



ARCHIVES AND CULTURAL AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Can we possibly begin to imagine the linear metres of textual documents stored in archives, both public and private, throughout the world? The millions of documents—cartographic, graphic, photographic and audiovisual material—which make up the multiple content of the archives?

Can we imagine all that could be done with this material that is the fabric from which humanity's memory is built? Are we aware of the great potential of these documents, the interests of the creators of cultural products, the patterns of and reasons for the use of such cultural material by citizens?

Providing an answer to these questions is one of the objectives of a Conference on Archives organized by ICA (EURBICA and SPA), and the Municipal Archives of Girona, which will take place in the city in 2014. To this end, we believe that it is necessary to rethink, in an innovative manner, the role of archives in the context of the Information and Knowledge Society.

We must add to the existing view of the archive as a place of preservation and research that of the archive as a centre of technological experimentation, as a laboratory of innovation and new practices. This will help in giving added value to the varied material for which we are responsible.

Undoubtedly, this means establishing innovative strategies that examine the treatment, diffusion and exploitation of the content of the archive by legal methods, which, by respecting the property rights of all stakeholders, will easily allow diffusion of the material and make the archives a living, active part of the cultural industry.

Archives should establish relations with the new stakeholders, especially those in the business sector and in particular technological companies, who previously were of no interest.

For these reasons, we suggest a three pronged approach which will allow us to become aware of and advance our strategic development in this field. Firstly, by taking an overview of the content, that is of the archives themselves. Secondly, by taking an overview of the cultural and creative industries (including the contents carriers); and thirdly, by taking an overview of the needs of the citizens.

- 1 Regarding the content of the archives, great efforts have been made in recent years to organize, describe, digitize and disseminate collections. A few examples perfectly illustrate these achievements:

Europeana: <http://europeana.eu.portal/>

Archives Portal Europe: <http://www.archivesportaleurope.eu/Portal/index.action>

The National Archives: <http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

French National Archives: <http://archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/chan/index/html/>

NARA: <http://www.archives.gov/>

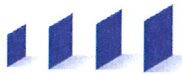
The 2014 Conference could deal with the following themes:

A presentation of these archives and portals initiatives and the strategies which have allowed their development as well as an overview of their future plans.

In the context of the European Union and of a whole range of public policies in place in many countries throughout the world, digitization programmes have resulted in the establishment of planning strategies and preservation policies. Another theme of the Conference could be to analyse these policies and programmes in order to determine their possibilities and to establish actions for intervention.

A third aspect would relate to access to information (boundaries and possibilities), to authors rights and intellectual property, processing software, databases, codes and descriptive standards, standardization of structures, information protocols for communication, multilingual indexing, etc.

- 2 Regarding the cultural and creative industries, reports relating to the content of the cultural industries¹ highlight the global growth of the digital contents market. Archives should fully participate in this market which means approaching those the companies which are



transforming the new digital market, those creating and distributing the content as well as the carriers of the information.

In many cases the products on offer show a lack of cultural vision because the sector views the digital object as something practical and not as a possible new form of culture.

One of the objectives should be to establish opportunities for collaboration between the public and private sectors to further the creation of businesses, i.e. to demonstrate the business opportunities that exist through exploitation of the contents of the archives (especially once these have been digitized).

Examples:

Old Maps Online: <http://oldmapsonline.org/>

Focal International: <http://www.focalint.org/>

New York Times Store: <http://www.nystore.com/>

Family Search: <http://familysearch.org/eng/default.asp>

Parisien photographie: <http://parisenimages.fr/en/the-project.html>

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It would be helpful to be able to have contributions from companies which are transforming the new digital business as well as the contents carriers (Google, telephone companies and technological routes: ADSL, 3, 5G, 4G, etc.).

In this field, it is also necessary to be aware of the strategies and needs of businesses dedicated to marketing, to diffusion via the Internet and social networks, the publishing profession, exhibitions, the audiovisual sector, the possibilities offered by augmented reality in archives, widi codes, etc.

- 3 Regarding users, we must move archives forward towards being aware of the interests, cultural habits and use of citizens as well as possible new trends for the future.

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We need to get to know the opinions of those professionals who are analyzing the various elements within the Information Society, in order to become aware of the changes which are taking place in the habits of cultural consumption. From the archives point of view, the aim should be to be aware of these changes and to aim to participate fully in them in order to avoid the risk of being left behind in the communication revolution which is happening all over the world.