Untangling Digital Knots

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Untangling Digital Knots

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Why do Semantics Matter?
How do you interpret the terms “Digital Archive” and “Institutional Repository”? 
Defining Digital Archives

• First, what does “archive” mean?

n. ~ 1. Materials created or received by a person, family, or organization, public or private, in the conduct of their affairs and preserved because of the enduring value contained in the information they contain or as evidence of the functions and responsibilities of their creator; especially those materials maintained using the principles of provenance, original order, and collective control; permanent records.

Broader terms: Collection; Repository

http://www2.archivists.org/glossary/terms/a/archives
What does “archive” really mean?

- Records?
- Papers?
- Collections?
- Saved/backed up?
- Materials put somewhere else so you don’t lose them?
- Old stuff?
Commonalities

- Acquire
- Preserve
- Organize
- Access
The concepts do not change just because the format does...
Digital Archives Defined

Digital materials, whether born-digital or digitized, of enduring historic value, that are acquired, organized, and described for purposes of preservation and access.
Communication
The difference is replication

Identical copies can exist in all places at all times
So what about that institutional repository?
Institutional Repository (IR)

Also known as:
Digital Repository
Scholarship Repository
Open Access Repository
“Digital Archive”
An Institutional Repository is…

• “…a set of services that a university offers to the members of its community for the management and dissemination of digital materials created by its members. It is essentially an organizational commitment to the stewardship of these digital materials, to include long-term preservation where appropriate, as well as organization and access or distribution.” (Lynch, 2003)
And...

- For many academic leaders, institutional repositories seem an ideal tool to manage knowledge production and dissemination. (Smith, 2007)
An Updated Definition?

- “Institutional repositories contain the various outputs of the institution including research results and learning/teaching materials.”
  (Armbruster & Romary, 2010)
Institutional Repository Example

http://dash.harvard.edu/community-list
But…

- “There is no consensus on what institutional repositories are for…” (Smith, 2007)
collections that don’t meet this criteria

http://trace.tennessee.edu
Bibliography


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