



Library of Congress Digital Preservation Newsletter

Public Interest in Private Records

“There are more businesses created each year than there are marriages, but even with high divorce rates the business failure rates are higher,” said David Kirsch, Associate Professor at the Robert H. Smith School of Business, University of Maryland during a presentation at the Library of Congress on March 17, 2009.



Photo Credit: Barry Wheeler

Kirsch noted that understanding why some businesses fail and others succeed is dependent largely upon the examination of business records. The records provide facts, methods and organizational structures that distinguish between success and failure. Such records are usually private but after time passes, competitive and confidential information typically become moot. After restrictions are lifted, business records are valuable sources for students, educators and scholars.

In a digital environment, records that are not managed will not survive merely by accident—as many records in the past have. When a business fails their records are often simply thrown away. Kirsch observed that companies are often motivated to destroy records because they are seen as a legal liability. This creates a situation where only a very limited number of records from contemporary companies are preserved for future researchers.

Kirsch outlined four possible approaches to creating an environment where companies have incen-

tives to preserve their records. Read [more](#) about these approaches - and about the Kirsch-led [Birth of the Dot Com Era](#) project, which is supported by NDIIPP - on [digitalpreservation.gov](#). A [webcast](#) of this presentation is also available.

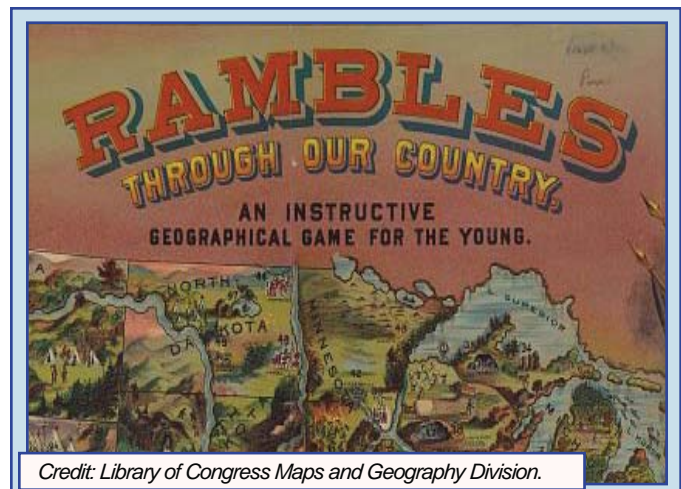
State Partners Meet

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, at least 47 states are currently facing shortfalls in their budgets, and the combined budget gap for the current and next two fiscal years is estimated to total more than \$350 billion.

This issue served as a backdrop for a recent meeting of the four Preserving State Government Information initiative projects supported by NDIIPP. Project staff met at the Library of Congress to share information about efforts to preserve and provide access to important government digital information.

The participants explored the ways in which a formal national network of digital preservation partners, comprising representatives from government, academia and the private sector, might provide benefits to its members in support of digital preservation and enhanced access. The participants also discussed the responsibility of network members, mentioning trust and participation as central concepts needed to move the potential organization forward towards success.

Read [more](#) about the meeting and the work of the States projects on [digitalpreservation.gov](#).



Credit: Library of Congress Maps and Geography Division.



NARA Conference Explores a New Preservation Era

A one-day conference, “Digitizing for Preservation and Access: Past is Prologue”, was held at the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, D.C. on March 26, 2009. In addition to staff from NARA, the Library of Congress and other federal government agencies, there were participants from university libraries, state archives and a representative from the National Archives of the UK.



The conference was hosted by the National Archives.

A major theme that emerged throughout the day was the importance of considering digitally reformatted content as a valuable resource on its own, rather than just as a copy. Overall, the presentations included overviews of governmental programs such as NARA’s preservation program and Electronic Records Archives, information about private sector partnerships with government agencies and sessions on usability, social tagging and conservation as they relate to digitization.

Read [more](#) about the conference and check the [Federal Agencies Digitization Guidelines Initiative](#) for the NDIIPP staff presentations made at the conference. •

World Digital Library Launched

On April 21, 2009, UNESCO and 32 partner institutions launched the World Digital Library. The web site showcases unique cultural materials from libraries and archives in many nations. Librarian of Congress James H. Billington first proposed the WDL in 2005.

For more information, see the full Library of Congress [press release](#).

International Intern at NDIIPP



NDIIPP hosted its first international exchange intern during April and May of 2009. Sabine Schrimpf of [nestor](#), the German Network of Expertise in Digital Preservation, worked with the NDIIPP team at the Library of Congress for six weeks to gain insight into all aspects the program.

The visit included work with the NDIIPP Communications team, study of the Library’s web archiving processes, a visit to the Packard Campus of the National Audio-Visual Conservation Center, and attendance at the Archiving 2009 Conference in Arlington, VA.

Read [more](#) about Schrimpf’s experience at digitalpreservation.gov. •

Announcement



NDIIPP is a sponsor of the 4th Annual International [Open Repositories Conference](#), held at the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, Georgia on May 18-21, 2009. This year’s conference is organized by the Georgia Institute of Technology, an NDIIPP partner in the [MetaArchive](#) project. •

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