



Case Study: Information Management reports example

Structure of a case study response

Your response to the case study is often presented in a report format, but check your assignment instructions for any specific requirements. In this example we look at an executive summary, introduction and conclusion. For more information on how to write and structure a report, see the report writing handout.

Executive Summary

Preservation has long been considered a fundamental responsibility of research libraries. Data on preservation activities by its members has been collected by the Association of Research Libraries since 1987, but changing digital technologies and the research, teaching, and learning environments in which research libraries are engaged created a need to review and examine assumptions about the types of qualitative and quantitative data needed to characterize current and emerging preservation programs.

The report is organized around three themes: Preservation functions; Networked digital environment; Collaboration. Within each section, background and analysis are provided and recommendations for consideration by ARL are posed.

<section deleted>

A final set of recommendations suggests ways that ARL and others in the preservation ...

Finally, specific recommendations to ARL's Statistics and Measurement Program are provided in Appendix B.

Set the scene/context

- *Introduces the topic broadly (i.e. preservation as a responsibility of research libraries).*
- *Narrows down the focus (i.e. preservation activities).*
- *Problematizes the topic (i.e. new technologies necessitate the need to review assumptions).*

Outline of the report

Summary of major findings

- *The executive summary continues by providing a summary of findings based on these three themes.*

Summary of the implications based on the findings

- *These are broad statements which lead to very specific recommended actions*

Recommendations

- *In this report they are attached in an appendix. Often they are stated in the executive summary.*

(Adapted from Meyer, 2009, p. 7-9)



Introduction

The analysis reported here is an outcome of the ARL Task Force on the Future of Preservation in ARL Libraries meeting held in 2006. Based on the discussion at that meeting the Task Force recommended that ARL conduct an investigation of the kinds of preservation activities being pursued or considered by ARL member libraries. ARL has gathered data on member libraries' preservation activities for several decades, but the goal of this study is to expand beyond those traditional bounds and address a fuller range of activities that advance the preservation of increasingly digital research collections. Thus, the findings in this report rely on additional sources of evidence including qualitative interviews conducted with preservation librarians and collection development librarians; an experts meeting to review initial findings from the qualitative interviews; and a review of recent literature.

Based on these sources, this report summarizes the range of preservation activities pursued by ARL member libraries and provides recommendations about how libraries should characterize and measure those activities. Although a full palette of preservation activities is addressed, areas of emerging interest or concern for libraries are particularly highlighted. The recommendations in this report serve two purposes: (1) to inform the development of an ARL preservation self-study tool for libraries and (2) to offer suggestions to the ARL Statistics & Measurement Program for enhancing the ARL preservation statistics.

Several assumptions inform this report:

Set the scene/context

- *This is an extension of the information presented in the executive summary*

Aim/goals

Methods

- *Brief description of how information which formed the main findings was collected*

Outline of the report

- *This matches the outline in the executive summary. However, in the introduction they are presented as problems or issues which need investigating, whereas in the executive summary they are presented as findings.*

Outcome

- *Connected to aim/goals stated above*
- *Connected to recommendations which are NOT presented in the introduction*

Assumptions

Conclusion

The overarching trend among research libraries is a broadening of their preservation agenda. They are increasingly acquiring, making, and preserving digital content while continuing to manage the preservation of books, manuscripts, archives, and audio-visual materials. Research libraries are engaging a wide range of challenges including, but not limited to, the management and preservation of the digital output of the now well-documented large-scale book digitization projects; the preservation and conversion of sound recording and moving image materials whose use is threatened by decaying media and technological obsolescence; the capture and preservation of digital content created by the library and other entities within and beyond the parent institutions.

This report has identified a range of new preservation activities and highlighted key challenges faced by preservation programs in the shorter term. In addition to informing library and preservation leaders, it will serve as a basis for ARL's development of a preservation self-assessment tool for member libraries. The tool will be designed to help a library paint a more complete picture of its preservation activities than what is reflected in the currently reported statistics. The tool will also aid libraries in identifying preservation strengths, weaknesses, and cooperative or leadership opportunities. Together this report and the tool will offer a broader base for planning and prioritizing preservation activities in a digital age.

Restatement of the broad focus of the report

- *i.e. preservation activities by research libraries*

Summary of findings

- *Follows the outline presented in the executive summary and the introduction*

Summary of findings continued

Outcomes

- *These lead to the recommendations, which in this report are presented in an appendix; often they are presented in a Recommendations section of the main report*
- *The outcomes are stated broadly, where recommendations are very specific courses of action*

(Adapted from Meyer, 2009, p. 39-41)

References

Meyer, Association of Research Libraries, & ARL. (2009). *Safeguarding collections at the dawn of the 21st century describing roles & measuring contemporary preservation activities in ARL libraries prepared by Lars Meyer*. Association of Research Libraries.