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HELPIFUL LINKS

- [Edmonton Chapter](#)
- [ARMA International](#)
- [ARMA International Education Foundation](#)
- [Journal of Canadian Records & Information Management](#)
- [AIIM](#)
- Governance & Record Keeping Around the World [English](#) | [Français](#)

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The ARMAYeg Connector

AGM RECAP

Thank you to everyone who attended our recent Annual General Meeting (AGM). We had a great turnout with around 30 chapter members registered! We saw a lot of familiar faces, but we also welcomed a number of new members. At the AGM, the Board introduced new volunteers and directors; check them out on our Board of Directors website page.

Some very exciting programming plans were also announced to attendees. The 2020/2021 term will be action-packed with webinars on a number of different streams; these include Records and Information Management, Information Governance, Privacy and Risk, Technology and Security, and Career Development. As always, information will be posted on our website and shared with members directly.

UPCOMING NOVEMBER EVENT

With much of this year feeling very disconnected, the Board wants to facilitate a fun session for our members to come together and celebrate each other. We appreciate everyone's continued support of ARMA and want to take this opportunity to recognize a few particular gems.

Please join us over the lunch hour as we host a "Coffee Style" chat and networking event for November. We are excited to offer this opportunity to recognize our longstanding ARMA peers, catch up with everyone, and have a little fun doing so! Spoiler alert.... we may have an interactive game planned, so prepare some "flair". For more registration information, please visit our [website](#).

LENDING LIBRARY

As mentioned in our previous edition of the ARMAYeg Connector, the Board is looking to establish a lending library to support the professional development. One of our programming sessions will even be focused on career development and making sense of the "alphabet soup" of designations.

We are taking suggestions on acquisitions of specific titles or certification supports. If you have an IM book that you think others should read or a certification in mind, contact marketing@armaedmonton.org with your suggestions. Also, think about virtual learning avenues you have discovered. Share links to programs, courses, webinars, other associations, and any relevant resource materials. Ideas or suggestions are always welcome.

NEW AWARDS COMMITTEE

As a professional association, we are always looking for more ways to recognize and commemorate our members. At the past AGM, we discussed the creation of an awards committee to assist with just that. Volunteers will be responsible for nomination collection, evaluations, and award presentation. If you are interested in volunteering some time to coordinate yearly chapter awards, please email us at communications@armaedmonton.org.

DID YOU KNOW?

You have likely heard of black holes. These are places in outer space where the gravitational pull is so strong that not even light can escape. But have you heard of the *digital* black hole? Well, it is real!

The “digital black hole” phenomenon occurs when an event causes digital information to be lost. This can happen when information is taken down from a website or when a website shuts down completely. It can also happen when old computer disks are accidentally wiped of information or when the technology needed to run those disks becomes obsolete. In today’s world, technology is changing rapidly, and there has been an explosion of ephemeral content online, particularly on social media apps. Therefore, digital preservation is now needed more than ever to combat the digital black hole.

For more information, check out the article, “[The digital black hole: Will it delete your memories?](#)” In addition to the digital black hole, the article also discusses some notable digital archival projects from the British Library, the Library of Congress, and the Crop Trust (specifically, its Global Seed Vault).

CALL FOR ARTICLES

Remember that you can submit your articles to our Newsletter Editor:

Marlena Muskens
muskensm@mymacewan.ca

DIGITAL PRESERVATION AND ITS CHALLENGES

When it comes to digital records, organizations must preserve them to ensure continued accessibility over a long period of time. However, as technology changes, file formats, hardware, and software can become obsolete; this puts the organization at risk of losing valuable records and information forever. Therefore, organizations must practice digital preservation to mitigate this risk.

According to the [Digital Preservation Coalition \(DPC\)](#), digital preservation is “the series of managed activities necessary to ensure continued access to digital materials for as long as necessary.” Along with continued access, the authenticity and integrity of the records must also be preserved. When it comes to digital preservation, organizations face many challenges. These include technological obsolescence, preserving authenticity and integrity, and cost.

Technological obsolescence is definitely a huge challenge. Technology refresh cycles last three to five years; therefore, in five years, file formats, hardware, and software may become outdated or obsolete. Also, hardware and software do degrade over time, so repairing old, obsolete technology can be an impossible task. Besides this though, preserving the authenticity and integrity of digital records can be difficult, especially since digital materials can easily be edited or altered over time. Therefore, maintaining long-term trust in digital records can be a difficult process.

Finally, cost is a huge barrier, since organizations need sustainable, long-term funding to continue running their digital preservation programs. Long-term funding is needed not just for digitization equipment e.g. servers and scanners, but for ongoing training of personnel. If organizations lose their funding halfway through the project, then valuable records and information could be lost forever.

CURRENT BEST PRACTICES IN DIGITAL PRESERVATION

The Digital Preservation Coalition (DPC), International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and Smithsonian Institution Archives all discuss current practices for digital preservation. Some key points are discussed below.

To combat technological obsolescence, it is recommended for organizations to use open file formats that can be used on more than one software application or system. These formats include the Portable Document Format Archival (PDF/A) format and the Joint Photographic Experts Group 2000 (JPEG2000) format. Both are recognized by the ISO as standards for digital preservation ([ISO 32000-2:2017](#) and [ISO/IEC 15444](#), respectively). In addition, migration and emulation are common practices for preserving digital information. According to the [Smithsonian Institution Archives](#), migration is the transfer of digital information “from its original file format to a preservation quality file format,” whereas emulation involves creating “an environment to render the file as it would have appeared or functioned in its original form.” In some cases, migration may not be possible; if certain equipment is not available, then the file may not be accessible in its original form. If such situations arise, then it is recommended for organizations to use emulation to preserve the files.

To maintain the authenticity and integrity of digital records, the DPC recommends applying “data integrity techniques” and maintenance of audit trails to keep track of “who or what has interacted with them [the digital records] over time.” One example discussed by the DPC is [checksums](#); this is defined as a “digital fingerprint whereby even the smallest change to the file will cause the checksum to change completely.” In addition, it is important to remember to capture metadata with each digital record. This will ensure that the record’s authenticity and integrity is preserved.

Finally, to ensure reliable, long-term access to managed digital resources, an organization can create a trusted digital repository. The ISO’s [Reference Model for an Open Archival Information System \(OAIS\) \(ISO 14721:2012\)](#) sets out a framework and compliance guidelines for organizations who wish to create one.

For more information on current digital preservation practices, check out the DPC’s [Digital Preservation Handbook](#) and the official website of the [Smithsonian Institution Archives](#).