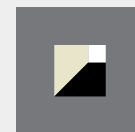# PORTICO CASE STUDY
Liberal Arts Colleges

How Portico has helped colleges protect their investment in e-resources

Preservation and the Print-to-Digital Transition

Across academic libraries, demand for electronic journals and books has led to enormous growth in digital collections in recent years. Colby College and Vassar College librarians have seen a steady decline in use of their print collections, and have been working to free up shelf space by moving print offsite. Clem Guthro, director of libraries at Colby College, notes that having a preservation strategy in place is critical when de-accessioning print and building electronic resources. "As you downsize the number of physical copies, there really has to be a sense that this stuff is available in a secure digital format," comments Guthro. "Without that, making a secure transition from reliance on print resources to reliance on electronic resources would be impossible."

Whose Responsibility *is* Digital Preservation?

Colby College and Vassar College, like many liberal arts colleges with concerted preservation efforts, demonstrate an important point about modern librarianship: digital preservation is not the exclusive purview of large institutions like the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) members. All institutions, from small teaching institutions to large research universities, have an active stake in the preservation of scholarship. Each institution needs to protect its own investment.

Without a digital preservation solution strategy, librarians risk losing access to their investment in e-resources due to format obsolescence, failing platforms, or organizations ceasing operation. Sabrina Pape, library director at Vassar College, says, "Preservation has always been a core part of our mission, and we need to protect our electronic content for future Vassar students and scholars." By implementing their own digital preservation strategy, Pape knows that Vassar's electronic resources will be there for the long-term.

Why Portico. Why Now.

By participating in Portico, Vassar can meet student demand for electronic resources and feel secure doing it. "We were concerned about our move to electronic journals without a preservation strategy," says Pape. "And when Portico came along, it was a great relief. It was like our insurance policy. We used it to make the move to electronic

PARTICIPATING LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES
Albion College
Allegheny College
Amherst College
Austin College
Bates College
Bowdoin College
Bryn Mawr College
Bucknell University
Calvin College
Carleton College
Colby College
Colgate University
College of St. Benedict & St. John's University
Colorado College
Concordia College
Connecticut College
Davidson College
DePauw University
Elon University
Franklin & Marshall College
Grinnell College
Guilford College
Hamilton College
Haverford College
Hope College
Illinois Wesleyan University
Keene State College
Lake Forest College
Lawrence University
Lenoir-Rhyne University
Luther College
Macalester College

more palatable for faculty members and library staff." By being able to confidently rely on electronic content, Vassar has saved money by minimizing costly dual formats. Today, Vassar is cancelling its last duplicate print subscriptions.

In their evaluation of preservations services, Guthro found that other solutions required a significant financial burden. Other solutions can require staff resources and hardware with hidden costs. He prefers Portico's fully managed, third-party approach. "It's moderately easy to get money for things; it's harder to get money for people. When Portico came along, we jumped on it right away. It was something I knew I could find money for." Today nearly 70% of Colby's collection is electronic. "Portico is my fire insurance for having gotten rid of print," says Guthro.

Guthro adds there is an increase in urgency surrounding digital preservation. "With the rapid growth of digital collections, a move to the development of shared print collections among institutions to free up shelf space, and a shrinking number of print materials in circulation, an investment in digital preservation is essential for all libraries today."

How can Portico benefit your library?

Portico helps librarians keep pace with the digital transition.
Some librarians maintain print alongside electronic access for the same content as a strategy for hedging against the potential loss of electronic access. These dual-format environments quickly prove costly and inefficient, though—especially when users prefer online content.

Portico's third-party preservation service ensures that e-journals, e-books, and digitized historical collections will be accessible in the future. This means librarians can securely move away from their reliance on print and invest more in electronic resources.

Portico requires no effort from librarians so they can prioritize other responsibilities. Some librarians choose self-directed digital preservation methods, increasing their staff and technical infrastructure to ensure the long-term safety of their content. These methods can seem inexpensive upfront, but they require significant time, labor, and planning on the part of each library.

Portico is a cost-effective solution for small libraries. Due to financial limitations, some librarians have discarded print altogether, with no preservation plan for the long-term. Many look to larger libraries to handle preservation issues. But what happens to their investment in electronic resources when a press or platform dissolves?

Portico's model makes preservation affordable, so that no institution, regardless of size, is faced with these worries. Portico was developed as a community-based model in partnership with libraries; our fees are based on library materials budgets, and are affordable to all types and sizes of institutions.

Contact us for more information or for a holdings comparison at participation@portico.org.

PARTICIPATING LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES CONT.
Middlebury College
Mount Holyoke College
Reed College
Sarah Lawrence College
Skidmore College
Smith College
St. Lawrence University
St. Mary's College of Maryland
St. Olaf College
Swarthmore College
Trinity University
Union College
Vassar College
Wellesley College
Whitman College
Williams College