CREATING WEB ARCHIVING SERVICES IN THE BRITISH LIBRARY

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DLF Fall Forum 2005
November 9th 2005
Creating Web Archiving Services in the British Library

The presentation will cover the following areas:

- Brief history of web archiving in the British Library
- Relationship with UK Web Archiving Consortium and International Internet Preservation Consortium
- Legal Deposit in UK and impact on non-print: latest developments
- Challenges: legal, technical, operational
British Library Web Archiving Programme: Where are we now?

• Web archiving began in BL in 2001/2002 with experimental domain.uk project

• This led to creation of BL Web Archiving Programme which comprises three main elements: Underpinning collection development policy, UK Web Archiving Consortium (UKWAC), and International Internet Preservation Consortium (IIPC)
British Library Web Archiving Team

- Seven full time staff dedicated to web archiving
- Web Archiving Programme manager
- Curator, Web Archiving
- Each of the above has a team
UKWAC

- UKWAC comprises six institutions: British Library, National Library of Scotland, National Library of Wales, The National Archives, JISC, and Wellcome Trust

- Initial two-year project to develop and evaluate a collaborative infrastructure for web archiving within the UK consisting of both shared costs and shared objectives, and exploring the nature of collaboration between partners
Issues in Providing a Service: Legal

- UKWAC operates on website owner rights clearance basis
- Less than 25% successful return rate on permissions; although few outright refusals
- Considering ‘notice and takedown’ approach which has been tested in connection with events-based collecting, e.g. General Election 2005; 7/7 London bombings
UKWAC: Achievements / Challenges

• Fulfilled goals of testing and using National Library of Australia’s PANDAS software

• Live archive of web sites, fully accessible, free of charge is in place http://www.webarchive.org.uk/

• Permissions-based approach has worked but has raised challenges

• Key issues in terms of software and its functionality especially in a collaborative environment e.g. green-light red-light approach, downtime etc

• Challenges in formulating agreed collecting procedures

• Challenges in different remits of the member institutions
Issues in Providing a Service: Legal: Legal Deposit

• Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003 and extension of legal deposit to non-print

• Enabling legislation now moving to secondary legislation stage through work of the Legal Deposit Advisory Panel (LDAP)

• Triads set up to look at specific areas, e.g. e-journals, websites. Great interest expressed in work of UKWAC
Issues in Managing a Service: Technical

There was full agreement by UKWAC to use PANDAS but we have encountered a number of problems, including:

- Robot exclusion
- Content filtering
- Maximum URL limit
- Style sheets
- JavaScript
- Failed downloads
- Missing gathers
UKWAC: Unexpected Issues

- National library archiving websites implies validation of that site
- Imbalance of collection, e.g. if one political party agrees to have site archived, others not
- Website owners fear confusion over archived site and current site
- Bringing down sites.
IIPC: Whole domain searching and tools

- Approximately 5 million UK websites

- Stated aim of seeking a snapshot on a regular basis, i.e. in line with legal deposit

- Procurement in place (British Library and Bibliothèque nationale de France) for smart crawler (prototype planned in 2006/2007; possibility of whole domain searching in 2008)

- Issues of territoriality; resourcing; access in respect of Legal Deposit Libraries Act
Options appraisal planned:

- PANDAS 3
- IIPC tools tested within BL and appraised by UKWAC partners
Next steps

• Defining the future of UKWAC – current pilot ends in June 2006

• Future of IIPC

• Need to work with and learn from others to achieve web archiving!
…. and concluding with a recent quotation from an RLG report ‘But web archiving tools and services require a level of local commitment and resources that often exceed in-house capacity’