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Focus on preservation metadata

Having good preservation metadata is fundamental to the long-term sustainability of the objects in a repository. Just looking at one aspect of sustainability, the inevitable event that access technologies are no longer supported or viable, it is preservation metadata that will help the search for alternatives. This area will be one of the focuses for APSR in the coming months. It is a timely move with the recent release of the results of a survey on current practice in preservation repositories conducted earlier this year by the PREMIS project (see *Around the traps* for this report).

APSR will work closely with the research communities in the partners to identify likely failure areas for digital material in university repositories and compare these against existing preservation metadata frameworks to write best practice models for university repositories. Just as importantly, the model will be checked against the test-bed repositories to see what is possible in the real world: what is collected now and propose strategies to bridge any gaps.

APSR will work draw from and inform the ARROW project in this task.

Contact: Tom Ruthven, Tom.Ruthven@anu.edu.au

Information exchange days

Three one-day roundtable workshops will be held between November and February for APSR partners to share knowledge and expertise on specific topics of relevance to all partners. The first, to be held at the ANU, will be a detailed walk-through of the framework, concepts and terminology of OAIS model for repositories, and what constitutes preservation metadata.

Experts in the field will lead the discussion and partners will present case studies. Technical staff and "business owners" in the partners will find them particularly useful.

Suggestions for the other two workshops include: subject thesauri; formats appropriate for long-term preservation; lessons learned from encouraging researchers to deposit material and metadata; how the use of objects informs the structure, content and promotion of repositories; and how best to address risk.

The ideas and issues that come out of the workshops will form the basis of a one-day national forum on sustainability to be held early next year.

Contact: Tom Ruthven, Tom.Ruthven@anu.edu.au

News from the partners

The basics of metadata

Determining the mandatory and optional metadata fields for images was the topic of a half-day meeting of the people involved in the SORRT Project at the University of Sydney on 13 October. SORRT, the Sustainable Object Repositories for Research and Teaching, is coordinating the work of APSR at the university.



The smiles that metadata brings, SORRT members from the University of Sydney. From left to right: Linda Barwick, Su Hanfling, Ian Johnson, Tim Shaw, and Ross Coleman.

Contact: Ross Coleman, r.coleman@library.usyd.edu.au

Mandating e-theses

The University of Sydney is set to make it mandatory for all theses to be lodged with an electronic copy from 2005. "This exciting development confirms the need for the strong sustainability of repositories," said Ross Coleman, the SORRT Project Coordinator, "it puts pressure on us to ensure good business and technical solutions so that these theses are available in 50 years time."

Contact: Ross Coleman, r.coleman@library.usyd.edu.au

ANU becomes a DSpace committer

Scott Yeadon from ANU joins five other people in the world who are authorised to make changes to the DSpace software. These six are called "committers" as they can commit changes to the code repository. They have ultimate responsibility for the shape of the DSpace software, its architecture and design, and can apply code changes contributed by the larger DSpace development community to the open source platform. This makes ANU one of the key institutions guiding the development of Dspace.

Contact: Scott Yeadon, scott.yeadon@anu.edu.au

From repository to a national service

Metadata is moving seamlessly from ANU's Dspace repository to the PictureAustralia service run by the National Library of Australia. Images are being contributed from the Noel Butlin Archives Centre which houses one of the largest collections of business and trade union records in Australia, and the University Archives which documents the unique history of the ANU.

Contact: Peter Raftos, peter.raftos@anu.edu.au

Software under review at UQ

The University of Queensland is testing a range of software for the eScholarship@UQ gateway they are building. The software has to do a dual job - that of harvesting from both OAI-compliant and non-OAI-compliant repositories, and providing access to that data through a portal-like interface. It is also important to the eScholarship@UQ project that any software selected be able to import and make use of the ASRC classification currently used to categorise material in the University's ePrints@UQ collection.



The team at UQ. From left to right: Chris Taylor, Belinda Weaver, and Christiaan Kortekaas.

There is currently no mature digital library software product in the market that can offer all the features required by the eScholarship@UQ brief, but testing continues. Software tested or still under testing to date includes Keystone, a Danish digital library software package, the Harvesting software from Public Knowledge Project, the CWIS software from the Internet Scout Project, FEDORA and ELATED. It is likely that the final selection for eScholarship@UQ will be a mixture of different products, coupled with some in-house software development.

Contact: Belinda Weaver, bweaver@library.uq.edu.au

Meet Kevin Bradley

What happens when you combine a love of music, an interest in technology and work in a national library? Luckily for the APSR project you become fascinated with keeping all things digital alive for future generations.

Kevin Bradley is a world expert on digital sound preservation. He contributed to and was editor of the *Guidelines on the Production and Preservation of Digital Audio Objects*, published in 2004 by the



International Association of Sound and Audio Visual Archive, and was a member of the OCLC/RLG Preservation Metadata Framework Working Group that developed the *OCLC/RLG Metadata Framework to Support the Preservation of Digital Objects*.

Based at the National Library of Australia, he is working most closely on the digital sustainability aspects for APSR.

If that weren't enough to keep him busy, he is currently President of the Australasian Sound Recordings Association and Vice Chair of the Technical Committee of the International Association of Sound and Audio Visual Archives.

Contact: Kevin Bradley, kbradley@nla.gov.au

■ Around the traps

Send your suggestions to tom.ruthven@anu.edu.au.

Conferences and events

Archiving Web Resources : Issues for Cultural Heritage Institutions : International Conference
<http://www.nla.gov.au/webarchiving/>
9-11 Nov 2004, Canberra

International Conference on Developing Digital Institutional Repositories: Experiences and Challenges
<http://library.ust.hk/conference2004/program.html>
9-10 Dec 2004, Hong Kong

Information Online 2005
<http://conferences.alia.org.au/online2005/>
1-3 Feb 2005, Sydney

Educause Australasia
<http://www.educause2005.auckland.ac.nz/>
5-8 April 2005, Auckland, NZ

JISC Conference 2005
http://www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=event_jisconf_0405
12 April 2005, Birmingham, UK

Joint Conference on Digital Libraries 2005: Cyberinfrastructure for research and education
<http://jcdl2005.org/>
7-11 June 2005, Denver, Colorado, USA

ETD2005: evolution through discovery
<http://adt.caul.edu.au/etd2005/etd2005.html>
28-30 September 2005, Sydney

Publications

Implementing preservation repositories for digital materials: current practice and emerging trends in the cultural heritage community. PREMIS project, September 2004, 66p.

<http://www.oclc.org/research/projects/pmwg/surveyreport.pdf>

Discusses current practices and emerging trends for managing preservation metadata in digital archiving systems. It is the result of the survey conducted by the PREMIS project in late 2003 - early 2004 of nearly fifty institutions, including libraries, archives, and museums.

Institutional Repositories: Is There Anything Left to Say? OCLC, October 2004.

<http://www.oclc.org/research/announcements/2004-09-20.htm>

A talk by Dr Peter Conway, Director of Information Technology Services at the Duke University Libraries, in the OCLC Distinguished Scholars Series.

Next issue?

Be the first to know when each issue of *Sustaining Repositories* is released by joining the APSR Announcements email service. You will also receive news of upcoming events and when major documents are released. Register at:
http://mailman.anu.edu.au/mailman/listinfo/apsr_announcements

The APSR partners



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