

Juvenalis



Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?
Challenges and solutions for practical
preservation planning in a small but busy
organisation.

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Background

- Accredited digital archive for heritage data in the UK.
- Founded in 1996
- ADS archive over 3 million digital objects...
- ...In 299 unique formats
- Bespoke Systems Stack



<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/about/annualReports.xhtml>

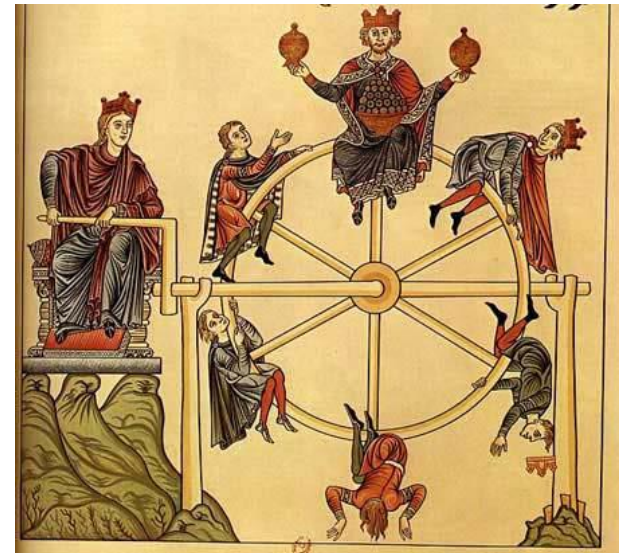
Background

- Entirely project funded.
- Maintain a core staff of 12.
- Of which 5 are directly/predominantly focussed on Digital Preservation.
- “Curatorial And Technical Staff”.



Preservation

- Preservation Planning is an ‘unfunded’ activity.
- Yet one that is an essential part of what we do.
- Balance to ensure colleagues have the tools and time they need.
- Triggers need to be identified as soon as possible to give ourselves time to react.



<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/about/ourWork.xhtml>

Main triggers

- Sector technology evolves. New formats and different ways of handling data (e.g. BIM)
- Objects themselves differ from what we're used to = Policy Change!
- File format 'obsolescence' impacting what we hold = Migration Time.



Solution: People

- Ensure we have members of staff who monitor and interact with our Sector.
- Ensure we understand what's coming in and how that compares to what we hold.
- Ensure we have staff looking out – learning from peers.



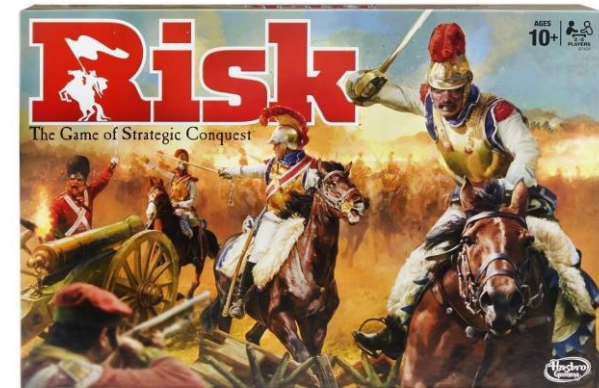
Solution: technical

- Integral tool is the ADS Object Management System (OMS)
- Based on PREMIS concepts.
- Most important (in this context) is “what is it?”.
- Everything has a ‘data type’.
- Signatures based on DROID.
- Understand at any moment in time, what we have, and to help inform our planning and to give us a sense of ‘normal’.



What's at Risk Now?

- Internal 'hit list' of file types we know will require a migration, for example:
 - CAD (.dwg): keeping up with software
 - Documents (docx): historic use of interim ISO.
 - PDF: just a pain for many reasons...



Watching Ourselves!

- Monitor current standards for change:
- Updates to current formats i.e. new versions / new software;
- New software and formats for deposit
- New data types or techniques
- Monitoring developments in software and organisations associated with our current suite of formats



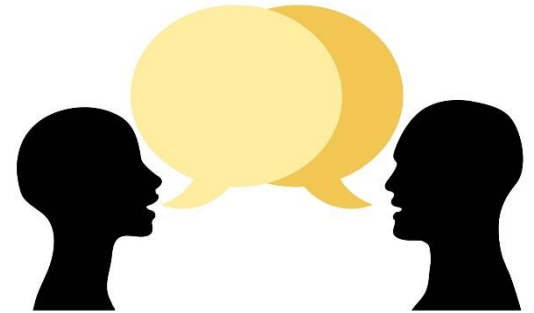
Watching Others!

- Digital Preservation Supporters
- [DPC Technology Watch Publications](#)
- [Federal Agencies Digital Guidelines Initiative \(FADGI\)](#)
- [Data Curation Network](#)

- Other people!
- [DANS](#)
- [Swedish National Data Service](#)
- [National Archives](#)
- [Library of Congress](#)
- [University of Minnesota Digital Conservancy \(UDC\)](#)

Making the Watch Worthwhile

- Watch is a standing monthly Task.
- Reported back to Management.
- Continual Risk Assessment
Informs Annual and 5/10 year Strategic Priorities:



E.g. We know we have to do a CAD migration, what skills/tools do we need?

What's at Risk?

- Strength of a bespoke system
 - How many files?
 - Where are they?
 - How old are they?
 - How many archives does this impact?
- Traffic Light System per data type
 - No action
 - Incoming Action i.e. plan for this
 - Do it now!



People!

- A lot of what is written is based on Process.
- The Process still needs responsibility pinned down to a role.
- The person who's job it is needs time to do this!



Thanks!

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<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/blog/>

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