Driving in the dark without headlights, technically it's possible, but is it sensible?

Elizabeth Thompson-MacRae

Digital Archivist, University of St Andrews

DPC Around the World

19th November 2026

Is risk in the driving seat of your organisation's digital preservation journey?



But I’m not an expert!

Risk-based decision-making is the light that cuts through the dark.

Ok, so what can I do?

If you are a leader…

Do you understand:

- What digital assets are critical to your organisation achieving its objectives?
- What would be the impact if those assets could no longer be accessed, understood, or trusted?
- Who is responsible for managing them?

If you're a practitioner…

Do you understand:

- How your organisation manages and records risk?
- How digital preservation challenges can be articulated as organisational risks?
- When concerns should be escalated, and who needs to hear them?

Is the road ahead now visible?

Useful resources

- **Digital Preservation Coalition.** (2015). *Digital Preservation Handbook* (2nd ed.). Digital Preservation Coalition. Available at: https://www.dpconline.org/handbook
- **Digital Preservation Coalition.** (2024). *Digital Preservation Coalition Rapid Assessment Model (DPC RAM)* (Version 3). Available at: http://doi.org/10.7207/dpcram24-03
- **HM Treasury.** (2023). *The Orange Book: Management of Risk – Principles and Concepts*. UK Government. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/orange-book

Thank you… Any questions?



Email: **ejt9@st-andrews.ac.uk**



LinkedIn: **/lizziethompson**