

Migration

[Table of Contents](#)

[UPF Home](#)

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Universal Preservation Format: User Survey

2. Which statement best characterizes your thinking about institutions converting from analog to digital formats for long-term storage?

- a. Institutions should actively investigate digital formats with a plan to eventually convert all collections to a digital storage format. 6**
- b. Institutions should plan to maintain a dual set of storage for materials. 29**
- c. Institutions should wait for a digital storage format that addresses the issues of tape fragility and rapid and irretrievable deterioration before making any new investments. 7**
- d. No opinion at this time. 13**

Eventually the conversion will need to be made because of a lack of playback devices for the old analog medium... - [Baker](#)

...we currently plan to fold preservation microfilming into any digitization program, until we are satisfied with longevity standards (in terms of technology and expense) for digital copies. - [Carli](#)

Collections should not be "preserved" solely in digital form until the problems of technological obsolescence and migration strategies are addressed. The *fragility of the media* and the *obsolescence of storage technology* can be addressed today. Finding a format for storing images, audio, video that can be easily and completely migrated is the key issue. - [Conrad](#)

...in the best of all worlds, institutions prefer to aim for an analog copy for long-term preservation and a digital copy for easy and readily available access. - [Dale](#)

Digital storage for our materials makes sense when either the paper media are inadequate (CAD models and complex databases) or when the physical media are deteriorating. Digital storage may also be appropriate when access is needed for more than a small number of scholars. - [Eiteljorg](#)

It will never be possible to convert everything, which means *a triage process* must be in place. - [Graham](#)

I think it very much depends upon what type of collection is involved and the usage it's to receive. - [Hamal](#)

...administrators [mistakenly] only see value in the newest technology and do not see any merit in keeping [...] analog materials for future access when the digital environment fails....- [Helman](#)

Holders of copyright must be much more flexible if any progress is to be made in this area. - [Hughes](#)

I think it is premature to consider conversion of non-digital information to digital format for the purpose of long term preservation, due to the unresolved problems of managing systems of migration and refreshment, and the cost of doing so. I'm not sure the physical fragility of digital media is a particular obstacle, if we assume the physical media will be discarded with migration. - [Jones](#)

I'd like to see digitization happen as rapidly as possible for access and preservation both, but of course preserve originals in the best possible environment. - [Lucas](#)

...I'm inclined not to make any NEW investments in technology to handle things we want to preserve "forever", but I WOULD consider investing in a technology which provided long enough shelf-life and media availability to justify the costs, for use with things like office files. - [Maher](#)

With technology in such rapid flux, I do not think enough information is available about the shelf life [...] or future retrieval capabilities of current digital storage formats to commit to any particular plan at this time... Much of the media I work with has intrinsic value in its original format. - [McLemore](#)

institutions should make it their priority to both 1. Preserve original artifacts through a stable environment and 2. Begin the process of coming to terms with what it means to preserve electronic records. - [Messier](#)

There is no way a digital storage format can ever replace a physical collection. It is important to maintain both side by side to allow scholars [and others] access... - [Rymer](#)

Standardization needs to be complete before long-term investments are made by anyone. - [Schwan](#)

The original image is the best image - a maxim passed down to me in archives school. - [Skarstad](#)

...everything should be converted eventually, but that it's probably wise to wait for a permanent support rather than lock into a cycle of copying every few years. - [Turner](#)

I think institutions need to be concerned about preserving original formats as well as creating preservation formats. - [Vetter](#)

"Institutions should actively investigate digital formats with a plan to eventually convert all collections to a digital storage format" [...] so long as "all collections" means all the material worth keeping accessible within the technology-dependant collections. We have no plans to digitise all of our collections. Need to remember that investigation is still very active, and will influence whatever conversion plans we develop.

"Institutions should plan to maintain a dual set of storage for materials" is also true for some collections for some time. For example, we are maintaining both analogue and digital versions of our sound recordings while the analogue set can be accessed, because we want that level of redundancy in case one medium fails - that was our approach with analogue where we used at least two different kinds of tape to spread the risk.

With our multi-media collections our preservation path is migration but we are not confident that we can migrate publications successfully, so we will probably need to maintain dual storage arrangements for the "originals" which may be in good condition but not accessible with current technology, and for reformatted versions which have lost some of the functionality and look and feel of the original but at least provide some access using current technology. This approach would be based on an assumption that technology won't always drive us away from accessibility - that there will be recurrent cycles of innovation and incompatibility, followed by tools to bring the inaccessible back into view.

"Institutions should wait for a digital storage format that addresses the issues of tape fragility and rapid and irretrievable deterioration before making any new investments" is true to some extent, but in many cases we just can't wait: the problem reaches crisis point before the ideal solution is available. - [Webb](#)

Broadcasting is already digital, and much new material coming into the archive is digital. Transmission is also rapidly moving to digital. So the `conversion' is a process being thrust upon us. - [Wright](#)

[Top of Page](#)

[NEXT QUESTION](#) | [PREVIOUS QUESTION](#)