Renew and Recycle: Developing Sustainable Preservation Strategies

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As research libraries rely on shared print networks, the Library of Congress needs to develop a sustainable preservation strategy for the items it keeps available as a “library of last resort” and share effective preservation administration practices to other archive builders.
Assumptions: Shared Print

Shared print will continue to grow as a major factor in how research libraries operate.

Formal, sustainable relationships take significant time to develop in our policy environment.

As that time passes, we need to preserve opportunities and options for how to use and provide access to the collections.

**Recycle**
Existing programs provide building blocks (e.g. ILL, Service Academies MOU)

**Renew**
Participation in Committees and Working Groups develop mutual understanding and collective knowledge.
Assumptions: Preservation

Preservation does not need to justify itself in terms of mission: Libraries exist to preserve.

But, preservation can be seen as an inevitable and perpetual cost: not an area of growth, change, or innovation.

Archive builders are wary of recurring, perpetual costs by making retention commitments.

The preservation intent of print archives can be at odds with the efficiency goals of shared print.

Renew
Preservation efforts need a clear business model to show relevance to current organizational goals.

Recycle
Many preservation services do not need to change-- they’re well-optimized and necessary-- but do need to be positioned within a meaningful strategy.
Intro:
Framework for Sustainability

Goal is to determine if the preservation programs are healthy: efficient, flexible, and suited to needs and resources of the library

Developing Sustainable Preservation Models

How we reorganized for sustainability

How we developed a business model that could adapt and change

Case study of storage: a fundamental cost key to shared print
Starting Point: 2017

New Librarian of Congress
- New Strategic Plan and Vision
- Updated Mission Statement

New in Preservation
- Director (first in 2 years)
- Collections Management Division

Recycle
Each part of PRES was independently effective, producing at high quantity and high quality

Renew
Facing significant change and new vision, had to make sure that preservation effort was integral to the Library’s emerging direction
Planning for Sustainability

Where have we been?
- Recycle: Preservation self-study
- Renew: Cost-study 01

Where are we?
- Recycle: Reorganization
- Renew: Budget workshops

Where are we going?
- Recycle: Budget rebalancing
- Renew: Cost-Studies 02-03

2017-19
2019-2021
2021-2023
Internal Self-Studies

Where have we been?

2-year series of self-study efforts:

- User Satisfaction Survey
- xDiv Teams
- “POP” Workshops

Q1 Have you seen water in the stacks or had other collections emergencies occur in the past year?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, several times</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes, once</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, did you call USC...</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Answered: 32  Skipped: 0

2017-19

CMD Determines Item requires Preservation

PRD and CCS review item
All items except Brittle go to BCCD

CMD Determines Item requires Preservation

CCS Determines Boxing or Treatment

Boxing CCS measures on site or in CCS

Treatment in CCS

CCS Performs QA on Boxes

CCS Performs Treatment

CMD folds and labels boxes

Item returned to Stacks

CCS Performs QA on Item

LBS performs QA on Item

Item returned to Stacks

Commercial Rebinding LBS

LBS sends item to Commercial Bindery

Item returned to stacks

See PRD Workflow

See Handout
Reorganization

Where are we?

Library of Congress Preservation Directorate

Jacob Nadal
Director for Preservation

Special Assistant to the Director

Preservation Education Specialist

Collections Management Division
Chief: Cathy Martyniak

Inventory Management and Document Fulfillment Section

IMOF I

IMOF II

Collections Maintenance and Stack Management Section

Stack Mgmt. Unit
Priority Response Team
Jefferson Building Team
Adams Building Team
Evening/Saturday Team

Collections Maint. and Security Unit

Off-Site Storage Unit
Calvin Branch Team
Ft. Meade Team
Landover Team

Conservation Division
Chief: Elmer Eusman

Book Conservation Section

Collections Conservation Section

Paper Conservation Section

Photo Conservation Section

General Collections Conservation Section

Preservation Services Division
Chief: Adrija Henley

Reformatting Projects Section

Business Operations Support Section

Processing and Preparation Section

Preservation Research and Testing Division
Chief: Fenella France

Scientific Laboratory Operations Section
Budget Workshops Series

Where are we going?

Goals:

• Enable creative thinking and problem solving to the question of sustainable preservation services

• Make progress regardless of the overall budget picture (flat budget, CR, late budget)

• Connect to opportunities that range from annual special funding requests to major Library development efforts
Workshop: Reframing Pay Budget 2021-2023

Collections Management Division
Conservation Division
Preservation Research & Testing Division
Preservation Services Division
Workshop: Non-Pay Budget

PRES Directorate Non-pay Budget

Approx. $14M with $1M flexible year-to-year
Budget Looking Forward

Results

In recent years and into FY23

Rebalanced approx. $5 million across PRES programs

• For each division: between $.5M - $1.2M in spending opportunities, in different years
• New objects conservator
• New scientific instruments
• Expedited transfers to preservation faculties (closing LCA)
• Funded supporting infrastructure in DCM and OCIO
• Funded annual line item for Cost-Study Program
Program Areas

Shared print and storage costs bear on all items, all the time.

A crucial aspect of our fiscal strategy is both decreasing storage cost and increasing the preservation outcomes from storage itself.

But need to take into account a holistic view of entire preservation program.
Natural Experiment

Library has an overall storage deficit

- Operating an interim facility (Cabin Branch) while new modules are built at our preservation repository site (Fort Meade)

Both facilities use the same high-density shelving model, however…

- Cabin Branch is leased commercial space, built out to Library minimum standards using commodity systems and materials
- Fort Meade is owned by the Library, and purpose-built to preservation standards by the Architect of the Capitol

Allowed us to determine a unit cost of storage and a differential cost for gaining preservation benefits from storage
Off-Site Storage Costs

Cabin Branch:  
~USD $13 per item  
Leased by the Library  
High density storage  
Moderate environment:  
• TWPI: ~60  
• Requires additional preservation actions and costs to compensate

Fort Meade:  
~USD $21 per item  
Owned by the Library  
High density storage  
Environmentally optimized:  
• TWPI: 200+  
• Reduces scale and scope of additional preservation actions
Present Value Cost of Preservation

Natural Experiment with Two Facilities

~USD $8 present-day provided a preservation environment forever (Projections incl. 40, 200, 200+ years)

Most of the differential costs in capital cost for the building

Operations & maintenance very small in relation
  • Operations costs also provide real-time value
  • Operations costs can also change over time as needs change
  • Maintenance provides near-term value but often with year-to-year flexibility (just don’t wait too long)

There is a base level of capital investment required to achieve benefits: important for benchmarking, budgeting, and fundraising
Present Value Cost of Preservation

Natural Experiment with Two Facilities

Gives us a benchmark: anything over the differential cost may not be worthwhile unless…

- Environmental control is not a viable alternative
e.g. torn paper
- The treatment (re)enables use
  e.g. prepare for users and exhibition
- The treatment provides additional options for use
  e.g. prepare for digitization

Guided the Library to a strong case for environmental measures: high ROI, reliable and flexible, and applicable to wide range of collections
Multifactor Comparison Over Time

The possibility of costs over time is hidden in year one, and only starts to emerge over time.
Multifactor Comparison Over Time
Rebalancing Strategy: Cost Studies

- **2017-19**: More generic framework for sustainable preservation programs
  - Key performance indicators
  - Principal cost models for different preservation services

- **2019-2021**: Forrester Total Economic Impact™ Analysis: The Library Of Congress' Preservation Methods

- **2021-2023**: Forrester Total Economic Impact™ Analysis: The Library Of Congress' Preservation Programs
Deferrable preservation goals can sound like…

“Preservation ensures that future generations will have access to collections.”

“In a [distant, ambiguous time] collections will still exist for [unspecified people] and we don’t know what they will do with those collections.”
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Sustainable preservation goals sound more like…

“In a [meaningful time] we will have similar or improved options for use of this resource, compared to the present.”

• “improve usability of items…” (treatment)
• “develop new options for use…” (research)
Continuous Process

Preservation has to solve problems across decades or centuries

Libraries operate in annual funding cycles and five-year strategic cycles

Sustainability requires…
… developing activities that can continue into eternity while regularly showing benefits in the present
Thank you - questions welcome!

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Questions – Ask a Librarian: Preservation
https://ask.loc.gov/preservation/

Blog – Guardians of Memory: Preserving the National Collection
http://blogs.loc.gov/preservation/

Online Resources – Preservation Directorate Website
https://www.loc.gov/preservation/