Chapter 5
Digital Archiving

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ABSTRACT

Digital technologies are currently defining the 21st century age. Digital collections are core information and research materials for individuals and organizations. These core resources created for information use are fragile and require maintenance and preservation for future availability and accessibility. The preservation and management of these materials are dependent on the format and media, and digital collections are now been integrated to perform a single purpose of identifying, processing, and retaining the enduring value of digital materials. This chapter focuses on the concept of digital archiving, importance and challenges regarding preservation, accessibility of digital collections, and solutions to the expected challenges of digital archiving to strengthen the roles of information collecting and archiving institutions through the practical solutions provided.

INTRODUCTION

According to Szekely Ivan (2017), the term archive in European notion entails all documents produced or received by individuals, business entities or corporate bodies during the course of their business engagements and transferred to another institution that is concerned with the preservation of such documents (Archives). This definition was corroborated by the Council of Europe Recommendation (2000), who defined "archive" as the totality of the documents created for their businesses, which are subsequently transferred to the Archive for permanent preservation. This definition is obtainable when it is written with a lower case of "a" and confers a completely different meaning when written as Archive. "Archive" therefore, is the institution that has the responsibility of preserving archival documents. One of the major objectives of Archive is to create access to archives. Access to archives involves the usability of archival documents in conformity to the national laws. The Archive is known to identify, preserve, and provide access to their important material holdings. They preserve these materials in order to create access and

enhance their usability for information purposes. Their mission is to drive openness, cultivate public participation, and strengthen the Nation's politics when they create access to high-value government records (National Archives, 2017).

Archives have undergone series of changes in the past few decades, and these changes have affected the science and practice of Archives. These changes are distinct and concurrent and their impacts are evident and strong. This paradigm change in their operation is facilitated by the several hosts of emerging archival concepts, prominent among which is the development of information and communication technologies, which imparts expressed changes in the individual, and institution's communication practices, thus leading to development. One element of these changes is the relationship between remembering and forgetting (Szekely Ivan, 2017).

Archives are memory-preserving institutions and for the fact they serve large host of users (consults of the archival documents), who largely depend on the archival documents as the necessary sources required in their research search. Szekely Ivan (2017) opined that the Archives, irrespective of the changes they undergo, are still expected to take up the challenges introduced by the concept of information communication to create a better information processing and service delivery, for those who largely depend on them, reiterating that Archives and archiving institutions will remain relevant even in today's digital age. He supported his argument with six strong points emphasizing that the presence of information communication technologies which has introduced the digital age, and launched the archives into the practices of digital archiving, may not phase out the traditional archiving practices.

"In the final section I claim that, despite all of the above developments, the need for archives and archival institutions will continue to exist in the digital age. I have six reasons to support that claim: the archives' administrative and cultural embeddedness in the fabric of society; the provision of persistent functions related to data and documents; the task and capacity to preserve physical, no digital copies; the importance of preserving the historical and information technology context; the long-term task of migrating document formats; and, finally, the significance of archives' institutional responsibility".

Traditional archiving is the bedrock upon which the digital archiving was built using technology. The process of carrying out activities may change but the activities and the functions of archiving remains exactly the same, though in a new environment. Both, traditional and digital-archiving have their major backdrops and loopholes, which impacts the whole process of archiving. However, this chapter focuses on the concepts of digital archiving, as there is paucity of information in the area. Information on the concepts of digital arching is scarce in literature relative to the abundance of information on traditional preservation and conservation. Hence, this chapter will consider some activities and functions involved in digital archiving. It is worthy to state that the objective of this chapter is not to compare digital and traditional archiving but rather to highlight some important concepts in digital archiving and proffering solutions to some of the challenges encountered in the functions of digital archiving.

BACKGROUND

The use of technological tools in the workplace, in the field, or at home took credence since the early 1960s, thereby, shifting the traditional means of creating information and attending to many tasks to a more sophisticated method. The use of these technological tools is indispensable for a growing segment

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