

**Eleventh Annual Meeting of the
Corporate Archives Forum
May 15-16, 2008
Scotiabank
Toronto. ON**

**Meeting Notes
Final**

The eleventh annual meeting of the Corporate Archives Forum was held May 15-16, 2008 in Toronto. The Scotiabank Archives hosted the meeting. Present were:

- Elizabeth Adkins, Ford Motor Company
- Laurie Banducci Klip, Gap Inc.
- Bruce Bruemmer, Cargill
- Mike Bullington, McDonald's
- Paul Lasewicz, IBM
- Phil Mooney, Coca-Cola Company
- Jane Nokes, Scotiabank
- Gord Rabchuk, Royal Bank of Canada
- Ed Rider, Procter & Gamble
- Corrado Santoro, Scotiabank
- Becky Haglund Tousey, Kraft Foods

Dean Weber of the Ford Motor Company Archives called in to participate in one of the topic discussions. 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. Project Management
2. Web Capture
3. Anniversary Planning
4. Working with Media Relations to Increase Visibility
5. Brand Memory
6. Building a Virtual Archives
7. Globalizing Archives
8. Blogging Without Tears
9. Information Management Strategy
10. Working with Human Resources to Classify Archival Positions

1. Project Management

It is important to clarify at the beginning how a “project” is different than a “program” or a “process:”

- A project creates something new. There are specific outcomes, definite start and end dates, and a life cycle.
- A program is ongoing and indefinite; it is never completely realized. One or more program goals will be associated with a project.
- A process is not a one-time activity. There are steps you do every time in performing a process. Processes often are part of a project but are not a project themselves.

There are several ways to classify projects:

- Strategic or operational. Are these short-term or longer-term projects?
- Simple or complex. The scope can vary widely.
- Local or distributed. Where will the project be carried out?
- Hard or soft (no physical deliverable) outcomes. Is there a concrete deliverable?
- Fixed or changing environment. Is organizational change happening at the same time?

The following is a checklist to use in defining a project:

- Team. What is the core project team?
- Associated groups. Who else is involved with the project?
- Management structure. How will the project be managed?
- Objectives. What are the project objectives, stated in a single sentence?
- Constraints. What are the parameters for time, budget, and performance?
- Scope. How large or small is the project?
- Risks. What risks are associated with the project?
- Assumptions. What assumptions have we made, including unconscious ones?
- Costs. What will the project cost?
- Benefits. What are the benefits that the project will bring?
- Project proposal. Have we stressed the business case for the project?
- Project approval. Have we gotten the approval in writing?

The subsequent discussion covered a number of points:

- It is important for the archivist to understand corporate processes. Archivists must talk the same language as others within the corporation.
- Projects can move your budget beyond the static, basic operational budget.
- There is a downside to relying on special project funding: archives’ projects are thrown into a hopper and graded against all other projects in the corporation. Funding may not be easy to secure.

2. Web Capture

Corporate archives realize that they will need to capture and preserve Web sites in order to document the company. In particular, Web technologies are having a big impact on marketing and conveying messages to public. It is important to document the changing role of technology in marketing.

One company decided to conduct a pilot involving Web capture. The pilot project focused on Web-based records that are not proprietary.

They began by using an intern from a local university. The intern helped clarify the requirements for captured Web records. They agreed that three aspects were important: information, look and feel, and functionality.

Functionality is the most challenging aspect and most organizations are not capturing it. Without functionality, however, one does not really capture the user experience.

This corporation's main Web portal is fed by 52 other sites, which, in turn, are fed by databases. This is a very complex environment. In addition, the corporate Web site uses a great deal of flash technology, which is not captured in a PDF file.

The Corporate Archivist attended SAA's Electronic Records Summer Camp at the San Diego Supercomputer Center. Researchers at SDSC were intrigued by the corporation's struggle – they like complex problems.

In December, SDSC did a test "crawl" of the corporation's Web site. The corporation then decided to authorize a regular program of Web capture. SDSC would conduct 4 crawls/year at a cost of \$8,000 per year for programming and storage. Most of the costs were for programming (only \$45 was for storage). The corporation's own storage cost for this amount of data would have been \$3,500.

The first formal capture was conducted in April. This capture excluded external links and totaled 11,000-14,000 pages.

Each capture is unique and self-contained. The captures total 5 GB per year. SDSC adds its own internal identifier so they can continue to work within each individual capture.

An important question is: How many levels of links will we preserve? This corporation's goal is to capture everything within the corporate Web domain and nothing outside of it.

In terms of databases that feed the main Web site, the crawler accesses the information from the database in real time. The crawler clicks every link and captures all of the choices, creating a page for each selection.

A crawl captures a "moment in time." This capture may not be useful for future legal cases – since legal cases will likely involve other moments in time that were not captured.

Authenticity and reliability are keys to long-term preservation. SDSC is establishing a preservation environment. In addition to capturing content, SDSC is preserving browser technology and the software that runs the site.

SDSC uses a technology they developed called Storage Resource Broker. SRB replicates data in several places around the country and protects the integrity of the data with hash algorithms.

Two SDSC members were part of the InterPARES Project. SDSC's digital repository, called Integrated Rules Oriented Data Structures (IRODS), incorporates all 176 attributes of a preservation environment as defined by InterPARES.

The corporate archives' intent is to put each capture in its research catalog and permit online viewing. The concern is that Google and other Web crawlers will index the historical capture and that people inadvertently will access the historical copy. The corporation wants it clear that users are not looking at the current/active corporate Web site, especially if users find the page through a general Internet search. SDSC added a banner to identify the pages as part of a captured Web site.

There followed a general discussion that covered the following points:

- What is the business need to do this capture of the external Web presence? Another corporate archives has focused on capturing the corporate Intranet – there is the business need for this. For this second corporation, “look and feel” are not as important as content.
- What is the scalability? This complicated process only involved one Web site.
- Why is Flash such a problem? As part of the capture, we have to “chunk” things into files and then re-create them for the user. Files have to arrive in the proper sequence. The capture also involves database options based upon user choices. Finally, we need to do all this without overloading the user's computer.
- Anti-hacker measures built into the corporate Web site can cause difficulties with archival captures.
- Why not just capture entire databases as separate entities? The archives will not be permitted to “scrape” the entire database – the database may have other information in it. Also, databases change structures regularly.
- What if a brand is sold in the future? Will you have to transfer part of the Web capture to the new owners? Will you have trademark issues with the Web capture you did previously?
- Would SDSC need to customize programming to capture the Web site of another corporation? Probably 80% of the programming would be the same, especially once the Flash issue is solved.

- Another corporation is exploring “Hanzo,” a product out of the United Kingdom. Hanzo will manage Flash but not database-driven Websites. Hanzo is open source software and is being used by some European national archives. (www.hanzoarchives.com)
- SDSC has more powerful machines than most organizations. Will SDSC do this as a service for others? They are an academic enterprise.

3. Anniversary Planning

Many corporate archives are involved in anniversary planning. The Public Relations Society of America (Anvil Awards) is a good source of case studies.

There are a number of ways to leverage the opportunities presented by an anniversary:

- Sales and Marketing. One corporation increased income 31% during its anniversary year. There was a strong connection to marketing campaigns.
- External communications. This same corporation had 2.6 billion media impressions during its anniversary celebration. The anniversary became a platform to shape perceptions of the corporation, to address key social issues, and to enhance the brand. The anniversary strengthened relationships with clients and partners.
- Internal Communications. An anniversary can motivate employees as well as celebrating them.

Some common anniversary activities are:

- Distribute core messaging to go to all business units, but give business units the flexibility to work within parameters.
- Create product tie-ins
- Identify a geographic location of particular corporate significance and hold an anniversary-themed event there.
- Sponsor high-profile cultural events
- Prepare a company history book
- Leave a post-anniversary legacy
- Conduct a post-anniversary ROI (Return on Investment) assessment

A lively discussion followed the presentation:

- One corporation created a toolbox for “what is an anniversary?” The celebration was internal and story-driven. Posterboards were placed in cafeteria.
- Brand anniversaries require more effort from an archives than a corporate entity anniversary.
- Plans can be in place, but they may change based upon sales and executive changes.
- An anniversary can strengthen the archives’ relationship with the CEO. An anniversary moves the conversation beyond current sales.

- One corporation's 75th anniversary was celebrated by giving each employee 75 shares of stock.
- Another corporation has begun planning for a major anniversary in ten years. A small group of senior people realized they needed to begin planning now. An historian will work each summer on various projects. Projects are approved on a year-by-year basis; the anniversary is flying under the radar. Last summer, the historian interviewed key executives from 1980-1990. The interviews are essential for content, which is not preserved in current documents. Based upon the interviews, the historian will re-write the last chapter from a volume published during a previous anniversary.
- An anniversary celebration can be the best time in your career. All roads run through the archives. The archives is involved in all kinds of activities.
- Because of the current economy, one corporation anticipates bringing out some of the advertising posters from the 1930s rather than commissioning a new campaign.
- Some corporations link charitable donations to anniversary celebrations.
- This is a tough business climate for celebrating anniversaries. Many corporations are not in a very celebratory mood.
- Book publishing costs can be prohibitive. For example, the global business environment requires a corporation to consider in how many languages it will publish the book.

4. Working with Media Relations to Increase Visibility

One archivist has spent the last three years of being interviewed a great deal. The archivist never expected this. It was not part of archival training.

A corporate anniversary was the springboard for this media visibility. The corporation also had a business turnaround story to tell. It was easy to inject corporate history into that story.

This corporation wants department heads to tell the story rather than media professionals. This is because of the credibility of the spokesperson.

The corporation established a cross-functional team. The archivist was an equal member of the media team and received media training. We are not just telling history, we are communicating the company's message.

The archivist helped pitch stories to media. The archivist also worked behind the scenes to help to media teams. The archivist was not just in front of the camera.

Serving on the media team brought credibility to the archives. The archivist received awards for serving on the media team.

Timing is very important. The archives received additional funding after the airing of a significant story.

There was one additional tip: Don't try to answer a question you shouldn't answer. Just say, "It's not a question I can answer. It's not in my area of expertise." Media professionals will try to push but they are used to this response.

5. Brand Memory

In one corporation, the Archives is part of "Global Services." All global services units had to identify services they could offer to business units. The Archives called one service as "Brand Memory" and identified three aspects of the service:

- **Memory Scan.** This is an Archives "show and tell." Front-line people responsible for the brand come to the Archives and look at historical materials related to the brand. There is no extra charge for this service – it is included in the base pricing assessed against each business unit.
- **Memory Lab.** This is an "idea jam session." The staff of the Archives facilitates a 2-hour workshop focused on mining past information to generate business building ideas. Depending upon the research required, the cost is between \$1,000 and \$7,500.
- **Memory Insights.** This is a "long term memory" project. It offers a structured way to capture, store, and disseminate brand knowledge across the organization. The staff of the Archives will gather documents, conduct oral histories, and design a SharePoint site for the dissemination of information.

Another corporation used SharePoint to establish a Wiki of historical information. Front line managers and staff add content, which the Archives' staff checks for accuracy.

6. Building a Virtual Archives

One corporate archivist has been asked to try to reduce the space required for the storage of paper-based records. A secondary objective was to improve the ability to search the historical documentation for legal discovery proceedings. With the loss of institutional knowledge and elimination of product managers, lawyers have fewer people to consult. As legal discovery expands, lawyers are spending a great deal of time doing manual discovery.

The Archives began with a project to scan all policy documents from 1990 to 2007. These documents are essential for litigation support. The scanned documents were saved as PDF/A files. Optical Character Recognition (OCR) was applied to the documents so they could be searched by lawyers. The role of the archives as "gatekeeper" will be diminished as a result.

OCR is not perfect (only 95-97% accuracy), but there also are risks in the manual process of not finding everything that is relevant to a discovery proceeding.

Moving forward, they are capturing digital documents directly and converting them to PDF. This will bypass the scanning process.

At this point, the Archives can provide metrics on cost savings and workflow efficiencies. The project has saved the cost of two full-time staff members who used to print and forward the hard copy to the Archives and liberated ~80% employee time relevant to the previous manual

searches of hard copy policies. Additionally, full text searchability enhanced the accuracy and reliability of responses to queries -- critical factors when responding to a legal matter.

The next initiative will deal with business forms and brochures. They also will capture these documents as PDF/A files.

At the conclusion of the two initiatives, the Archives will have reduced its storage space by 10% and improved workflow capabilities. These are real cost-savings.

During the subsequent discussion, someone mentioned the risk of destroying the original documents. What happens if the digital technology “goes bad” in the future?

7. Globalizing Archives

CAF members had a discussion about globalizing archives. What are the possible objectives for a global program? What issues and strategies must a corporate archives address in going global?

Some of the factors in establishing a global archives program are:

- **Organizational Driver.** Corporations are becoming more global every day. Do we even have a choice? It’s the nature of our organizations.
- **Documentation.** Since the beginning of CAF, we have been talking about the need to document more than Headquarters. We were ahead of the curve.
- **Records Management.** A global archives program presupposes that there is a global records management program. This is not always the case.
- **Marketing Imperative.** Global brands require global documentation.
- **Compliance imperative.** Discovery requests require knowledge of all records.
- **Efficiency Argument.** Decentralized efforts often are more expensive.
- **Risk Mitigation.** Not knowing which records exist is a major risk.
- **Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery.** Global records are required for recovery.
- **Heritage driver.** It’s part of our traditional mandate as an archives.
- **Expertise is a driver.** Even if the archives is only at headquarters, at the least you can give advice. If we have a mandate to document globally, we have a professional obligation to make certain it’s done correctly around the world.

If we wish to globalize our archives, is the mandate coming from management or is it self-directed from the Archives? Does management back up its imperative with resources?

There also are arguments for not expanding globally. It is costly. It stretches you further. Also, it may not be worth the investment: most of the historically-valuable records may already be preserved. On the latter point, corporate archivists may benefit from reading about the 1970s project at the National Archives to inventory and appraise the records of the FBI field offices

What does it mean to be global? A virtual “global” archives is a possibility now because of digital documents. Also, many corporate information systems are global -- records from around the world are stored in these databases and other large systems.

There are models for global archives. In one model, the corporate archives sets global policies but has no responsibility for global operations. In the second model, the corporate archives also

has operational responsibility for global satellite archives. The reporting relationship can be either “hard-line” (the global satellite reports directly to the corporate archives) or “dotted-line” (the global satellite archives confers with the corporate archives but reports elsewhere).

There are two strategies that corporate archives have used with global initiatives. One strategy is to develop and fund a tool at headquarters and share it with the rest of the world. This could be a “collections database” that provides visibility into worldwide collections. It also could be a Digital Asset Management (DAM) system for high-interest records like photographs. This can help get everyone playing on the same field. A second strategy is for the headquarters archives to act like a grant-making agency, funding archival projects around the world.

The politics of going global can be a potential obstacle. There are suspicion and fear of initiatives coming from headquarters. The only way to overcome suspicion and fear is to go to the other country and talk to the staff directly. We also have to realize that “globalization” has a negative context in Europe. Different languages and legal environments can also be barriers.

Among the points raised during the discussion were:

- Corporations tend to be schizophrenic. The pendulum swings from centralized to decentralized, global to local, etc.
- It can be difficult to see the Return on Investment (ROI) on international efforts, if the corporation doesn’t see the ROI on the archives in general.
- The most strategically-important materials probably are captured at corporate headquarters.
- As the “litigation mentality” is exported globally, there may be greater global interest in archives.
- It is important to understand the difference between universal barriers and local barriers.
- Records management programs often assign key responsibilities to “departmental records coordinators” who don’t report to records management. Records management programs have difficulty sustaining continuity in coordinator positions.
- Information Security and Privacy use risk assessments all the time. If something becomes an “audit issue,” it gets done.

8. Blogging Without Tears

In 2007, one company decided to move into social media to engage with consumers. The corporate archivist volunteered to write the blog. The corporation discussed all scenarios if the archives published the blog and developed a matrix of how to deal with controversial issues.

The focus of the blog was limited to corporate heritage and current marketing that involves heritage.

The corporation established a number of rules for the blog:

- The archivist had to commit to 3-4 posts per week
- All comments will be posted, whether they are relevant or not, as long as the comments are not obscene or libelous
- All comments will be screened before posting
- Off-topic issues will be dealt with once and not again. If other questioners raise the same issue, they will receive a private e-mail.

This initiative led the corporation to create a “social media policy” for employees, which includes the following points:

- You can blog on your own time about anything you want
- You must identify yourself as a company employee if speaking about company matters
- You must make clear that you’re not the official company spokesperson

After five months of blogging, the corporation is very pleased. The blog personalizes the corporation. It also moves the official corporate site up in search engine results. At this point, Corporate Affairs and Legal are comfortable enough that they don’t review every comment in advance.

The blog has not reduced overall e-mail traffic to the archives. Rather, more people are now involved in the discussion.

What staffing level is required? This corporation has budgeted 50% of the time of one person for developing content and answering questions.

A non-CAF corporation has 5 full-time staff members working on its Wiki. Since a Wiki is user-generated content, there is a risk with the accuracy of “facts.” Also, people post photos and videos, often without knowing who owns the rights to these materials?

An internal Wiki must have a business purpose otherwise it looks like employees are just wasting their time.

Another corporation has an internal blog. This serves as outreach to specific user communities that are very comfortable with blogs.

In conclusion, establishing a blog is another way of reminding people that heritage is part of the DNA of the company. It puts the “historical” into the new social media environment.

9. Information Management Strategy

An information management strategy is an opportunity to think big, rather than just think about how to do more with less. This can be especially important in a climate where staff have been cut while responsibilities have expanded.

One corporation followed these steps in developing an information management strategy:

- Receive a charge from senior management
- Create a cross-functional task force

- Archives
- Records Management
- Legal (discovery, privacy, compliance, intellectual property)
- Information Technology (technology and architecture)
- Audit
- Security
- Conduct a current state analysis
- Prepare a set of recommendations
- Present the recommendations to senior management

This corporation focused on two core principles: information is a strategic business asset, and information quality is essential.

There are a number of risks with poor information management:

- Information gaps
- Lost information
- Inadequately managed communications
- Adverse litigation
- Court Sanction
- Reputational harm

There also are opportunities arising from improved information management:

- Enhanced control and reliability
- More disciplined and simplified business processes
- Increased efficiencies
- Global consistency
- Information preservation and reuse

The corporation also conducted a benchmarking study to determine where Information Management reports: The results were:

- Legal/Compliance, 61%
- IT, 19%
- Finance, 5%
- Other, 15%

The benchmarking also identified a number of current trends. First, there is movement toward cross-functional executive oversight (Legal, IT, Finance, HR). Second, most corporations are using a central funding model. Third, administrative assistant positions are being eliminated -- they are the typical records liaisons.

The benchmarking study also looked at best practices contained in ISO 15489 and the ARMA self-assessment tool.

At the end of the study, the team proposed the following structure:

- Cross-functional executive oversight
- An Information Management Strategy Office (ideally independent and reporting at the highest levels)
 - Records management and information management
 - Subject matter experts as needed
 - Strong legal support
 - Representative of business units at “champion” level
- A network of Information Management Coordinators
- Access to central funding for enterprise-wide initiatives

It was noted that the Government of Ontario created a similar structure.

10. Working with Human Resources to Classify Archival Positions

In one corporation, cutbacks in staff have led to the need to re-think work and streamline/eliminate tasks. In some cases, lower-level staff have taken on additional tasks that previously were assigned to higher-level staff (who now are eliminated). Staff who stepped-up thought they should be promoted.

This led to a number of questions: Can you re-classify positions rather than promote individuals? How far can you raise people while still expecting them to do the lowest-level hands-on work? How do we set appropriate expectations?

Among the points raised in the discussion were:

- Unlike other groups within the company, staff don’t rotate in and out of archives.
- Don’t promote the person, promote the job.
- More responsibility does not necessarily mean higher-level responsibilities.
- Are there any carrots you can offer? Awards? Honors?
- Because of constant downsizing, sometimes the people who are left are not the people you need.
- There may be a generational shift. Younger people take direction well, but are not looking at the bigger picture. Younger employees also have to be willing to become part of the company culture. It is a good idea to ask them: What is your 5-year plan?
- It may be necessary to have a “tough love conversation” with an employee after the job is defined properly: What is your expectation about the job and career? The manager may need to lay everything on the table: “Here’s what I expect of you; here’s what you can expect of me.”
- Compare job descriptions with others in the company, such as Information Technology. Focus on the functions and activities.

- HR has been tasked in most companies to push back on “grade creep.” Another problem is that salary actions increasingly are tied to effectiveness ratings across companies. It is hard to compare an archivist to front-line business people.
- HR is a financial function, not a partner. It’s not about the people. In many corporations, HR is not seeking to retain people – they encourage turnover.
- Many companies have second-level reviews that involve all managers sitting around the table and slugging it out. They are trying to sort out “relative contribution.”
- As your archives team get smaller, it’s harder to distribute them under the bell curve mandated by HR.
- It is increasingly difficult to manage a specialty (like archives) within a corporation where you have to make comparisons with many others in the corporation.