The Cheat Sheet's Cheat Sheet

Glossary for Digital Archives

⚠ DANGER

KEEP

QUICK REFERENCE
& FAMILIARIZATION
ARCHIVAL GLOSSARY
TERMS ONLY!

NOT IN-DEPTH.
NOT DETAILED.

CALM

MASTER

ARCHIVAL TERMINOLOGY

THERE IS POWER IN KNOWING WORDS.

NDN

ARCHIVIST

Introduction

The Cheat Sheet's Cheat Sheet is a companion glossary meant to familiarization people with basic digital archival terminology. It can (and should) also be used to quickly reference terms.

This was created for the Digital Curation portion of training provided by the Indigenizing Archival Training (IAT) pilot program and funded by the Society of American Archivists and the Mellon Foundation.

Whenever possible, terms have been kept to a minimum of one to two sentences and simplified. Some terms may have been omitted due to human error, complexity or time constraints.

This glossary, by no means, should be considered as being an in-depth explanation or a how-to-guide. For a more in-depth glossary, please consult the Society of American Archivists' website listed below:

https://www2.archivists.org/glossary/terms

Digital Archives Haiku

Made to have access

Preservation is the key

Digital headache.

-Unknown-

GLOSSARY

Access: OAIS function that allows users to retrieve digital materials.

Administration: OAIS function that manages the daily operations of the archives.

AIP or Archival Information Package (said as Ape or A-I-P): One digital object made up of supporting files encapsulated and stored for digital preservation.

Analog: Archival material that exists in the physical world. It's what you can physically touch.

Archival Storage: OAIS function that stores, maintains, & retrieves AIP(s).

Best Practices: Experience + Research= Optimal Results that become discipline standards.

Bit: The most basic unit of data that a computer can store or process.

Bitloss: The corruption of digital data at its most basic level.

Bitstream: It's a sequence of bits flowing over a communication path.

Byte: A group of usually 8 bits working as a unit. It's like a unit of memory size.

Born Analog: A non-digital form that is digitized. Think of scanning a historical document.

Born Digital: Materials that have always existed in a digital format. Think of a text or email.

Clone: An exact duplicate of a digital file without any bitloss versus a standard copy of a computer file.

Chain of Custody: Tracking the movement of archival material from its creation through digital preservation.

Checksum: Alphanumeric representation that verifies a file integrity at the place in time it is created.

Collection Management System or CMS: Software that creates, manages, & modifies archival content for public consumption.

Data Management: OAIS function that coordinates the descriptive information of AIPs with its supportive system information.

Data Sovereignty: Having control over digital data, its collection and storage through laws and governance.

Digital Asset (or also Digital Materials): Simply put, digital files belonging to part of an archives.

Digital Asset Management System (or DAMS): Software that stores, shares & organizes digital materials.

Digital Object: Considered to be the smallest unit in digital archives with its support content file(s) & metadata.

Digital Obsolescence: Obsolete hardware & software that prevent accessing digital materials, <u>risk of data loss!</u>

Digital Repository (or also Digital Archives): Space dedicated to storing, managing, & curating digital materials.

Digital Sovereignty: Having ownership of and the ability to govern a digital infrastructure.

Digital Storage: Generic term for networks dedicated to storing digital files.

Digital Surrogate: Digital copy of an original analog medium item.

Digital Wrapper (and/or Encapsulation): Combining several digital objects into one unit. Think AIP preperation.

Digitized (or also digitization): Analog information created and interpreted into an electronic format.

DIP or Dissemination Information Package (said as Dip or D-I-P): Accessible digital files by an archive's users.

FADGI or FEDERAL AGENCIES DIGITAL GUIDELINES Initiative (said Fad-Ji): Guidelines for digitizing historical, archival, and cultural content. Think of it as ideal, healthy units in an ecosystem.

File: A single unit and named computer digital file.

File Format: Think WAV, JPEG, or TIFF. How bits are used to encode and store information in a standard way.

Fixity: When a digital file remains "unchanged". This can be done by running & verifying its checksum match.

Indigenization: the ability to adapt something into and make it part of an extension of your tribal culture.

Ingest: OAIS function that prepares digital material to be uploaded as an AIP into a digital preservation environment.

Life-cycle: Distinct phases of a digital file's life from its creation, use, on-going digital preservation & disposal.

Metadata: Data about data; information which allows for long-term use of digital materials. Think about it like an electric version of the old library card catalogue used to find books.

Migration: Converting data from an obsolete format to a relevant format, think old to new and better.

NAS (or Network Attached Storage): Data storage device that backs up computer files.

NDSA (or NDSA LoP, National Digital Stewardship Alliance Levels of Preservation): Matrix used to plan, build, and/or access their digital preservation efforts at different levels and stages.

OAIS (or Open Archival Information System): Best practice standards that describes the processes necessary for a digital archives to function (think of it like how a well-balanced ecosystem thrives and interacts). Its six primary functions are Ingest, Archival Storage, Data Management, Administration, Preservation Planning, & Access.

Open-Source Software: Simply put, public-domain software that can be modified, copied & redistributed as needed by the user or institution using it.

Preservation Planning: OAIS Function that supports all tasks to keep the digital archives accessible through its existence.

Proprietary software: privately owned software that is owned, controlled & distributed under licensing agreements.

Provenance: Fancy word for the source, custody, and ownership of an analog or digital collection.

RAID (or Redundant Array of Independent Disks): Storage device made up of multiple hardware disks.

SIP or Submission Information Package (said as Sip or S-I-P): Initial digital file(s) given to an archives.

Workflow: Series of steps used to complete digital archiving tasks referenced in the OAIS Reference Model.

Writeblocker: A device that prevents data writing of files from occurring.