

**Tenth Annual Meeting of the
Corporate Archives Forum
June 28-29, 2007
Ford Motor Company
Dearborn, Michigan**

Meeting Notes

The Tenth Annual Meeting of the Corporate Archives Forum was held on June 28-29, 2007, in Dearborn, Michigan. Ford Motor Company's Global Information Management department hosted the meeting. Present were:

- Elizabeth Adkins, Ford Motor Company
- Bruce Bruemmer, Cargill
- Jean Elliot, JP Morgan Chase
- Phil Mooney, The Coca-Cola Company
- Becky Haglund Tousey, Kraft Foods

Also present was Dean Weber of the Ford Motor Company Archives. Laurie Banducci of Gap Inc. joined a few of the sessions via phone. Bruce Bruemmer served as note-taker.

The Corporate Archives Forum shares these meeting notes with the greater archival community in order to further the discussion of issues facing corporate archives. With very few exceptions, attribution of archivists and the identity of corporations are removed in order to protect confidentiality and to allow for free discussion during the forum.

This year's meeting included the following topics:

1. Responding to Downsizing
2. Succession Planning and Professional Development of Staff
3. Archives Space Planning and Moving
4. Archives Database Demonstration
5. Marketing Opportunities Using a Corporate History Collection
6. Shifting Organizational Placement
7. Japan/U.S. Conference on Access to Records
8. Visual Legacy at Risk
9. Privacy and Personal Data Security
10. Presentation on the "New World of Coca-Cola"

Session 1: Responding to Downsizing
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Impact of downsizing on staffing

One corporation has experienced multiple staff reductions due to repeated budget cuts. This has resulted in uneven quality and quantity of staffing in Archives and Records Management

programs. The Records Management program has been hit particularly hard due to voluntary departures that resulted in vacancies that could not be backfilled.

To strengthen the quality of Archives staff, during a lull between two waves of downsizing one corporation was able to recruit higher-quality agency staff.

Impact of downsizing on records management

The Archives in one corporation has been involved in a plant closings process. Teams of three archivists and records managers are assigned to each plant, and are responsible for working with an on-site records person to transfer records to a new "owner" or arrange for storage until the records meet their retention requirements. A side benefit of the project has been that the archivists are gaining a deeper understanding of records management concepts and standards.

This same corporation also developed a process for managing electronic records during downsizing. The corporation launched a project to engage with Information Technology (IT) and Human Resources (HR) to address legacy abandoned records and to prevent abandoned records on print and file servers. They developed a new policy that limits individuals to a single instance of a network drive. Those individuals who had content stored on more than one network drive were sent an email with a link to the older data with instructions on how to delete the legacy information or to migrate it to their current network drive. In the case of departing employees, managers are responsible for transferring data from the departing employee to a new "owner." If a new owner is not specifically identified, the manager will become the new owner by default. These policies and procedures have been incorporated into HR's Transfer and Termination Checklist; use of this checklist is now auditable.

An archivist at another company finds that a benefit of being organizationally tied to Records Management is that the Archives is included in things like plant closings. At that company, however, Records Management is not very involved in divestitures, while the Archives department is. The archivist there does not volunteer much information to the new owner of a divested part of the business; they need to ask. The Archives staff feel that they can determine what is appropriate to transfer to the new owner. Agreements with new owners include ambiguous terms about records transfer.

Impact of downsizing on archival records

The part-time archivist for one corporation's Canadian subsidiary was cut during a wave of downsizing. For a while, the Canadian archives turned into a "self-serve archives." The situation resulted in misfiling, loss and damage to the records. The only effective options for dealing with the situation were to revisit the decision to cut the archivist in Canada, or to move the records to the U.S. headquarters. The corporation's archivist prepared a proposal that the Canadian subsidiary hire a full-time archivist, but the Canadian subsidiary was unwilling to do so, and agreed to transfer the records to the U.S. The decision resulted in a transfer of 550 cubic feet of records; the Archives at headquarters started receiving requests as soon as the records arrived.

Another company had issues bringing in non-English records from foreign subsidiaries, and experienced issues over patrimony and heritage.

Session 2: Succession Planning and Professional Development of Staff

The group discussed the need to integrate succession planning into other standard HR processes, starting with job descriptions. There should be an annual review of job descriptions for everyone in the department, which helps enormously if there is unexpected turnover and a quick replacement is needed. It's necessary to understand how HR ranks salary grades in order to get the positions rated appropriately, especially since most HR people do not understand what archivists do.

One archivist commented that HR is a financial function, and they are not your friends. You have to be able to express the Return on Investment (ROI) for investing in the talents needed to run the Archives. This means identifying the value you and your team bring to Public Relations, Sarbanes-Oxley and other critical drivers for your company. The more you can compare your teams to other teams in the company, the better off you will be.

HR also has a process for identifying talent for future leaders, and you need to make sure that you are part of that process. While this might give people the opportunity to move out of the Archives, one archivist argues that that is a good thing. One archivist asked whether there is a down side to the leadership discussion. What would happen if they tell you that you are high performing but with a low potential for promotion – does that become a disincentive? On the other hand, many archivists come into the company identifying as an archivist, not a company person. Sometimes the issue is to get them to identify with the company, not the profession.

The group then discussed the issue of assigning pay increases as part of the performance review process. Companies often use bell curves, requiring a forced ranking system to divide up a pot of money for raises. It is important to consider succession planning during ranking.

The group discussed how to enrich the experience of a potential successor to keep him or her around, especially if an interim promotion is not possible.

Once a likely successor is identified, it is important to create a development plan. What skills will the likely successor need in order to succeed? Examples include having a greater exposure to senior management, having a leadership role in the department, and showing more management and leadership traits.

A likely successor needs to be comfortable speaking in front of large groups. Professional involvement provides a great opportunity to hone these skills.

Sometimes archivists can be passionate about archives, but blind to corporate politics. This might lead to looking at the possibility of a non-archivist as a successor – someone who could manage the Archives program along with other programs because of their appreciation of the Archives.

Summary of things to keep in mind in succession planning:

1. Your obligation is to the organization. You need to supply the best for the job, including external candidates
2. Your obligation to the staff. Be sure to “shoot square” with them.
3. Clearly define core competencies. You don't want to be replaced by an unqualified person (“Joe likes history – let's let him run the Archives”).
4. If you are going to develop people, you need to let them take risks and risk failure. Turn these into learning opportunities.
5. Archives have changed; it's going to take some different skill sets than when you started.
6. Assure that the Archives function doesn't get demoted once the current manager or director leaves.

We don't have many examples of smooth handoffs of corporate archives. The problem is the risk of the personality carrying the operation – and then it dies with the personality.

Session 3: Archives Space Planning and Moving

When the Archives at one corporation was established, the company was just beginning a multi-year construction project to build a new headquarters. The Archives was located in space in a long-term leased building rather than waiting for new space under construction, since senior management wanted the Archives to get up and running immediately. Most criteria that were proposed for the leased space were approved, including dry pipe system, no toilets overhead, etc. The architect didn't originally know much about archives – he wanted to design a huge multimedia room without much storage, but was educated by the team and then created an archival space including processing, display and stacks.

The archivist had been aware of a small annex in the new HQ building, had been asking about it for several years, and had also brought it to the attention of the Chairman. The archivist also noted space that was being used by a vendor, adjacent to the corporate art collection with all of its security and temperature controls. The archivist asked the Facilities Team to provide a heads-up if it ever became available, and periodically touched bases on space plans, both informally and through a quarterly meeting that the archivist set up.

The archivist then was informed that the leased space was being given up on very short notice, and it was necessary to plan to move in three months. Having met with Facilities prior and identified space options, they were aligned on how to proceed with the move. The existing Archives space had approximately 1,800 square feet of storage. The new space was about the same size, but the configuration was not as good. Facilities also ordered shelves without confirming the specifications with the Archives staff, with obvious results. The whole move and space utilization was "a bit of a jigsaw puzzle." The result did allow for the Archives to move into the HQ building, even if the space was not as ideal.

After the move, the Archives team really didn't have any processing room. The Facilities team located a room totaling about 300 square feet on another floor for processing. The spread of the

Archives over three floors is a great pain. The archivist says that Facilities still views things as temporary, but now it looks as if the Archives has always been there, so that helps.

One downside to the new location is security. The door to the main vault is right off the street, so they've added another lock.

There is a possibility of expansion space at another campus, but that is away from their main clients.

Key lessons of this experience:

1. The archivist had good knowledge of what was going on in the business, and shared plans for space.
2. The archivist purposely kept the issue alive, so was able to move quickly when it was necessary to do so.

Session 4: Archives Database Demonstration

One corporation did a "stand down" of all applications as part of a Sarbanes-Oxley self-assessment, and the Archives' collections management and requests databases were found to be at risk because of personal data, privileged and confidential content, and the use of Microsoft Access to share the application. Microsoft Access is not designed for concurrent sharing. In addition, the database design had stretched the limit of Access functionality, resulting in data corruption problems.

The project bogged down due to bureaucratic IT processes and competition for IT funding, until the Chairman's staff determined that he needed a system to track his personal gifts and printed articles, and the Archives' chosen software would serve their needs. The Archives helped implement that system as well as their own.

The project cost a total of \$300,000, including \$75,000 for the base application with 5 concurrent users, and \$160,000 in programming support.

After a demonstration of the new application, there ensued a lively discussion about a descriptive system based on accession versus record group. Is it possible that the old intellectual structure is no longer necessary in light of current system capabilities?

Session 5: Marketing Opportunities Using a Corporate History Collection

One corporation's archives has been around for 30 years, but the archivist is still trying to figure out the best way to market the Archives.

The archivist developed a presentation for selling the Archives' services to the heads of business units, but the business units already had a strategic plan. The archivist will reconfigure the presentation to communicate products and services more generically.

The archivist has developed tours for company clients, key chains with replicas of materials from the Archives, and similar items. None of this brings in revenue, but the archivist hopes to add value to the Archives through these offerings.

The archivist worked on a history publication that grew to a 40-page document and was told that the effort should be abandoned.

The archivist decided to develop a portfolio of exhibits to show people the archivist's capabilities. Regional representatives have no idea how to get history out to the field; the Archives supplied that.

The group discussed a *Wall Street Journal* article about the former archivist (now a VP) at Wells Fargo who does genealogical research in preparation for "sales pitches" to potential wealthy clients of the bank. The information that he has been able to uncover regarding the ancestors of potential clients often surprises and delights them and helps Wells Fargo earn business. This is clearly an example of using history to build the business.

Session 6: Shifting Organizational Placement.

For one company, Corporate Communications never really understood the function of Archives. The Archives moved to Compliance (part of Legal), and it instantly became a great fit. Compliance provided a great stick for the Archives. The downside of the switch was that being a non-lawyer in Legal makes you a second-class citizen. It is a difficult place to expand your career.

The Archives program has since been passed to two vice presidents in the last six months. Team morale suffered from all of the moves – who are we aligned with today?

With the latest round of cuts, areas of lower risk were identified for cutting, and the archivist had to argue that they were connected to mitigating high risk. The archivist also laid out what the Archives would and would not do in light of a smaller staff (one position cut). The archivist sent out a memo to all stakeholders stating how the cuts would or would not affect products and services. The archivist has been met with understanding because of all of the change, but worries about cutting services too much to the point of people not trusting the Archives (because of the perception that it is valueless). At the end of the quarter and year, the archivist will report all of the missed opportunities due to the cuts.

The group discussed strategies to fend off bad moves, especially to departments that are not important clients of the Archives. Many times, you just don't get a choice. Archivists find comfort in certain reporting relationships. Is this meaningful in a business anymore? With changes to fundamentals like electronic records, the old structures may not apply. Archives are not masters of their fate with a mess of mergers.

In one corporation, Records Management was part of Compliance and Archives was part of Internal Communications. Archives moved to Legal after the CEO restructured functions, and merged Corporate Affairs and Legal. The Archives went with the newly merged organization

and is now part of the same organization as Records Management. The archivist did as much preparatory lobbying as possible to avoid certain managers, and now reports to the lawyer in charge of Compliance and Integrity. The Archives has now moved to a function with a smaller client base, which is a bit uncomfortable. But the Archives staff's day-to-day activities working with core clients in other functions and business units have not changed.

The archivist has found the following pros and cons to the new reporting structure:

1. Records Management is receptive to input, but doesn't seek it out. There is no automatic role of the Archives in Records Management other than reviewing records retention guidelines.
2. Compliance is a nifty stick, and it is nice to have in the Archives because it expresses the business case for the Archives in terms of "need to do" rather than "nice to do." Because of the influence of the Archives input, Compliance now stresses the need to retain some records for business purposes and no longer focuses exclusively on legal requirements.
3. In the new organization the archivist is not being micromanaged, and Records Management recognizes Archives' expertise.
4. There is a larger resource pool in Legal to draw from, but it is more ambiguous.
5. The Records Management function is improving in terms of its professionalism and customer focus.
6. The archivist hopes that Archives has a little more clout for information services development.
7. The process of fitting in and forming new networks is time-consuming.
8. The archivist doesn't want the Archives' identity to get lost in this restructuring and alignment with Records Management, and has needed to assert this by trying to include Archives in appropriate processes.
9. The only full-time records management employees are based at company headquarters. Records Management feels that they should establish RM guidelines and delegate authority to implement those guidelines to employees at each location around the globe. The archivist doesn't want to see that model implemented for archival records.

Session 7: Japan/U.S. Conference on Access to Records

Becky Haglund Tousey described her travel to Japan for a conference titled *Access to Archives: Japanese and American Practices* at Tokyo University on May 11, 2007.

The unofficial agenda of the conference was to encourage the Japanese government to open records from World War II forward. Others in attendance were:

- Yuko Matsuzaki of the Shibusawa Ei'ichi Memorial Foundation of Japan
- David Mengel from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)
- Shohei Muta of the National Archives of Japan
- Richard Pearce-Moses of the Arizona State Library and Archives
- Mark Greene of the American Heritage Center at the University of Wyoming
- Trudy Peterson, former Acting Archivist of the United States

Trudy spearheaded the idea of the conference, and the Society of American Archivists agreed to be a grant sponsor. The conference was supported by a grant from the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission.

Japanese business archivists appreciated the perspective of US corporate archivists in using archives as a business asset.

In Japan, all organizations get rid of their primary resources after the official history has been written. This is usually done about every 25 years. They are looking at American practices to get out of the cyclical practice of destroying the original materials.

The scope of the National Archives of Japan is not as broad as NARA. The National Archives of Japan houses records of one part of government, not all of the ministries.

Japanese business archivists feel outside the mainstream of archives in Japan, and were very happy to be included in the archival proceedings.

President Bush and the Japanese liaison pointed to this meeting as a good example of desired cultural exchange between the US and Japan.

Session 8: Visual Legacy at Risk

One corporation's photo collection has vinegar syndrome and it is getting bad. Ownership of the images is complex and makes it more difficult to address the problem. The photo collection is currently held in a library run by Public Affairs. The archivist tried to get the images transferred to the Archives, but Public Affairs did not want to let them go. The photos are not stored in a climate-controlled environment. The archivist rescued additional images from an old company warehouse.

Now the Archives can demonstrate that the images are in imminent danger of disappearing.

The archivist shared a presentation showing numerous historically-important images that were scanned five years ago. The images were fine then, but the emulsions are now shattered or completely destroyed. Once vinegar syndrome is evident, deterioration progresses geometrically.

In addition to the physical deterioration, there is no metadata to facilitate access, document copyright ownership, or facilitate permissions. In Public Affairs the only metadata is that which is tracked in the photographic log book. And now they have born-digital images that reside on a server with no metadata. Born-digital images are handled in different ways depending on the owner. The presentation covers all these points to add to the sense of urgency in addressing the problem.

The price tag for dealing with the preservation issues is big enough to be problematic in light of current economic problems at the company.

The presentation provided three possible options for rescuing the images:

- Off-site cold storage
- On-site cold storage
- Donate the images to a local museum and work with the museum to get grants

The chairman has asked for a proposal by July. The archivist is working with the Corporate Historian (a Public Affairs employee) to prepare a proposal and recommendation.

Session 9: Privacy and Personal Data Security

If you work for a global company, you are working in an environment with multiple, changing privacy requirements. The challenge is to find a single approach. In the U.S. there is no overarching privacy law, although that may not be true in the future with concerns over identity theft. Examples of current U.S. legislation include the Gramm Leach Bliley Act, which primarily impacts financial institutions, and HIPAA, which deals with medical records.

Common requirements of U.S. legislation include notice of private information collection. There are no present restrictions on exportation of data in the US.

Some states have more restrictive laws than others. Many have restrictions on sharing Social Security numbers and other personally-identifiable numbers. Now there is state legislation requiring notice for security lapses involving Social Security numbers, financial accounts and passwords. Some states are proposing even more protection, restricting or preventing offshoring of personal data.

In the European Union, Directive 95/46 EC provides a personal right to privacy, addresses the processing and free movement of personal data, and requires member states to have supporting laws. The definition of personal data is fairly broad: "Any information relating to an identified or identifiable individual." Does a corporate information directory fit here?

Transfers of personal data to other countries are allowed if the receiving country "ensures an adequate level of protection." The U.S. is not seen as providing an adequate level of protection.

Canada has PIPEDA, which is legislation that has similar requirements as the European Union, and also has separate provincial laws. However, Canada has no exportation restrictions.

In Asia-Pacific, the APEC privacy principles are in development. This is a work in progress, and recognizes the need to do business globally. The principles do not prohibit domestic or international transfer of data as long as there is adequate notice.

Other countries are all over the map. The APEC approach may somewhat mitigate EU influence.

One thing is clear: Protection of personal data will increase in the years to come.

The archivist at one corporation was tasked with putting privacy policies and mitigation strategies in place. The archivist had to leverage existing relationships (including IT Security and Marketing) and convince others that this was a value-add to them. Each stakeholder had some business concerns, but didn't want to worry about operationalizing a solution across the company.

The archivist developed an incident response plan (what to do in case of a breach) and conducted an initial privacy inventory (Where is our information? Is it encrypted? How does data get in? How does it get entered? And what are your concerns?). A second inventory focused on manual processes in the field. The archivist decided to focus on risk and where problems are most likely to occur.

At another company, auditors were finding issues around bad data practices, but could not point to a comprehensive privacy policy to back up the need to address these issues. The archivist led an effort to revise standards on information security, and participated in a team effort to create a comprehensive privacy policy which has now been approved at the highest level. Now the challenge is how to get operations to cover the cost of implementing the policy in light of a very tight economic environment.

Session 10: New World of Coca-Cola

Phil Mooney shared a terrific front-page article from the *Atlanta Constitution* (Sunday May 20, 2007) about the opening of the new World of Coca-Cola. The old World of Coca-Cola opened in 1990; the new World of Coca-Cola opened this year. They picked a design firm through competition. The designer was Jack Rouse Associates (Legoland, Dinosaur Land).

Rather than doing a linear view of history, they addressed chapters through each exhibit. The process of developing the exhibits included considering which elements to include, scanning them, laying them out on the floor, conducting an inventory, and boxing up and sending the originals to the facility. Most of the artifacts were already in their collection; very few had to be purchased. One staff member has been at the new facility 8 hours per day, 5 days a week since March.

The exhibits had to be installed while the facility was still being built, which was a very challenging environment. Phil chose the people who installed each artifact.