

Chapter 5

Problem–Oriented Assessments in Archives Management and an Extensive Archival Maturity Model Design

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the author examines maturity models from archival literature, addressing first and foremost the preservation of (digital) archival materials. Next, the author analyzes selected capability and maturity instruments from the author's own experience. All those models from literature and practice are problem-oriented, so they do not apply to all situations in archives. Subsequently, the author addresses the need to develop a more extensive maturity model for archives management by employing methods that combine recent approaches to designing maturity models and then undertakes the first phase of developing such a tool. The author demonstrates how maturity models can support improvement work (on the example of the model from literature and the digital archival system from practice). Finally, the author announces further development of the proposed extensive maturity model for archives management.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-7080-6.ch005

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides examples of the use of maturity models in archives management and construction of a broader model in this area. Archives management is an area of management that serves “to appraise, acquire, arrange and describe, preserve, authenticate, and provide access to permanently valuable records” (Pearce-Moses, 2005, p. 33). After reviewing examples from literature, the chapter presents assessment tools from four archives management related cases in which the author served as an advisor or project manager. The cases involve metadata management, digitization quality control, archival descriptions and cloud-based preservation. After analyzing the used assessment tools, the possibilities of designing and developing a more extensive archives management maturity model will be explored.

The first objective is to describe existing archival assessment tools from literature and practical cases in which the author was involved. Relevant academic and business resources were reviewed for the necessary information on maturity models in archival literature. Models from other areas were researched mostly in review literature, and the associated primary sources were referenced.

The second objective is to propose development of a maturity model that applies to most archival processes and which can serve as a guide for other models used in archives management. The respective archival processes deal with historical records and encompass a selection and appraisal of records, archival descriptions and arrangement, various tasks related to preservation of archival materials, and collaboration with other stakeholders. Appraisal is the process of determining whether materials have archival value (Pearce-Moses, 2005, pp. 22-23). Archival description is the process of describing of archival materials, e.g., in the form of inventory (Pearce-Moses, 2005, p. 25). Arrangement deals with the organization of the materials, maintains connections with its creator, and establishes the context and control (Pearce-Moses, 2005, p. 25).

BACKGROUND

Maturity “implies an evolutionary progress [...] of a specific ability or in the accomplishment of a target from an initial to a desired [...] stage” (Mettler, Rohner, & Winter, 2009, p. 343). Maturity models are intellectual tools, the purpose of which is to “facilitate internal and/or external benchmarking while also showcasing future improvement and providing guidelines through the evolutionary process of organizational development and growth” (Lasrado, Vartapu, & Andersen, 2005). Maturity evaluations have the purpose of informing organizations about their position so that they could move toward the more mature state. For an organization that uses a

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