

Building a Collaborative Curation Framework: Working Towards Sustainable Digital Stewardship

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Sustainable digital stewardship requires rethinking siloed organizational structures, as noted by Blumenthal, et al. in their 2020 article “What’s Wrong with Digital Stewardship: Evaluating the Organization of Digital Preservation Programs from Practitioners’ Perspectives.”¹ How might academic libraries overcome organizational barriers to dismantling these silos?

In March 2020, the Georgia Tech Library engaged Artefactual Systems to assess the current state of its digital curation/stewardship initiatives and to collaborate on producing a roadmap for revitalized organizational design and technological infrastructure. With the goal of building bridges across previously siloed content types, workflows, systems, and departments, we sought to look holistically at all unique content stewarded by the Library, from archives and special collections to the research and scholarship housed in the institutional repository. We also sought to build upon a developing community of practice within the organization that brought together a diverse range of interested staff to reconsider curation activities in a unified manner.

The resulting Curation Framework weaves together collections, infrastructure, services, products, and the caretakers who maintain it all. The Georgia Tech team will discuss takeaways from the Artefactual consulting report and improvement methodologies, reflect on the successes and struggles encountered in implementing the recommendations (including the effects COVID-19 has had on active change work), and offer starting points for practitioners looking to reimagine and sustain their curation work across existing silos. This presentation will explore insights from the report, give recommendations for approaching curation work holistically, and define the effort required to turn a vision into a sustainable reality.

Keywords:

organizational change, digital stewardship silos, digital curation planning, collaboration, institutional opportunity

Abstract:

This presentation will discuss lessons learned from an academic research library’s endeavor to reconsider curation work holistically – across siloed content types, processes, systems, and departments. Georgia Tech team members will explore insights from our efforts working with Artefactual Systems to reimagine and sustain digital stewardship work across existing organizational silos.

¹ Blumenthal, Karl-Rainer; Griesinger, Peggy; Kim, Julia Y.; Peltzman, Shira; and Steeves, Vicky (2020) “What’s Wrong with Digital Stewardship: Evaluating the Organization of Digital Preservation Programs from Practitioners’ Perspectives,” *Journal of Contemporary Archival Studies*: Vol. 7, Article 13.
Available at: <https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/jcas/vol7/iss1/13>