# Getting Started in Digital Preservation – Draft Programme

1000 – Registration open, tea and coffee

1030 – Welcome

1035 – Introducing Digital Preservation (Sharon to update)

1105 – Assessing Institutional Readiness (Sharon to update)

1125 – Maturity Model Exercise (Sharon to write)

1145 – Discussion

1155 – Bit-Level Preservation (Paul to write)

1215 – Characterisation Tool Demo (Sharon to update)

1230 – Lunch

1330 – Creating a Digital Asset Register (Sara to write)

1350 – Digital Asset Register Exercise (Sara to write)

1420 – Risk Management for Digital Preservation (Sharon to update)

1440 – Risk Management Exercise

1500 – Comfort Break

1515 – Next Steps in Digital Preservation (Sharon to update) –SDT to present (add any updates to Sharon’s slides)

1545 – Q&A

1600 – Close

# Creating a Digital Asset Register

## Notes

Falls under component: ‘knowing a little about the digital materials in question.’

NDSA 4-Step Model Step 2: Know your data

**Questions you should be able to answer, or start to answer, about implementing digital preservation after this session:**

* What is a digital asset register?
* Why should we create a digital asset register?
* How do we create a digital asset register?
* What information needs to go into a digital asset register?
* How do we get that information?
* What happens to a digital asset register once it is created?

**What is a digital asset register? How does it relate to a verifiable manifest?**

A digital asset register is a document or database where collections managers or those responsible for digital preservation systematically record all digital collections or other digital content. A digital asset register will contain some data collected from the verifiable manifest. A verifiable manifest is about file types and the size of data and is used mainly by digital preservation practitioners. A digital asset register organises data (or metadata) about collections in a way more easily understood by others, particularly management and practitioners in other parts of the institution. They contain more information about items in the collection. Some institutions make their digital asset registers available internally to all staff who have responsibility or partial responsibility for one or more items in the register. This way, individuals with more direct knowledge of a particular collection, or part of a particular collection, can provide updated information if something should change. For instance, if more items are added to a collection or if copyright permissions have changed.

**What a digital asset register does:**

* gathers information about all digital content in one place
* designed specifically to ascertain preservation risks
* method to coordinate digital preservation actions across an institution
* tool to negotiate with management
* way to promote best practice in management of digital content within an organisation
* helps to retain valuable knowledge about a collection to prevent loss of progress if staff leave

**What information should be included in a digital asset register?**

A digital asset register is a document (or database) maintained by the role or roles within an institution responsible for digital preservation. Because the digital asset register should contain more information useful for the management of these assets, it does not need to detail this information for each individual item in a collection down to the file, unless a particular file is especially important, large, or unusual. In table form, for instance, a digital asset register may contain rows for each collection, or for each subset of a collection. In a simple database, it might have an entry for every collection or subset of a collection.

\*Image

The information recorded in a digital asset register will depend on the needs of an organisation and the nature of their collections. Generally, a digital asset register would include:

* Name of Collection / Content
* Person / Role / Dept. responsible for this content
* Size of collection and file formats it contains
* Retention policy (e.g. How long does this content need to be preserved? Why?)
* Ownership, rights, and data protection issues
* Associated risks and impact, including software / hardware / other dependencies
* Estimated value of content (e.g. How easy would it take to retrieve this content? How long to re-create it?)

This may include posing questions about information you do not have about your collection(s) that you may need to follow-up on.

**How do we collect this information? Once we have it, what do we do with it?**

Make this an active document or database that you update as you further progress digital preservation at your institution. You may need to break down original entries into more granular items, especially if items within a group have different preservation requirements than other items at that level. It is best to start with a higher overview and drill down after the register is established.

Make other colleagues aware of the register, especially if they are responsible for all or part of a collection or subset of a collection. They may want to use the register for reference or add new information to it as a collection grows or evolves. Use the register as evidence in requests for funding or budgeting for further action.

**How do we collect the information we need for a digital assets register?**

Approaches:

* Using finding aids and catalogues, metadata already captured about collections
* Interviews with staff members (NLS case study)
* Issue a survey to all staff who manage collections
* Analyse shared drives
* A combination of all of the above

**Frameworks:**

TNA’s Information Assets Register (for records management, institutional or business records or archives) - <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/information-management/manage-information/policy-process/digital-continuity/step-by-step-guidance/step-2>

Data Asset Framework (DCC): <http://www.data-audit.eu/DAF_Methodology.pdf> (p. 43) or <http://www.data-audit.eu/>

NLS Digital Content Audit

**Third-party services:**

These are services who provide a commercial solution to records management or preservation who provide a digital assets register as part of their packages.

## CONTENT ACTUALLY PUT IN SLIDES

**Title Slide**: NDSA 4-Step Model - Step 2: Know your data

**Slide 3**: What is a digital asset register? How does it relate to a verifiable manifest?

A Digital Asset Register:

-Recorded in a document or database

-Log of all digital collections

-Includes details about collections, even some data collection from ‘verifiable manifest’

-Includes information about preservation risks

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**Slide 5**: What information should be included in a digital asset register?

A digital asset register is a document (or database) maintained by the role or roles within an institution responsible for digital preservation. Because the digital asset register should contain more information useful for the management of these assets, it does not need to detail this information for each individual item in a collection down to the file, unless a particular file is especially important, large, or unusual. In table form, for instance, a digital asset register may contain a row for each collection, or for each subset of a collection, with a column for each category of information required. In a simple database, it might have an entry for every collection or subset of a collection.

The information recorded in a digital asset register will depend on the needs of an organisation and the nature of their collections. Generally, a digital asset register would include:

-Name of Collection / Content

-Person / Role / Dept. responsible for this content

-Size of collection and file formats it contains

-Retention policy (e.g. How long does this content need to be preserved? Why?)

-Ownership, rights, and data protection issues

-Associated risks and impact, including software / hardware / other dependencies

-Estimated value of content (e.g. How easy would it take to retrieve this content? How long to re-create it?)

This may include posing questions about information you do not have about your collection(s) that you may need to follow-up on.

**Slide 6**: Your approach to collecting information for your Digital Asset Register will depend on the size of your organisation, the amount of time you have, and your priorities for digital preservation. On a very basic level, finding aids and catalogues will give a summary of information needed to compile a Digital Asset Register. If your organisation keeps a relatively organised shared drive, you can find deeper information about digital collections and other digital contents through organisational documentation. It’s important to note that finding aids and documents on shared drives are ALSO digital materials that need preserving – it’s important to work closely with corporate management to ensure organisational records are also registered and preserved to standard. To obtain any information missing from your digital asset register after these approaches, an organisation-wide survey can help fill in the gaps. A survey may also be an opportunity to raise awareness about digital preservation as well as gain insight into unpredicted risks or other issues with digital assets across your institution.

If you come from a medium to large-sized organisation, and/or you have time and resources to develop a more detailed Digital Asset Register, performing interviews with staff across the library will provide a very rich and thorough method for collecting the information you need and potentially discovering information you didn’t think to ask about. This process can be very time-consuming, working around your own schedule and the schedules of other staff can be difficult. It’s also important to use a standardised set of questions so that the interview responses will fit your Digital Asset Register uniformly. That said, you may need to adapt your questions slightly for different members of staff. It’s a work in progress – don’t worry if it’s not perfect the first time. If you’re doing it right, you will have to update the Register within 6 months to a year anyway.

**Slide 7**: Once we have it, what do we do with it?

Make your Digital Asset Register an active document or database that you update as you further progress digital preservation at your institution. You may need to break down original entries into more granular items, especially if items within a group have different preservation requirements than other items at that level. It is best to start with a higher overview and drill down after the register is established.

Make other colleagues aware of the register, especially if they are responsible for all or part of a collection or subset of a collection. They may want to use the register for reference or add new information to it as a collection grows or evolves. Use the register as evidence in requests for funding or budgeting for further action.

**Slide 8**: The good news is, there is a lot of information about this topic available. The bad news is, there is a LOT of information about this topic available. Don’t get overwhelmed – essentially, a Digital Asset Register is a pragmatic tool aimed to help you do your job. Make it work for you and don’t collect more information than you need to practice effect management and preservation of your digital materials.

**Slide 9**: In groups of 2 or 3.