



Click on the URLs to visit the Web Sites. (This box will not appear if you print the issue.)

Crossroads

Developments in electronic records management and information technology

Editor's Note: Coming Soon

Web Sites:

Crossroads on the NAGARA Web Site
http://www.nagara.org/crossroads/crossroads_home.html

Starting with the next issue of Crossroads the Committee on Electronic Records and Information Systems (CERIS) will be publishing a series of White Papers on various topics related to electronic records such as electronic mail, content management, electronic security, HIPAA, disaster mitigation, privacy, custodial digital archives, and the new PDF-A standard. In the past Crossroads has contained reports on various projects underway by NAGARA members, short news items about national and international digital preservation endeavors, and other topics submitted by CERIS members. The new approach is an outgrowth of the NAGARA Board asking CERIS to provide some professional development products for the membership.

The first White Paper will cover the topic of e-mail. Issues of Crossroads are available on the redesigned NAGARA web site in Portable Document Format (PDF) for easy printing. The issues also include hyperlinks for easy access to the web sites listed in the articles. The next issue of Crossroads will be available in late October/early November of 2005.

NAGARA Website Re-designed

Web Sites:

National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators
<http://www.nagara.org/>

Effective September 1, 2005 the NAGARA website will have a "members only" section. This section contains information that will be of value to our membership, including copies of Crossroads and Clearinghouse, board meeting minutes, and the NAGARA membership directory. Another feature of the "members only" section is special content guides. These guides provide easy access to products that NAGARA members have produced about various topics, such as policies for e-mail, digital imaging and microfilming, electronic copies of record retention and disposal schedules and records management guidelines, and more. Thanks to these content guides, you won't need to search the web to find out what your colleagues are doing. The information will be easily accessible from a single location. We hope that you will use this new section of the NAGARA website and will provide us with your feedback. To login, you will need to know the host city of the annual meeting (for 2005, Richmond). The password will change on January 1 of each calendar year. Check it out!

Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives Building an Electronic Records Archives

Web Sites:

Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives
<http://KDLA.ky.gov>

Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives
Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC)
<http://kdla.kyvl.org/>

Kentucky's Electronic Records Archives (ERA) will authentically preserve and provide access to any kind of electronic record, free from dependence on any specific hardware or software, enabling the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives (KDLA) to carry out its mission into the future. The ERA will take advantage of indexing tools and file structures used by agencies that create electronic records, as well as those tools currently used by KDLA to preserve and provide access to records in other formats.

In the past year, a planning team of KDLA staff has worked on: 1) guidelines for website recordkeeping; 2) modification of a Kentucky Administrative Regulation (KAR) for state publications to include publications in electronic format; and 3) electronic records transfer standards and procedures. Each of these measures is designed to facilitate the archiving of records through cooperation among state government agencies.

KDLA's current services for providing access to records in its holdings allow researchers to search the KDLA Online Public Access Catalog, available via the World Wide Web, to identify what collections are available in various formats. The OPAC, and other database searches, will provide access points for archived electronic records, many of which have appeared previously on agency web sites.

While much of the department's four-year-old conversion service has been devoted to format conversion projects for state and local agencies under contract, these resources are being used to convert some archival records to a digital image format. The archived images, which currently include court records and vital statistics, are currently offered on-site in KDLA's Archives Research Room using indexes created for administrative purposes. This process seeks to take advantage of the arrangement and retrieval mechanisms applied to electronic records before they are accessioned into the archives.

In January 2004, KDLA began participation in a two-year, multi-state grant from the NHPRC (see the previous Crossroads article on the Persistent Archives Testbed (PAT) project). KDLA first focused on installing hardware and software, as well as researching data archiving issues, such as metadata, harvesting of records on the web, and selection/reformatting of records for preservation purposes. Kentucky then loaded the following records into the test system: 1) web records from the Office of the Governor; 2) minutes of state boards and commissions; and 3) publications of state government agencies.

As part of the PAT project, KDLA explored ways to automate archival processes for electronic records. Staff members are experimenting with various automated harvesting methods to speed the collection of records as well as metadata associated with the records. KDLA is examining descriptive, administrative and preservation elements that are most important to these archival

functions (to identify only the most critical metadata elements). The study is also evaluating the quality of metadata put in web objects at the time of creation.

The focus of the PAT project on matching practical, low-cost, timesaving automation techniques with archival functions suits the needs of KDLA in establishing a data archives in a time of limited resources. The availability of Electronic Records Archives collections will be announced on the department's web site.

“Electronic Records Online” -- Pilot Presentation System from the National Archives of England, Wales and the United Kingdom

Web Sites:

Electronic Records Online: Pilot Presentation of the National Archives Digital Collection
<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ero/>

National Archives of England, Wales and the United Kingdom
<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

The National Archives' "Digital Archive"
<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/preservation/digitalarchive/>

The National Archives of England, Wales and the United Kingdom recently released “Electronic Records Online,” a growing collection of born digital records from UK government. Some records have a textual basis (for example, word processing documents or e-mails), but many have no paper equivalent – records such as web sites, databases, virtual reality models and audio-visual material.

The records available online are “presentation” copies of the original records, records that have been reformatted for online viewing without changing the content of the records. Some file formats require the use of third party plug-ins for viewing. Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) and Macromedia Flash are two examples of the plug-ins that may be required. Records can be browsed and viewed online, and users can order a copy of records of interest. Not all electronic records are available; closed or confidential records as well as large files and those with other technical issues cannot be presented online.

The Electronic Records Online is part of the National Archives' Digital Archive, which provides a secure repository for electronic records and stores them together with detailed data about their structure, content integrity and provenance. The Digital Archive uses magnetic tapes to store data and has a storage capacity of 100TB (terabytes). The project is currently in the pilot stage but future development and expansion are planned.

PDF/A Standard Nears Completion

Web Sites:

International Organization for Standardization
<http://www.iso.org>

A standard for a subset of the Portable Document Format (PDF) that intends to ensure preservation of and access to electronic documents is nearing completion. The PDF Archival (PDF/A) standard has been approved by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and will be published by the fall of 2006. The standard was developed by a working group made up of representatives from the U.S. Courts, vendors, academia, and federal agencies, in cooperation with Adobe.

The PDF/A standard will forbid links to outside documents, encryption, and JavaScript, making the documents completely independent of outside resources. The standard will also mandate

that documents include metadata and embedded fonts. These requirements will allow PDF documents to be retained longer and should reduce the costs associated with long-term preservation.

Crossroads

Web Site:

NAGARA
http://www.nagara.org/crossroads/crossroads_home.html

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