



# DIGITISING THE ARCHIVE IN SOUTH AFRICA

## some practical considerations

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*Digital Resource Management: From Data to Knowledge.*

*An overview of managing the digital cycle.*

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# Introduction

Which archive?

Eroding the archive?

Rights to the struggle?

Resourcing realities?

Moving past paralysis



# Which archive?

Historical not institutional

Primarily late 20<sup>th</sup> century print materials

Independent NGO reliant on donor funding

Activist archive with focus on access and use



# Eroding the archive?

Provenance?

Original order?

Authenticity?

Misrepresentation of archives and archivists

The secret life of archives?

Encouraging superficial research



# Rights to the struggle?

Information Imperialism

Revisionism and sanitisation

Commodification of the struggle

Copyright and the collective?

Retrospective releases



# Resourcing realities?

Diverting staff and money away from core business

Pandering to funders at expense of strategic planning

Maintenance of physical archives at risk

Sustainability and the digital preservation challenge



# Accentuate the positive...

Access without damage or security risk

Raising profile of primary sources and archives

Highlighting connections between archives and historiographies

Broadening user base by enabling remote access



# ...Accentuate the positive

Opportunity for local professional development and capacity building

Taking archives out the archive and into schools and communities

Participatory technologies for information gathering

Attractive to funders





# Moving past paralysis...

Opportunity to clarify role of archives in society

Build on principles of archival management

Maintain and highlight context

Stick to standards

Ensure persistent connections between physical and digital collections



# ...Moving past paralysis

Develop project-independent processes

Describe methods of selection and presentation of digital materials

Smart sampling to assess and clarify

Avoid duplication - develop and support regional initiatives



## Select bibliography

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