Accessioning Collections

Digital Stewardship Curriculum

Consider...

- How do collections come into your institution?

- What are the first steps you take?

Definition

Accessioning: The legal transfer of responsibility for the physical and intellectual care of the material.

The material, called an accession, gets a unique identifying number.

All collections, whether donated, purchased or transferred, are accessioned.

The Accession Process

- Once you accept a collection through legal transfer (deed of gift)

- Give an accession number
  - Ex: 2015-001
  - Common form is the year it is accepted, and sequential number in the order it is acquired

The Accession Process

- Put material in a new box, other housing

- Identify obvious preservation problems

- Create an inventory

The Accession Process

- May have multiple accessions for one collection
  - Make sure each addition is documented!

- Deal with any restriction issues
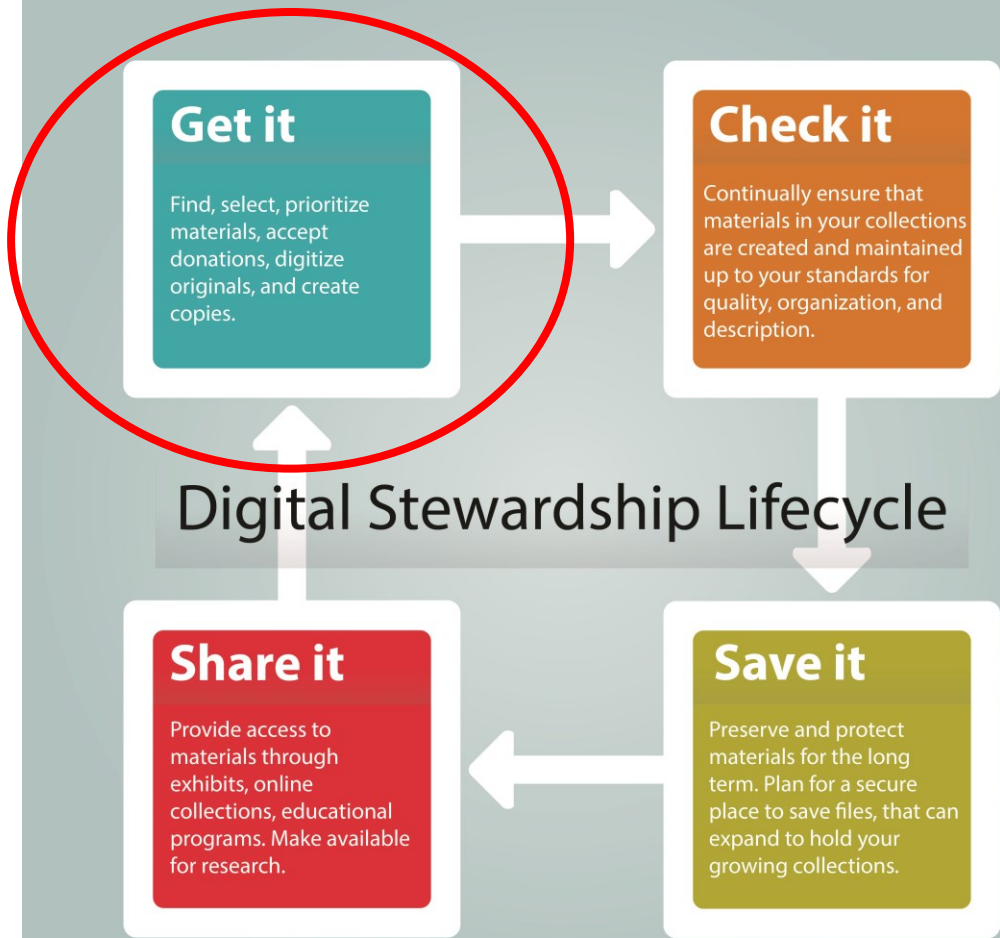
- Have a set Deed of Gift form for donations

Discuss

- When getting collections from donors, what levels of access or sensitivities are you dealing with?

- How do you deal with those requests or sensitive items?

Accessioning: physical and digital

- Digital files can't wait on a shelf as well as other collections- prioritize!

- Digital types: Born digital and digitized

Get it

Find, select, prioritize materials, accept donations, digitize originals, and create copies.

Check it

Continually ensure that materials in your collections are created and maintained up to your standards for quality, organization, and description.

Digital Stewardship Lifecycle

Share it

Provide access to materials through exhibits, online collections, educational programs. Make available for research.

Save it

Preserve and protect materials for the long term. Plan for a secure place to save files, that can expand to hold your growing collections.

Digital Lifecycle

Get it
Check it (flag issues, inventory)

Accessioning is the first step in multiple functions of the digital lifecycle.

Documentation examples

Accession forms:
- Standard
- Photographs
- Digital

Webster Collection

- Follow worksheet

- Fill out accession form for the collection

- Create an accession number and label the box