"Good" Digital Collections: Tech Talks

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Trends

- • Exploding volumes and rising demand for data use are driven by the rapid pace of digital technology innovations;

- • The products (and the starting point for new) research are increasingly digital &"born-digital";

- • All sectors of society are stakeholders in digital preservation and access;

- • A comprehensive framework for cooperation and coordination to manage the risks to preservation of digital data is missing, (NSTC, 2009).

Total Sites Across All Domains
## August 1995 - January 2010
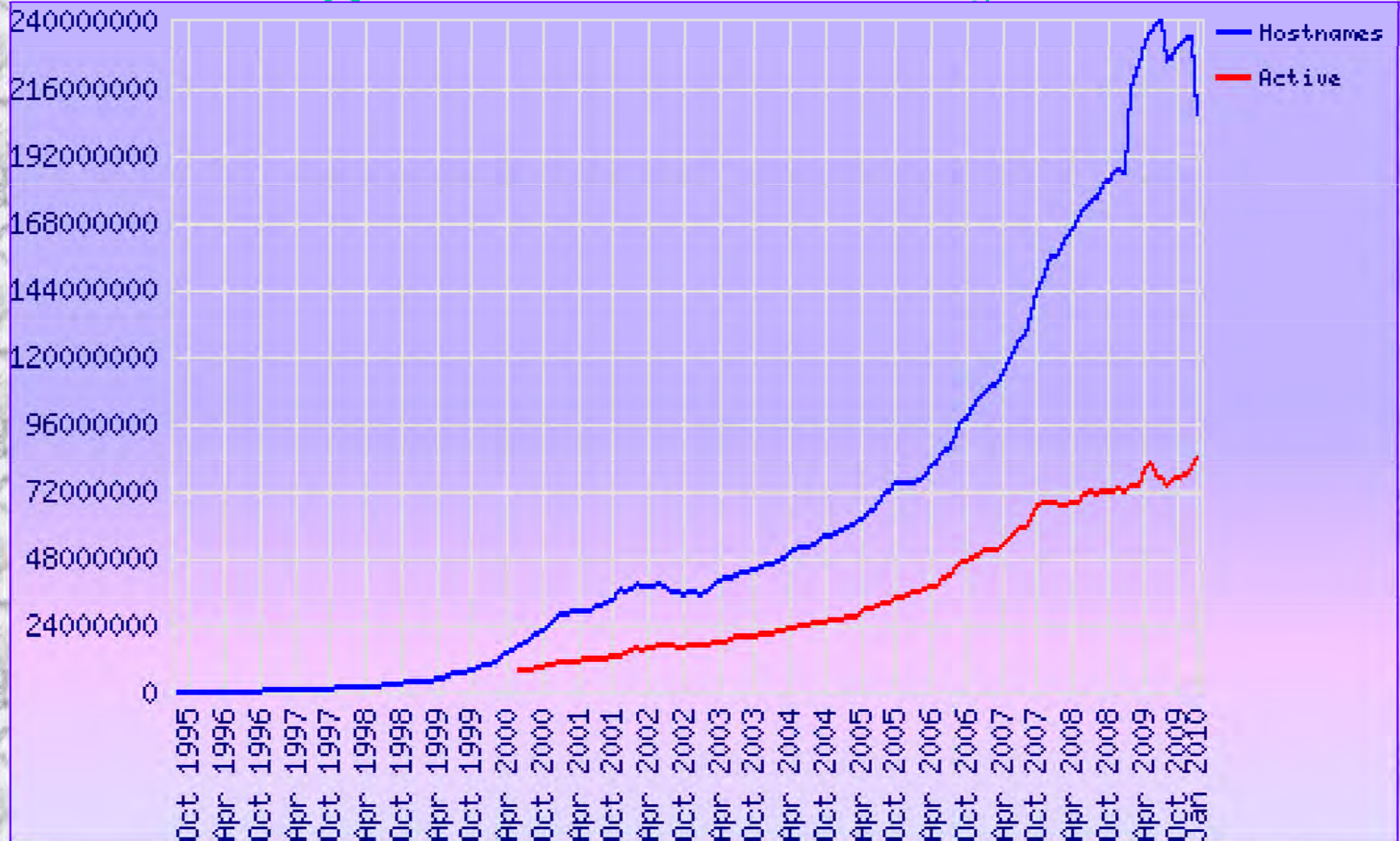
Digital Collection

- The digital environment has now introduced new resource types, new partners, and new user expectations into the current information landscape.

- Essentially, digital data are the common thread linking these powerful trends.

- Advancing knowledge requires not only enhancing our capacity to generate more knowledge, but also cultivating our ability to comprehend and communicate the vast quantities of knowledge we continue to generate.

Five Basic Aspects of a Digital Object
(van Wijngaarden, 2007)
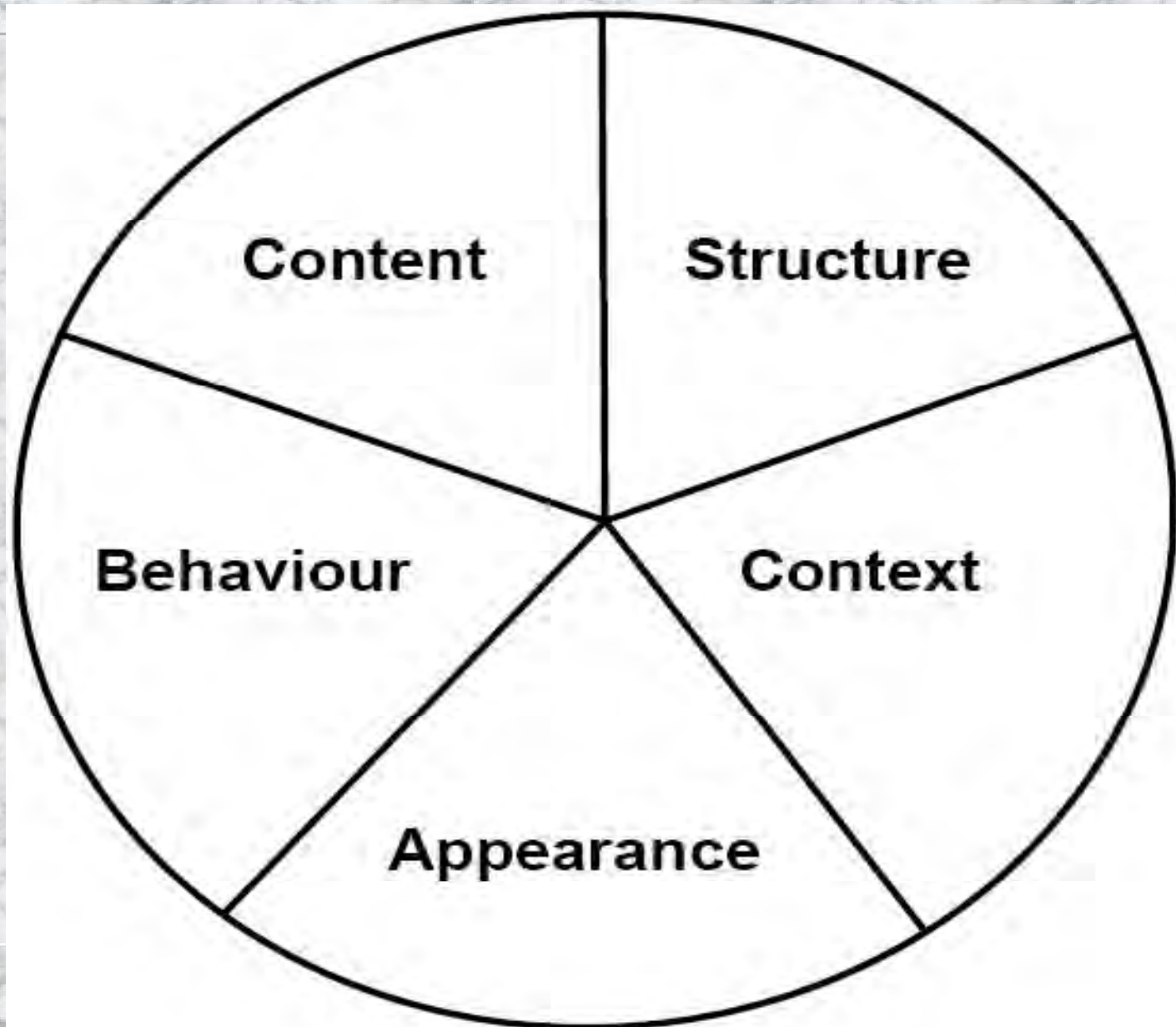
Factors Influencing Data Quality

- **The quality of the data in the objects themselves**
  - The digital life cycle management starts from the point an item is created & continues through image cleanup, metadata capture, derivative creation, and extends to ensuring long-term access.

- **The quality of the metadata associated with the objects**
  - Maintaining usable, interoperable, and sustainable digital collections necessitates maintaining high quality metadata about those digital objects.

- **Objects, metadata, and the user interface together create the user experience of a collection**

ALA's (2007) 9 principles of digital content:-

1. **Values,**
2. **Intellectual Property Rights,**
3. **Sustainable Collections,**
4. **Collaboration,**
5. **Advocacy,**
6. **International Scope,**
7. **Continuous learning,**
8. **Preservation, and**
9. **Importance of Standards**

ALA's (2007) Nine Principles for Digital Content

1. Values	1. Digital collections are as important to libraries as all other types of collections. The policies of the Association apply fully to digital collections, including values such as intellectual freedom, commitment to access, respect for confidentiality and privacy, freedom of information, service for the public good, and professionalism.
	2. Digital content must be given the same consideration as other library materials when conducting collection development, organization and cataloging of works, reference services, and preservation.
	3. Digital content must be provided in various and alternative ways to meet the unique needs and circumstances of all people.
	4. Equitable access to digital library materials is ensured through maximum accessibility, ubiquity, sustainability, and barrier-free access
2. Intellectual Property Rights	1. Access to and use of digital content that is protected by copyright should be provided in a fair and equitable manner, balancing the rights and privileges of users, creators, and owners.
	2. Rights management policies and procedures must promote the advancement and sharing of knowledge, innovation, and creativity.
3. Sustainable Collections	1. A library's digital collections and associated activities must be sustainable.
	2. Sustainability requires secure and ongoing funding, technology solutions that are appropriate to the longevity of the cultural record, and long-term management capabilities.
4. Collaboration	1. Collaboration enables the building of collections that support research, scholarship and information needs of diverse communities.
	2. Collaboration will require strong organizational support and promotion by library and cultural heritage practitioners, their institutions, and their associations.
5. Advocacy	1. A library's digital programs and associated activities require ongoing communication for its success.
	2. The library and cultural heritage communities must reach out to the public, to government, and to funding institutions with a clear and compelling message regarding the role of digital libraries and collections.

6. International Scope	1. Digital collections increasingly serve an international audience and are part of a global information infrastructure that is not limited by geography.
	2. The library and cultural heritage communities must understand the origination of materials in digital collections, respect the ownership of these materials, and be attentive to issues surrounding cultural asset exploitation and repatriation.
	3. Digital collections and services must be developed with goals of technical and social interoperability in the international information sphere.
7. Continuous learning	1. Digital collections are developed and sustained by an educated workforce.
	2. Members of the library and cultural heritage professions must engage in ongoing learning. They must explore new technology, work with new partners, and reach new audiences.
8. Preservation	1. Digital resources must receive appropriate preservation
	2. Preservation activities require the development of standards, best practices, and sustainable funding models to support long-term commitment to digital resources.
9. Importance of Standards	1. Digital collections must be built upon standards and best practices that maximize their usefulness.
	2. Such standards and best practices must serve the broadest community of users, including those with disabilities, support sustainable access and use over time, and provide user functionality that promotes the core library values: http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/statementspols/corevaluesstatement/corevalues.cfm • Access, • Confidentiality/Privacy • Democracy • Diversity • Education and Lifelong Learning • Intellectual Freedom • Preservation • The Public Good • Professionalism • Service • Social Responsibility
	3. Preference should be given to open standards and non-proprietary technologies that support long-term sustainability.

NISO's (2007) nine principles that apply to good digital collections:

A digital collection consists of digital objects that are selected and organized to facilitate their discovery, access, and use.

1. A good digital collection is created according to an explicit collection development policy.

2. Collections should be described so that a user can discover characteristics of the collection, including scope, format, restrictions on access, ownership, and any information significant for determining the collection's authenticity, integrity & interpretation.

NISO's (2007) nine principles ...

3. **A good collection is curated, which is to say, its resources are actively managed during their entire lifecycle.**

4. **A good collection is broadly available and avoids unnecessary impediments to use. Collections should be accessible to persons with disabilities, and usable effectively in conjunction with adaptive technologies.**

5. **A good collection respects intellectual property rights.**

NISO's (2007) nine principles ...

6. **A good collection has mechanisms to supply usage data and other data that allows standardized measures of usefulness to be recorded.**

7. **A good collection is interoperable.**

8. **A good collection integrates into the users own workflow.**

9. **A good collection is sustainable over time.**

Digital Collection Development

- A good digital collection should be created according to an explicit collection development policy that has been agreed upon and documented before building the collection begins.

- A collection development policy is a statement of general collection building principles which delineate the purpose and content of a collection in terms relevant to both external and internal users.

Collection Development Policy

- Collection development policy is intended to guide the selection of materials to be added to the collections.

- Accordingly, Digital collection development has moved from being an additional activity to a core service in many libraries.

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- The mission of the UNT Libraries is to acquire, preserve, provide access to, and disseminate recorded knowledge in all its forms.

- Access will be provided increasingly through electronic networks and consortial arrangements.

- The Libraries, through traditional methods and through digital information resources, provide bibliographic, reference, and instructional support to assist the university's programs of teaching, research, scholarly and creative production, and public service.

Sample Collaborative Digital and Research Projects

- **The Portal to Texas History:**
    - http://texashistory.unt.edu/
- **CyberCemetery:**
    - http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/
- **NDNP Texas Newspaper Digitization Project**
    - http://tdnp.unt.edu/
- **IOGENE Optimizing Interfaces for Genealogists**
    - http://iogene.library.unt.edu/
- **NDIIPP Web-At-Risk**
    - http://web3.unt.edu/webatrisk/

Summary

- **Digital libraries and supporting technologies have now matured to the point where their contents are incorporating complex and dynamic resources and services.**

- **The focus of digital collection-building efforts shifted toward the creation of useful and relevant collections that served the needs of one or more communities of users.**

The bar of "**goodness**" was raised to include levels of usability, accessibility, and fitness for use appropriate to the anticipated user groups. (NISO 2007)

Questions?

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