Flexibility and Pragmatism: Thinking Differently about “Better” for Digital Preservation Services

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with Nicholas Taylor and Jefferson Bailey

Chip’s part

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A few ideas from APTrust.

None require using APTrust, nothing proprietary.

To qualify under our session title, each needs to be FLEXIBLE and PRAGMATIC.

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1. Restore Tests: What are they?
• Exercises to demonstrate what we’re really trying to prove:
• *Can I get my content back, and will I recognize what to do with it when I do?*

**Restore Tests: What’s different about this idea?**
• Core service performs independent, PREMIS-recorded fixity checks (on top of AWS integrity checking) every three months, and depositors can request restores anytime they wish at no fee.
  • They (nearly) never do.
• Restore tests will select random content every three months and restore it to restore buckets for depositors (in final testing now).
  • Added check on integrity of content plus checks integrity of processes (ours and our depositors).
Restore Tests: Why is the idea flexible?

• It ain’t rocket science.
• Nothing unique about us doing it—any service could.
• APTrust member (Miami) is developing a restoration verification outline that anyone can use.

Restore Tests: Why is it pragmatic?

• Anything that (1) our depositors don’t have to remember to do, (2) costs them nothing extra, and (3) has value to them is a good, practical step.
  • They can ignore the test if they wish—we automatically clear the content out of the restore buckets after a period of time.
  • It appears to be helpful in ensuring that staff changeover doesn’t mean loss of familiarity with this important element of stewardship.
2. DART: What it it?
• APTrust created DART, the Digital Archivist's Resource Tool, to provide a simple drag-and-drop application for non-technical users to package and upload materials.

DART: What’s different about this idea?
• The next iteration of DART, which should be available in the summer of 2019, will be able to package digital assets in a number of formats and upload them to any number of repositories. DART will support custom plugins that allow developers to quickly customize and extend its features to serve the needs of their own organizations and communities.
  • Similar to the componentization strategy that LOCKSS has implemented.
  • https://github.com/APTrust/dart
DART: Why is the idea flexible?
• Anyone can use it (not just APTrust members)
• Next version will soon be openly available for anyone to adapt.
• Designed with that purpose in mind: relatively easy adjustment to use with any service or target destination for deposits.

DART: Why is it pragmatic?
• Our goal is to make it easier for more folks to preserve their digital materials—this tool is another step in lowering the hurdles.
3. Sub-Accounts: What are they?

- APTrust members can establish sub-accounts to extend their deposit privileges and stewardship capabilities to other entities within or outside their institutions—a cascading preservation-consortial model.
- The member institution also helps support sub-account holders that have limited resources and experience—a very effective strategy for the “long tail.”

Sub-Accounts: What’s different about this idea?

- APTrust’s goal is to preserve more content, while giving members the opportunity to develop their own cost-sharing strategies in a local consortial context.
- Sub-accounts can become valuable and visible manifestations of public service performed by the member.
Sub-Accounts: Why is the idea flexible?

• Cascading consortia, custom-designed by each member institution.
• Any service could consider doing the same thing.
  • *Rising tide lifts all boats (little ones as well as big ones).*

Sub-Accounts: Why is it pragmatic?

• A new way to envision distributed digital preservation, extensible with costs decreasing the more entities are involved, multiplying the opportunities to transfer the value of experience.
COST SHARING

APTrust

Member 1

SubAcct 1.1

SubAcct 1.1

SubAcct 1.1

Member 2

SubAcct 2.1

SubAcct 2.1

Member 3

SubAcct 3.1

SubAcct 3.1

SubAcct 3.1

DISTRIBUTED SUPPORT

CAPACITY BUILDING

PERSONAL NETWORKS

ACADEMIC PRESERVATION TRUST
Ring Trilogy—Level 1

APTrust

Member 1

SubAcct 1.1

Member 2

SubAcct 2.1

SubAcct 1.1

Member 3

SubAcct 3.1

SubAcct 1.1

SubAcct 3.1

SubAcct 1.1

SubAcct 3.1
ORGANIC HEALING CAPABILITY:
DISTRIBUTE ORGANIZATIONAL RISK, DON’T OVER-AGGREGATE IT