

**Eighth Annual Meeting of the
Corporate Archives Forum
May 18-20, 2005
Ford Motor Company Archives
Dearborn, MI**

**Meeting Notes
Final Version**

The eighth annual meeting of the Corporate Archives Forum was held May 18-20, 2005 in Dearborn, Michigan. Ford Motor Company hosted the meeting. Present were:

- Elizabeth Adkins, Ford Motor Company
- Laurie Banducci, Gap Inc.
- Bruce Bruemmer, Cargill
- Jean Elliott, JP Morgan Chase
- Paul Lasewicz, IBM
- Phil Mooney, Coca-Cola Company
- Ed Rider, Procter & Gamble
- Deborah Skaggs, Russell Investment Group
- Becky Haglund Tousey, Kraft Foods
- Dean Weber, Ford Motor Company

Greg Hunter of Long Island University served as facilitator and note-taker.

To protect confidentiality, these meeting notes do not attribute comments to any attendee or company. The attendees are sharing these notes with the wider archival community in the hopes of furthering the discussion of issues.

This year's meeting included the following topics:

1. Maintaining relevance in a changing organization
2. Web editorial boards
3. Global tool kit for cultural assets
4. Integrating archives and records management
5. Anniversary image delivery
6. Archival change: relocations and mergers
7. E-mail management
8. Archives and asset management
9. Internal publicity

Session 1: Maintaining Relevance in a Changing Organization

Maintaining relevance is journey. It is important to maintaining visibility with stakeholders as the organization changes.

The first step in maintaining relevance is to ask three key questions:

- What is the current environment of the company?

- What are the goals of the archives program?
- Which projects best help the archives to achieve its goals?

One archives found that maintaining relevance changed as the archives went through three phases: growth, survival, and redefinition.

Growth

During the growth phase, when the archives is launched, everything seems to be going well. The company is hiring employees at a rapid pace. The archives begins to develop relationships, making people aware of the value of archives through partnership and/or workflow processes.

Survival

The second phase may be one of cutbacks, merger, or a company's redefinition of its core goals or culture. The company looks for ways to streamline and reorganize, and the archives will be part of the review for continued support, restructure, or closure.

Redefinition

The hiring of new senior management, record growth, or other significant change can lead to a period of redefinition within the company. There is an opportunity to partner with new management to provide context of the company's history, and look for ways to use the history as an asset for internal and external communication. There may also be an opportunity to take on new responsibilities related to archives in order to build a core information management capability in the organization, with the archives embedded within it.

Some suggestions for maintaining relevance are:

- Don't just focus on routine archival tasks.
- Look for strategic ways to embed the archives in corporate activities.
- Review all record retention schedules as they are prepared to ensure appropriate records are designated for archiving.
- Include archiving of records into records retention requirements that ideally will be audited for compliance
- Along with retention schedules, try to ensure through other corporate policies and procedures that the archives is integrated into business practices
- Actively engage key stakeholders through outreach, especially for marketing and public relations
- Share goals across the entire company. Speak the same language as the rest of the company; sound less "archival."
- Fully integrate the archives into business processes so it is impossible to shut down part of it (database, retention schedules, etc.)

The key is balance – being a better archivist while doing everything else.

Some of the points raised during the discussion were:

- Everyone needs to be a history entrepreneur.

- You have to embed the archives in the corporate culture – you can't rely on personal relationships.
- How are you relevant? People will ask: How have you helped me today?
- In one company, being relevant meant reorganizing to serve business units. The archives staff was broken up to serve in the decentralized facilities. Archives staff are assigned to each business unit and costs are charged back to the business units.
- The archives can't just sit in Headquarters.
- We are not just selling history – we are selling our capabilities. It is outreach.
- We need to leave archival footprints behind and bring them into the corporate infrastructure.
- We can't just argue "historical value." Records are there because of their "ongoing business value."
- Are we still doing archives? Am I a marketing person?
- Does the chief marketing officer write press releases? No. He or she spends time on the political level. This flows down to the people who do the detailed work.
- Archives does not have a natural career path like public relations or accounting. You grab what you can and hope it is the right path to support the archives.
- We can build a program because we understand the relevance. We know whom we serve and to promote the archives.
- Corporate archivists have one foot in the business and one foot in the profession. We bridge the gap between them. We translate the business needs to the archival profession. We translate professional concerns to the business.
- In corporate archives, have to figure out the relevance quickly, promote it, and build from it.
- The archives' mandate is: make the company's past accessible.
- The point is not just to make archives relevant – but to make it indispensable.
- Part of identifying relevance is being able to switch your positioning and your argument.

Session 2: Web Editorial Boards

One archivist volunteered to serve on two corporate Web Editorial Boards (one for design and the other for content of sites). The corporation's purpose was to have the Web support strategic objectives and customer expectations. Integrating the Web company-wide is a mammoth task with many obstacles: 1.6 million pages, 200 separate sites, and 6 languages.

Cost is a big factor – it is expensive to convert to a design standard. Consistency also will be a challenge.

The initiative focused on three aspects: rigor, revenue, and relevance.

- Rigor. Metrics are getting more sophisticated.
- Revenue. There is a shift from "sharing content" to "generating dollars."
- Relevance. Content and content-professionals have been driven down in the pecking order.

Corporations are shifting responsibility for the Web site from Public Relations to Marketing. Some of the implications are:

- Marketing can bring resources to the table and can require centralization.

- There is more rigor in terms of metrics – revenue metrics (income generated) rather than web metrics (number of hits).
- There is an attempt to understand how users are getting into the site and are being channeled to revenue sites.
- The Web site is more sales oriented and less content oriented. For example, one has to drill down for press releases.
- The message and tone of the sites are becoming more important than the content.

Metrics are becoming more marketing-oriented and strategic. They are trying to develop metrics on the site's effectiveness, including customer satisfaction. Metrics are being applied against corporate objectives. Some comments on metrics were:

- What is the relevance of the metrics?
- How do you collect the metrics?
- How do you measure “client satisfaction?” Still a great deal of fuzziness in this area.
- Since we're dealing with marketing, we are trying to quantify things that are difficult to quantify.
- There is a mix of increasing rigor and soft numbers

Content is becoming strategized, atomized, and personalized.

- *Strategized.* Content is tied to the brand (mission, vision, values, personality, positioning, products).
- *Atomized.* The “page” no longer is the lowest level. We now are at the level of subcomponents of pages (content objects).
- *Personalized.* Corporations are trying to enhance user experience by providing them with resources specifically targeted to their interests.

Archivists have to deal with different players in trying to position archives content on the Web (marketing rather than communications). We don't want our content marginalized. At the moment anything that isn't linked to brand messaging and positioning will become marginalized as long as this marketing-driven streamlining and customer channeling trend remains in the fore.

Archivists need metrics that show that we're adding value. Content now is strategic. Content providers within the organization are less respected. Marketing also influences the “spin” on the content.

There also are implications for Web harvesting. It may be bad for archives if the Web is less of a “free-for-all.”

In highly regulated environment, Web sites contain regulated records. Corporations may be required to produce Web sites for federal and state regulators.

One corporation uses an outside contractor to capture all Web sites in PDF. In 4 years, they have only had 1 request to access the captured pages.

Session 3: Global Tool Kit for Cultural Assets

One corporation has spent five years capturing advertising content produced over the last half-century. This had been neglected as a corporate resource.

The project began in 2000 by capturing U.S. content. The corporation is working with a major non-profit institution to preserve the advertising. The U.S. project is 70% complete.

Among the key issues were:

- Who owns the copyright? In this case, the corporation retains copyright. The non-profit repository is not responsible for securing clearances.
- Who owns the creative content? Advertising agencies often maintain that they own the creative content. The corporation has clarified (through agency contracts) that the corporation owns the creative content.
- What is the status of talent rights (actors, musicians, etc.)? Clarifying this can be a time-consuming process. Another corporation has added “talent contracts” to the retention schedule as a permanent item.

But current and historical data are in one database. This is available to everyone in the company. Having the advertising assets available in a high resolution format saves a great deal of money in agency retrieval fees.

The program now is moving outside of the U.S. The corporation will take a similar approach in partnering with major cultural institutions in each country. Some considerations already raised are:

- Who will pay for the up-front cost of surveying advertising materials in each country? Each country is different and each corporate office is different.
- How will you deal with different tax structures?
- How do you get the cooperation of local advertising agencies, especially those that no longer do work for the corporation?
- Will local reformatting vendors be able to meet the standards of the project?
- Will all countries permit records – which can be considered cultural assets – to leave the country?
- How do you develop personal relationships in each country? This is important because you are asking people to go beyond their regular work. On the other hand, you are giving them a great public relations opportunity.

In terms of the future, this corporate archives has embedded its processes into the advertising environment. Every new advertisement is supposed to be delivered to the Website, which flows into the digital asset management system (marketing and the archives are co-owners of the system). The system has become too valuable not to maintain properly.

Session 4: Integrating Archives and Records Management

This session was a roundtable discussion of the relationship between archives and records management. Among the points discussed were:

- If the archives takes control of records management, we now are responsible for making certain that it works. Instead of griping about records management, we now have to do something about it.
- It is difficult to implement broadly-written global schedules and standards. Few programs have adequate resources to re-engineer the schedules and standards.
- Compliance now is being taken quite seriously. If the schedule says that an item should have “archival review,” employees actually are contacting the archives. This is a

problem, however, because the archives does not have the resources to handle all of the questions.

- Archivists and records managers have different approaches. The archivists are looking at individual customer service, while the records managers are concentrating on rules governing a global program. There are big cultural differences that may require cross-training.
- Global issues make the situation even more complex.
- Some organizations are integrating responsibility for the entire life cycle of records, rather than keeping archives and records management separate.
- One corporation has added “business analysts” to the records management program. They are trained in business process mapping, but not in archival functions.
- Compliance officers don’t see the difference between archives and records management. What is most important to them is the “records program.”
- It is hard to make changes when there isn’t a culture of recordkeeping. Compliance concerns have started to change this.
- People won’t just follow policies. You have to build a program from trust and make the program relevant to the corporation.
- One approach is to start records management in the organizations with the greatest risk.
- In hiring a new records manager, one archivist had the candidate interviewed by the archives staff – who knew the corporate culture.
- In some places, records managers get paid more than archivists. In other places, all managers get paid the same despite function. We don’t want executives to value the two areas differently.

Session 5: Anniversary Image Delivery

One archivist reviewed the selection, preparation, and delivery of images for a major corporate anniversary. Among the points discussed were:

- Huge anniversary led to a huge spike in work load. The archives needed strategies for dealing with the workload.
- The archives also did not want images only available at corporate headquarters
- The solution was to build an anniversary audiovisual Web site. The archives scanned 2,000 images at high resolution. They were stored as JPEGs and vector art.
- The site had password access, but was outside of the regular corporate firewall. There were 500 users including authorized vendors.
- The archives used an outside contractor to develop and manage the site.
- There were 7 categories of images (people, products, processes, environment, celebration, lifestyle, logos) plus the corporate identity handbook.
- The site included information on use fees for each image.
- The archives used “file info” in Adobe Photoshop to store header information. They applied a basic caption and descriptive data.
- This was a download site, not just a viewing site. The site had 30,000 downloads from 45 countries, with no performance problems.
- The site relieved a great deal of demand from the archives team (searching and duplicating images, etc.)
- It cost \$10,000 to get the site running and \$3,000/month to maintain it.
- There is an “Associated Press Wire Photo Resolution Standard” (200 dpi x 10” wide) that was recommended as a minimum file size.

Session 6: Archival Change: Relocations and Mergers

Corporate archives programs often must respond to changes caused by relocations, restructuring, mergers, and acquisitions. The discussion raised the following points:

- One archives is going to be moved to the first floor of headquarters, just off the main lobby. The level of exhibit quality will have to increase as a result. Exhibits and tours already take up 40% of the archivist's time.
- In a merger, it helps for the archives to be an early member of the transition team.
- What are terms of the merger agreement? Are all historical records included? Similarly with divestitures, does the new owner get the historical records?
- Mergers can be especially sensitive if a local community is losing a major corporate presence with deep historical roots. Removing the records of the merged company may only make matters worse.
- The archives needs to take steps to make certain that the Facilities Department does not destroy items of historical value.
- Multiple archival locations present specific problems. How do you manage people in more than one place? How will you have consistent policies? How do you provide information about what is in each location? Should there be a common catalog?
- When you decentralize collections, people consider them to be “their” collection. How do you deal with possessiveness? Management might say, “If other people can care for their own records, why not just decentralize the entire archives?” This approach has failed in the past.
- With decentralized archives, it is important to audit for compliance. Maybe the archives can't bring all the records to headquarters, but you can bring the people to headquarters to see how it should be done.
- Some acquisitions are like the Borg – eventually employees are assimilated.
- There are two main types of archival records in an acquisition
 - Company business value. Transfer these records to the main corporate archives.
 - Historical interest with no ongoing business value. This can be donated to a local historical society or college.
- Does the company want to maintain the memory that a major company once existed in the location? The archivist's responsibility is to the corporation, not to local manuscript repositories. It is impossible to predict future uses of records. If records are donated, they are open to anyone. But plaintiff's attorneys then have to do their own work rather than relying on discovery requests.
- Donating records requires a risk analysis and a balancing of many factors. One of the key reasons for a donation would be a local public relations benefit.

Session 7: E-mail Management

One corporation has been avoiding dealing with e-mail management issues for a while; they can't ignore it any longer. Part of the problem is that there are barriers to proper e-mail management:

- Storage expense
- Lack of a comprehensive solution
- Expense of creating a solution
- Training thousands of users
- User resistance to controls, especially metadata creation
- Ownership/transfer of e-mail when employees depart

At the moment there are more questions than solutions. Corporate archives need benchmarking help.

An archives can't plan a solution without considering four factors: (1) records management/retention, (2) security/privacy, (3) storage, and (4) legal discovery. Sometimes these four factors give conflicting answers.

Records management considerations are:

- Identifying official records
- Classifying records according to a schedule
- Deleting non-records
- Assisting users through automated tools
- Auditing compliance with requirements

Security considerations are:

- Eliminating spam and viruses
- Preventing inappropriate use of the e-mail system
- Preventing the sending of phony messages
- Secure transmittal and storage of personally identifiable information

Storage considerations are:

- Expensive server storage. One corporation has 200 terabytes of e-mail on servers. Another corporation has the equivalent of the Library of Congress on its e-mail servers.
- Personal Habits. For example, some employees send the same message to dozens of people (including attachments)
- Possible charge for extra storage. But if you make people comply with records retention policies, this can reduce storage.

Legal discovery considerations are:

- One has to be able to search across the entire company, including everywhere e-mail is stored.
- The “autoarchive feature” leads to the creation of e-mail collections in a proprietary format.
- Sloppy communication practices affect the content of e-mail.

One typical solution involves filing e-mail messages in a document management system. DMS systems, however, are not integrated with Microsoft Outlook. Employees also are not used to item-level management of records.

Encryption improves security, but adds expense and complexity to long-term access.

Some of the key implementation questions are:

- What is the best-in-class solution?
- How do we simplify the process?
- How do we deal with encryption?
- How do we deal with attachments?
- Can we identify a suitable format?
- Is there a less painful solution for the users?
- What should we recommend as an interim solution?

One corporation's current recommendations are: Use encryption for confidential information. Turn off the autoarchive feature. Prevent the submission of attachments with calendar notices. Permit the sending of compressed attachments.

One corporate archivist has spent 18 months working on e-mail. At the beginning of the project the corporation had no mailbox management and the Information Technology Department was encouraging the creation of .pst files. The archivist wrote an e-mail best practices guide. The archivist also did a management study of e-mail records and showed that there was a heavy reliance on e-mail for business. The solution was a short-term, tactical one. The immediate need was for preservation and searching. They opted to contract with a commercial firm to save all e-mail for a specified time required by law. IT may bring the functionality in-house.

Another corporation has banned the use of instant messaging.

Session 8: Archives and Asset Management

One archives manages a corporate-wide system for the control of assets down to the “component” level. These assets can be re-purposed for subsequent uses.

In the past, employees would not go through the extra step of savings these components. Now it is built it into the workflow of the originating department. Employees can do the work right in the archives database. This establishes control early in the lifecycle. The archives system has survived because of partnerships with business units.

The archives has been embedded as work process rather than being added after the fact. Other asset management solutions always are bubbling up (like the game “whack-a-mole”) since Information Technology does not always look at existing workflow or database implementations when working with other business units on workflow solutions.

Information Technology groups still seem to serve one silo rather than enterprise-wide solutions. They always want to know “where the money is coming from,” even to study a problem.

The archives has been embedded as work process rather than being added after the fact. Other asset management solutions always are bubbling up (like the game “whack-a-mole”). The archives system has survived since 1998 because of partnerships with business units.

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Compliance connections have finally gotten archives and records management a seat at the table for electronic records.

Session 9: Internal Publicity

Attendees shared strategies for publicizing the archives to corporate employees. Among the suggestions were:

- Use the internal Website to market the archives to managers of the lines of business. Include examples from specific lines of business.
- Preparing a general PowerPoint presentation about the history of the corporation.

- Be very open to the public, especially in supporting documentaries. This shows a connection to the community.
- New space can be a marketing tool for the archives. Hold lunches for staff across different lines of business.
- Connect with the corporate art program.
- Try to get the front page of the employee Website every 5-6 weeks. This reinforces the role of history as “part of the DNA” of the company.
- Provide anecdotes on the Website from all legacy companies.
- Try to join the internal communications team.
- Leverage experience with one line of business when approaching another unit.
- Consider changing the name of the department to from “archives” to “corporate history.”

Next Year

There were two suggestions for the meeting next year:

- Human resources
- Dealing with multiple archival locations