Digital Preservation in the UK

• Main focus on National Archives
  Websites
  Datasets
  Electronic records
Websites


Take about 65 sites – some weekly, some every six months and a few ‘current issues’ (Bird Flu; plane bombings etc)

Next - wikis

European Archive harvests, stores and displays websites

TNA takes back-up copy

Involved in UK Web Archiving Consortium a [consortium](http://www.europarchive.org/) of six leading UK working on a project to develop a test-bed for selective archiving of UK websites.
Datasets

• Social science datasets are held on our behalf by the UK Data Archive at Essex University [http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/](http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/)

• Other datasets are held by National Digital Archive of Datasets at London University [http://www.ndad.nationalarchives.gov.uk/](http://www.ndad.nationalarchives.gov.uk/)
Which brings us conveniently to Seamless Flow
Why Seamless Flow

1. Increasing use of electronic records
2. Increase in volume of electronic records
3. Inability to cope by manual means
4. Technology obsolescence
5. Need to be involved earlier in record life cycle
The Seamless Flow Programme

1. Lead and transform information management
2. Guarantee the survival of today’s information for tomorrow
3. Bring history to life for everyone
Life Cycle Management

2. Approach

• Not big bang!
• Modular/projects
• Incrementally phased introduction
• Keep it simple
• Use of standards
• COTS
• Build on existing components!
Life Cycle Management

1. Objective

The Seamless Flow Programme is intended as far as possible to ensure a secure, managed, seamless, automated flow of electronic records from creation in government departments through their eventual preservation at the National Archives and delivery to the public over the Internet.
Issues
Managerial > technical
Social > managerial
Need to reduce costs
Quick wins
3. Process Model

1. Record Usage at Dept
   - TNA
   - Paper system

2. Ingest record
   - Depts
   - TNA staff

3. Preservation and Maintenance
   - TNA staff
   - Paper processing
   - Inventory system
   - Closure Control system

4. Resource Discovery and Presentation
   - Ordering system
   - User registration
   - FOI Tracking system
   - Record copying

5. Technology Watch
   - PRONOM suite
   - Externals
   - TNA staff

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(the life cycle of a record)
The Two Environments

GSI

WWW
Seamless Flow
Appraisal and Selection
Why Appraisal and Selection?

1. Early intervention to preserve the historical record
2. Secures the capture of context as well as information
3. Focus resources on records of known value
4. Historical appraisal a requirement to be built into disposal scheduling
How (on earth) do we appraise digital records?
This is how:

- Move from review to appraisal;
- Use of macro-appraisal techniques;
- Appraisal decisions can be migrated as functions move within or between departments;
- Disposal scheduling is made easier by making the historical decisions;
- Still work to be done
Seamless Flow
Transfer to TNA
Seamless Flow Process

Department

Active records

Management of Semi-Current Records

Appraisal & Selection

TNA

Transfer

Cataloguing

Preservation & Maintenance

Delivery & Presentation

Resource Discovery

Technology Watch
Transfer

Scope

• Physical transfer to TNA
• Pre-accession processes
• User Interface for editing metadata
Transferring digital records raises new questions

- How do we best support government departments in the preparation of records for transfer?
- How do we manage the likely high volumes of digital records?
- How do we incorporate macro-appraisal?
- How to observe FOI, data protection, copyright and sensitivity issues?
- How do we actually move records from Departments to TNA?
Seamless Flow
Active Preservation
(Technology Watch)
Introduction

Active Preservation is responsible for ensuring the continued accessibility of authentic records over time, and across changing technological environments. Its aims are:

- To generate and maintain accessible preservation copies of records
- To generate new presentation copies of records
- To provide facilities for secure redaction of electronic records
- To provide characterisation, preservation planning and migration services to support the above
- If possible, to make these services available for external reuse
An online technical registry
A resource for anyone requiring impartial and definitive information about the file formats, software products and other technical components required to support long-term access to electronic records and other digital objects of cultural, historical or business value
A knowledge base to support automated preservation services

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pronom
### Summary

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- **Orientation**: Binary
- **Byte order**: Big-endian (Motorola)
Identification

- TNA has developed DROID (Digital Record Object Identification)
- uses automated analysis of the binary structure of a digital object, and comparison with predefined internal and external ‘signatures’ for specific formats.
- uses signature information stored in the PRONOM technical registry.
- PRONOM and DROID are both freely available on the web at http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pronom.
- This method is currently limited to identification; full object characterisation, including validation and property extraction, is intended as a future enhancement.
DROID

DROID (Digital Record Object Identification)

File list

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Identification results

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Preservation Planning and action

- Identifying what action to take, when to take it, and how to enact it
  - Risk assessment
  - Technology watch
  - Impact assessment
  - Preservation plan generation

- Enacting the preservation plan and validating the results
  - Execute preservation plan
  - Validate results – characterise transformed objects and compare significant properties with source objects
Global Search

- Autonomy Search Engine
  www.autonomy.com
- Relevance ranking
- Results by Subject – Folksonomy
- Recommended links
- Personalised searching – My TNA
Shared services

- Two new initiatives:
  - Intermediate digital archives for records required for business purposes
  - Next generation EDRM systems
Shared Service