

# Just Doing It!

Smithsonian Institution Archives –  
Rockefeller Archive Center

*Joint Electronic Records Project*



# Managing Resources, Time, and Milestones

or

# Managing the Project



- Goals
- Project partners
- Project details
- The larger context



# From 50,000 feet

- A practicable Electronic Record Archive System (ERAS) model for small to medium size archives
- Localized pilot ERAS functioning at partner organizations
  - Positioned for a long life – solid business case
  - Best practices-based management and preservation
  - Capacity and scalability
  - Framework for next generation digital records
- Emphasis on email, other common use formats
  - Involvement with more innovative technology (TRB involvement)



# Partner demographics

## *Rockefeller Archive Center*

- Serves as permanent repository for:
    - 21 Rockefeller organization, e.g. Museum of Modern Art
    - 6 other philanthropic organizations
  - Distinct IT environments, business workflows, and attitudes toward records
  - Low level of record management influence on record creators
  - 30 years of ongoing relationships with donors
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## *Smithsonian Institution Archives*

- Serves the Smithsonian Institution's 35+ units
  - Official record archives
  - Institution record manager
- Permanent and temporary records management
- Largely (but not completely!) centralized IT environment and culture
- Single, complex organization's set of processes and policies
- Some electronic record policy and ERM best practices in place
- Preservation and maintenance processes are largely manual



# SIA Electronic Records Program

- SI Archives Electronic Record Program began 1997 under Edie Hedlin and Fynette Eaton
  - Groundwork of policy development and initial accessions
  - Study and pilot for archiving websites
- Reactivated in 2003
  - Staffing increase – 2.5 dedicated FTE plus volunteers
  - Began production archiving and preservation
    - websites, legacy formats, CAD, databases
    - 1M+ records, 60% since January
  - Comprehensive inventory and preservation
    - Risk management



# Project details

- Phase 1: Survey & Draft Guidance
  - Staffing now complete: 3 dedicated archivists
  - IT involvement from RU and SI
  - Participant commitments
- Phase 2: System Design and prototype
  - Technical
    - OAIS model
  - Initial record transfers will also
- Phase 3: Preservation, Lessons Learned, Next Steps



# Thinking on your feet

- Build awareness
  - Of your project
  - Of their business
- How do “they” win?
  - ... who cares?
- Resources and materials
  - Synergies built early on can help minimize task slippage later on
- A portfolio mentality



# Risk management

- For your records
  - Don't forget your system
  - Obsolescence factors
    - Know your records and your environments
    - Take advantage of other research
  - Quality assurance!!
    - Every stage
  - Access
- For your project
  - Momentum
  - External and internal support
  - The right business choices (ROI, cost-effectiveness)
    - Hidden costs



# The larger context

- Too many projects to mine, too little time
- Some choices
  - NHPRC projects
  - Digital Archive Certification (RLG and others)
  - Persistent Archive Testbed
  - NDIIPP initial projects
  - Center for Government Technology
  - NARA's ERA
- Topical areas
  - Automation tools
  - Open source and commercial solutions
  - Data and system standards



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