf

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Thank You!

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