

EXTERNAL ADVOCACY FOR WEB ARCHIVES

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SINGAPORE

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Digital Preservation Coalition WAPWG
March 2024



National Library Board
Singapore

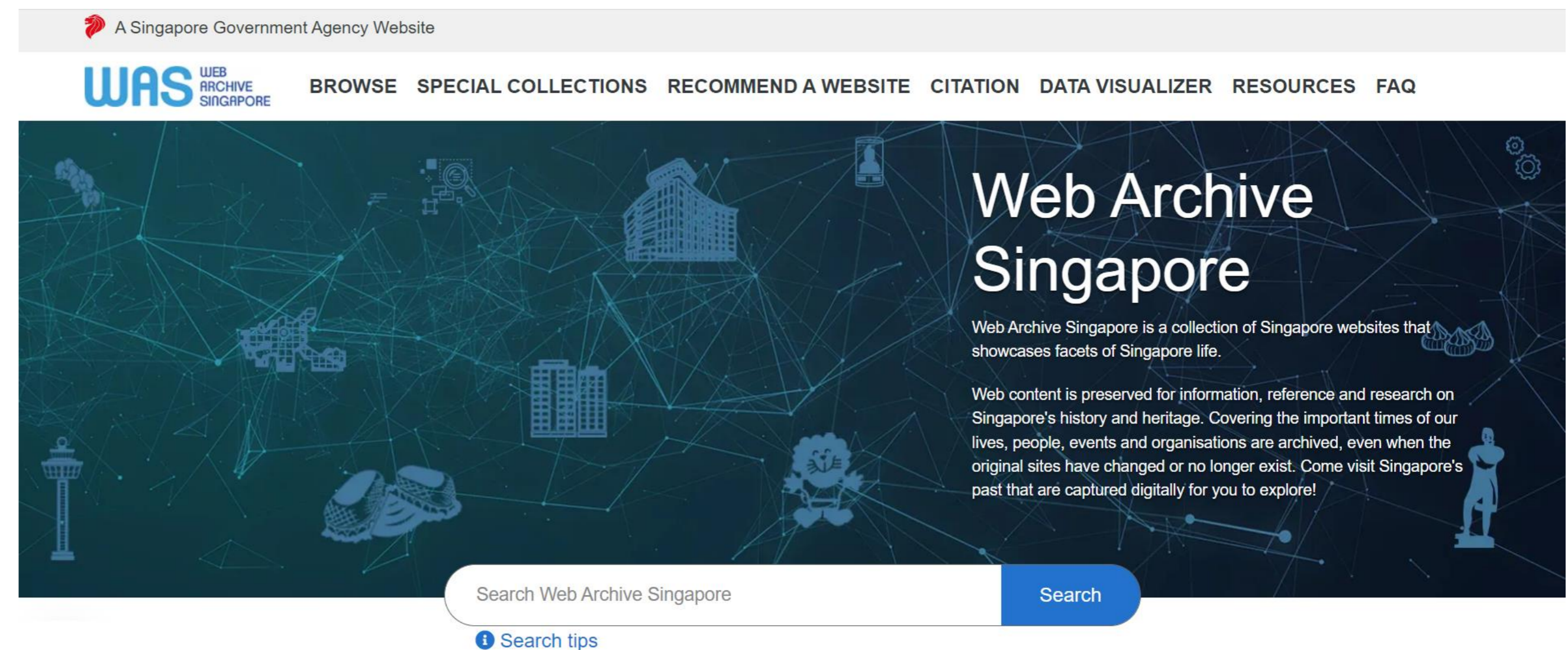
ABOUT US

- Heritage institution under the National Library Board Singapore, together with the National Archives of Singapore, and 27 Public Libraries.
- Plays an important role in collecting and preserving materials about Singapore through legal deposit, acquisitions, and donations.
- In 2019, our legislation was updated to
 - Allow us to archive websites ending in “.sg” without the need for written permission
 - Extend legal deposit to cover digital publications



ABOUT US

- Started web archiving in 2006 to preserve Singapore-related websites.
- Annual domain archiving since 2019 with the legislation changes.
- Collection is accessible via the Web Archive Singapore (WAS) portal. Most archived content available at NLS, with selected websites available online.
- Collection size:
 - 200 TB
 - 320,000 archived websites



EXTERNAL ADVOCACY



Public Engagement



Promotion



Talks

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- As part of our legislation drafting, we conducted focus group discussions with stakeholders such as academics, heritage researchers, website owners to get feedback and support.
- Newspaper op-ed by an academic advocating for web archiving during the proposed amendments.
- Organised a two-day public event in Nov 2018 to celebrate the legislation amendments. The event included a legal deposit and web archive exhibition, performances, and public talk from a popular blogger in Singapore about the importance of preserving materials.



PROMOTION

LIBRARIAN'S PICK

Title NDP 2015

Archived Date 25 Aug 2015

2015 was a landmark year where Singapore celebrated her Golden Jubilee since independence. This National Day had many first: all Singaporeans and Permanent Residents were given a SG Funpack, and the celebration was extended to the Float @Marina Bay on top of the parade at the Padang. Revisit the momentous event in the 2015 archive of the National Day Parade website.

Librarian's Pick

- Highlights from our collection once every two months
- Featured on the WAS portal and social media platforms

BIBLIASIA OCT - DEC 2018

ARCHIVING THE SINGAPORE-WIDE WEB

Recent amendments to the National Library Board Act now allow the National Library to preserve Singapore websites without the express permission of content owners. **Shereen Tay** tells us more.

Have you ever bookmarked a favourite website only to later find a broken link, or worse, find that it no longer exists? Unlike print materials, websites are ephemeral, and their content easily updated or removed with a mere swipe of the screen or click of the mouse.

Within the span of just one year, between 2016 and 2017, the total number of websites on the World Wide Web grew by a whopping 49 percent to more than 1.7 billion.¹ As at 10 September 2018, the number is close to a staggering 2 billion.

Websites are important records of memory, knowledge and history, and as more and more content is created online, there is an increasing need to ensure that websites are systematically archived and the information preserved for future generations. In recognition of this, many national libraries and institutions around the world today are collecting and preserving websites through a process called web archiving.

As the custodian of our nation's published heritage, the National Library of Singapore embarked on a web archiving initiative more than

a decade ago in 2006. An online portal, the Web Archive Singapore (WAS), was specially created to archive Singapore-related websites. Its reach, however, was limited as the National Library Board (NLB) Act only empowered the National Library to collect print materials via the Legal Deposit function.² As the archiving of websites involved the administratively cumbersome process of seeking the written consent of website owners, it hampered the building of a comprehensive national collection of Singapore websites.

Following in the footsteps of national libraries in the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea, the NLB Act amendment bill was passed by parliament in July 2018 to allow Singapore's National Library to archive websites containing the .sg domain without the need for written permission.³ With the introduction of the new legislation, the library intends to archive publicly available .sg websites at least once a year. Selected websites, such as those covering significant events like National Day and the Southeast Asian Games, will be archived more frequently.

Shereen Tay is an Associate Librarian with the National Library, Singapore. She is part of the team that oversees the statutory functions of the National Library, in particular web archiving.

BIBLIASIA OCT - DEC 2020

AN ARCHIVE OF SINGAPORE WEBSITES

Preserving the Digital

The National Library's effort to archive Singapore-related websites creates a snapshot of the present that is valuable to both scholars and nostalgia buffs, says Shereen Tay.

As an adult, passing by one's old school usually brings back strong memories. School is where we made lifelong friends, where caring teachers inspired us and where shared experiences in the classroom and on the playing field brought everyone closer together. It is not surprising then that people are very sentimental about their old schools.

In Singapore, however, few things stand still. Sometimes, schools move to new, improved premises in a different location – to the dismay of alumni who are attached to the familiar old buildings. Some schools, on the other hand, have had to merge with others because of falling birth rates and the changing demographic profile of housing estates.

However, if you are an old boy or girl of now-defunct Anderson Junior College, Balestier Hill Primary School, First Toa Payoh Secondary School, Loyang Primary School or Telok Kurau Secondary School, not all is lost. You can still explore your alma mater's digital footprint on the National Library's Web Archive (WAS) portal. Currently, the portal has the websites of 43 defunct schools in its archive, which can be found on eresources.nlb.gov.sg/webarchives.

These websites offer a peek into the 30,000-strong collection on the WAS portal. The National Library collects and archives Singapore-related websites because preserving the country's documentary heritage is part of its mission, and these days, documents are as much digital as they are pieces of paper.

To help people find information, the WAS portal employs full-text search capability that allows search by keyword or URL. In addition to this, the National Library has also organised some of these websites into themes that may be of interest to researchers or the public at large. These are found in the Special Collection section of the portal. Besides defunct schools, you can view past events like the 2015 Southeast Asian Games and ASEAN Para Games, the 2018 Trump-Kim Summit, National Day parades and even the Singapore Budget.

The National Library is constantly on the lookout for new collections to add to the portal. The most recent addition has to do with the COVID-19 pandemic in Singapore. The library has been documenting the impact of the pandemic here since January 2020 when the government set up the COVID-19 task force. Today, the portal is a trove of archived pages

and websites containing news, commentaries and stories pertaining to the pandemic.¹ These include the websites of the Ministry of Health as well as news providers such as Mothership.

Collecting Today for Tomorrow

The National Library began collecting websites in 2006. In the early years, one obstacle was that the library needed the written consent of website owners, which slowed down the archival process considerably. A further problem was that only a small percentage of website owners gave the green light to go ahead with the archiving.

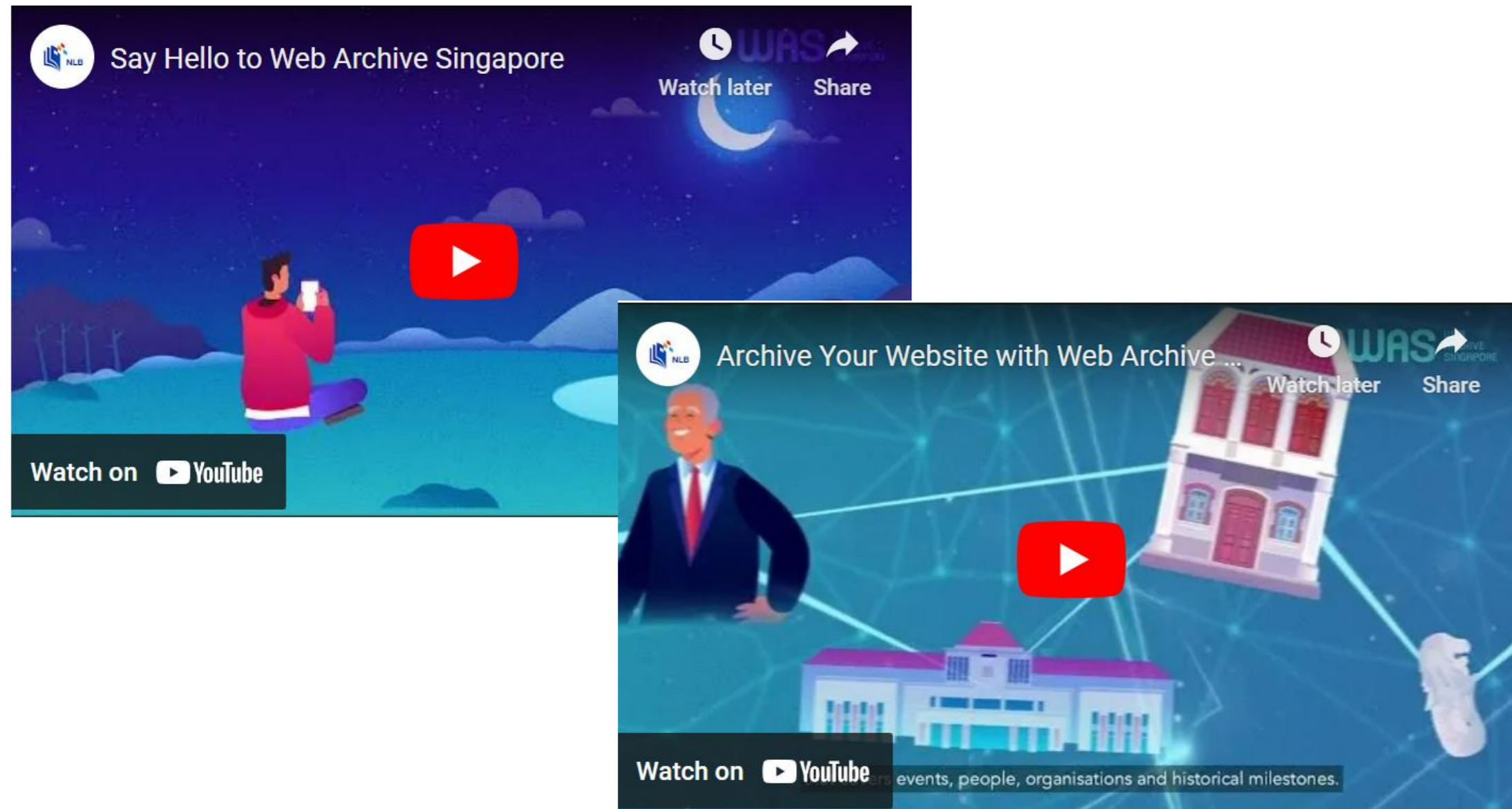
In order to create a more comprehensive database of websites, the National Library Board Act was amended in 2019 to allow the library to archive websites without the consent of their owners. This move was in line with similar measures adopted in countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea, among others. Globally, there is growing recognition that websites – as important records of a country's knowledge, history and memory – must be systematically archived and preserved for future generations.

Since then, the pace of web archiving in Singapore has picked up significantly, aided by a Memorandum of Understanding inked between the National Library

NLS Publications

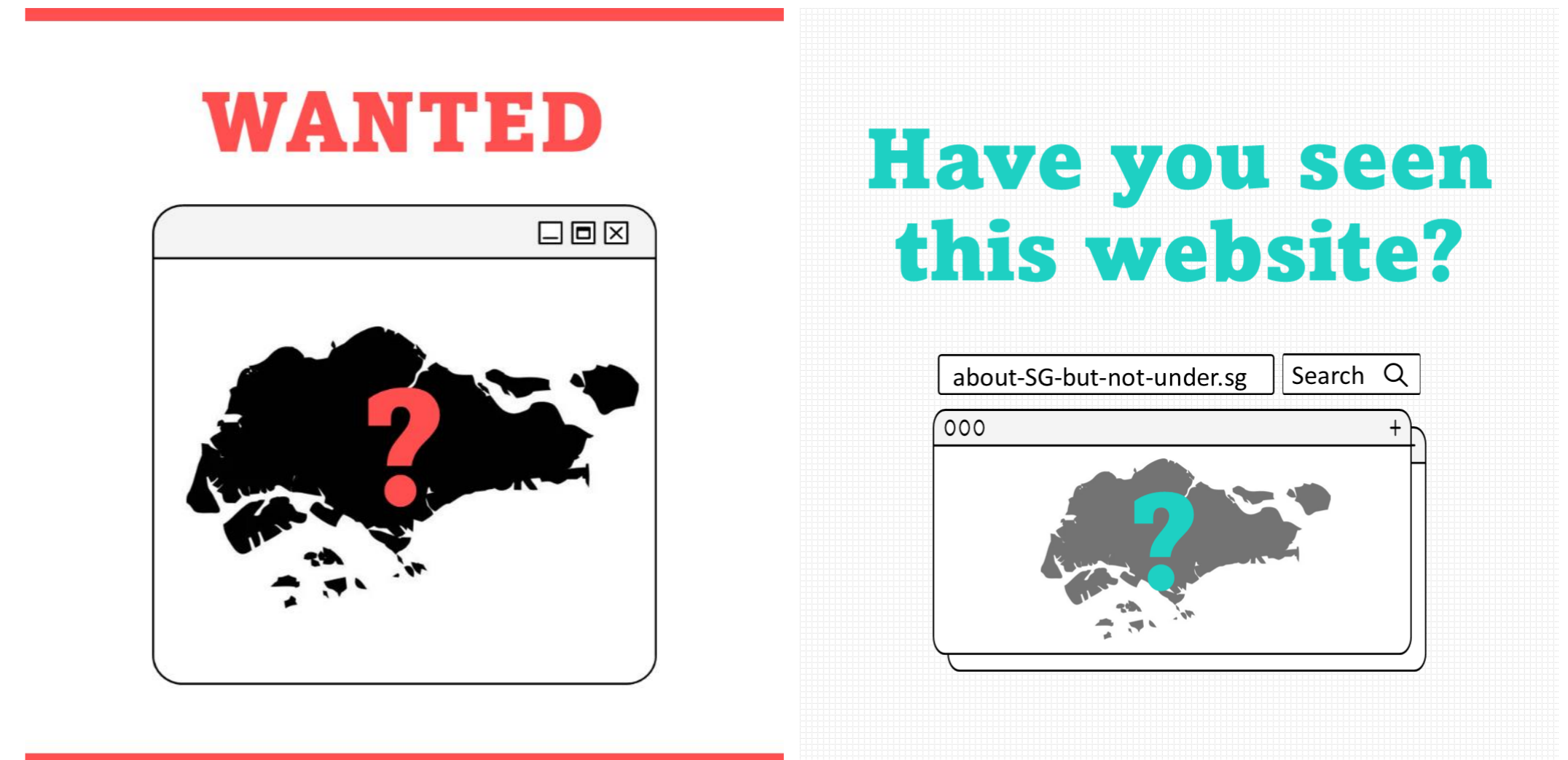
- Written two articles on *BiblioAsia*, NLS' quarterly magazine that features articles on the history, culture and heritage of Singapore

PROMOTION



Informative Videos

- Developed two animation videos to provide general information about web archiving and the Web Archive Singapore



Public Nomination via Social Media

- Calls to nominate Singapore websites from the non .sg domain via social media platforms

PROMOTION



How Big is the .sg Web?

Librarian Shereen Tay shares her observations of the National Library's initiative to web archive .sg websites.

Web Archives Data Analysis Blog Post

- Published a short analysis of the .sg domain crawl data on the NLS blog
- Create awareness of the potential of using web archives data for research

Data, Set, Go!

The National Library, Singapore has launched 10 datasets comprising metadata of over 42,000 digitised books, magazines, newspapers, web archives, images, sound and video recordings and more!

Visualise and analyse these datasets and uncover new insights on Singapore's history, art and culture today!



How our data can be used!



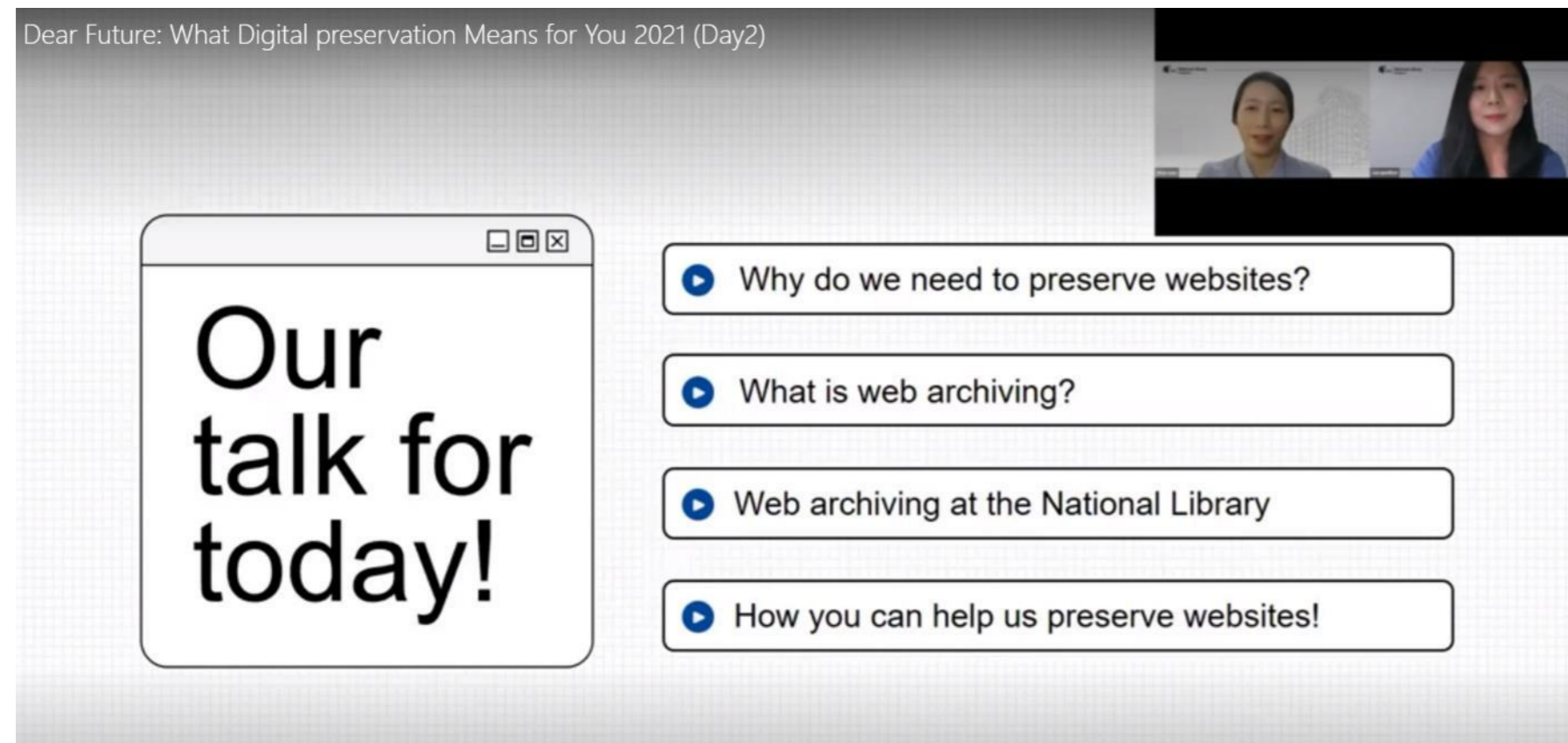
How big is the .sg web?
Click here to find out how we used the web archives data on the National Library blog!

NLB | National Library
Singapore

EDM to Researchers

- Promoting NLS datasets, with a spotlight on the web archives data analysis blog article

TALKS



Dear Future: What Digital Preservation Means for You 2021

- Organised in conjunction with the World Digital Preservation Day
- Shared about what is web archiving, its importance, and how public can help



Love our Libraries & Archives 2023

- An annual event celebrating libraries and archives in Singapore with lineup of programmes
- Shared about web archiving and NLS' efforts to collect digital formats

FUTURE PLANS

- Developing an annual call for nominations to get the public to nominate their favourite websites as well as other formats such as social media content (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok)
- Exploring providing web archives datasets to promote the collection to researchers

Thank you



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