

PORTICO CASE STUDY

University of Cincinnati



PORTICO

How Portico fit in with a university's print to electronic resources transition

Interviewees: James Van Mil, *Collections & Electronic Resources Librarian*, and Dan Gottlieb, *Associate Dean of Collections & Technical Services*

In June 2011, the University of Cincinnati Libraries established the Ad Hoc Group for Digital Preservation of Locally Purchased Content. This group was created to identify a preservation service for the libraries' growing set of digital resources. "With an increasing number of digital resources, comes a new approach to collection management and a need to ensure long term access," says James Van Mil, collections & electronic resources librarian. "We needed to find a solution to reliably protect our investment in e-content."

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Selecting a Digital Preservation Solution

Cincinnati librarians conducted thorough research and interviews, and evaluated their preservation options on a number of criteria before ultimately selecting Portico. Their review considered the following factors:

Archive size: One of the first things that appealed to the group was the volume of content in the Portico archive. Portico preserves content from the largest commercial publishers—like Brill and Springer—to university presses—like MIT Press and Oxford University Press—to smaller independent publishers and libraries. The archive's continued growth every year, with more than 31 million files preserved so far, was extremely attractive, Van Mil notes.

Value: The group was looking for a solution that could secure their growing investment in electronic resources and provide a solid cost/benefit. "The cost of participation in Portico was small for the investment we were making in our e-resources," says Van Mil of their decision.

Inclusion of d-collections: The library had made a significant investment in expensive, high-quality digitized historical collections. But as formats changed, they became concerned about long-term access. "We liked that Portico preserved Gale collections at no cost to our library," says Dan Gottlieb, associate dean of collections & technical services. "The backup plan we originally had in place for those collections became technologically obsolete."

Coverage of their libraries' holdings: Institutions considering Portico often conduct holdings comparisons between the contents of the Portico archive and the digital holdings of their own library. For the University of Cincinnati, the comparison proved that their libraries would be secure across a substantial portion of titles.

No staffing requirements: While self-directed preservation efforts often seem financially preferable at first, the cost of supporting these efforts at universities—as measured by staff time and technological infrastructure—can prove

unsustainable. Van Mil notes of Portico, “it didn’t require developing any IT infrastructure to support it, and there was nothing we would have to do in terms of developing content for ingestion into the archive.”

Archive certification: Portico’s TRAC certification by the Center for Research Libraries (CRL) helped confirm the quality of its preservation service. “Right around the time we were working on making a decision about a digital preservation solution, I attended a TRAC certification information session, and realized how valuable this certification is, and Portico was the first archive to undergo this process,” commented Van Mil.

Preservation Checklist

What should you consider when evaluating a digital preservation solution? Here are some key factors that digital preservation experts Anne Kenney and Richard Entlich recommend, and how Portico responds:

Mission and mandate: Does the repository have an explicit mission and the necessary mandate to perform long-term archiving?

- ✓ Portico’s purpose is to build a sustainable dark archive to preserve digital publications for the long-term. We are part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that has always had preservation of the scholarly record as a core part of its mission.

Network: Is the repository part of a larger network?

- ✓ At Portico, we believe that collaborative development is a keystone to success. The Koninklijke Bibliotheek (KB) preserves an off-line copy of the Portico archive. Portico consults regularly with the KB, the Library of Congress, the British Library, and other members of the digital preservation community. We are also supported by a global group of hundreds of libraries and publishers.

Rights and Responsibilities: Does the organization have long-term agreements in place with publishers?

- ✓ Portico has license agreements with the publishers that allow us to preserve the content for the long-term (including migrating or transforming the content as necessary) and to deliver the content should specific trigger events occur.

Content Coverage: Is the organization transparent about what it is archiving and from whom?

- ✓ The content committed to Portico is available on the Portico website. In addition, the specific holdings can be reviewed on our website and through our audit site.

Access Rights: Does the repository have the legal right to make content accessible under certain conditions?

- ✓ Portico has the right to make content available when specific circumstances occur: a publisher ceases operations, a publisher ceases to publish a title, a publisher no longer offers back issues, or a publisher’s platform fails.

Preservation Approach: Is the digital preservation approach robust and proven?

- ✓ Portico’s migration based approach is designed to address long-term preservation needs. Over time Portico will ‘migrate’ or transform content from one file format to another as technology changes.

Third Party Audit: Has the repository been accredited by a third-party?

- ✓ Portico has been certified as a trustworthy digital repository by the Center for Research Libraries (CRL). Portico was the first preservation service to undergo this in-depth assessment.

Find links to this report in the “Evaluating Your Preservation Options” section of the Portico website, portico.org

How Portico Can Help Your Library

Hundreds of libraries around the globe participate in Portico. Join the community: contact us for a library holdings comparison or questions about participation at participation@portico.org.