



FCoP Software Collections Inventory

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Purpose:

The purpose of this exercise is to better understand your organization's current descriptive/discovery limitations in terms of software. For example:

- "Has software been bundled during the ingest process so that it is indistinguishable from data?"
- "Have you stored content migrated from installation media in forensic disk image formats?"
- "What steps would need to take place to determine the range of common, complex formats that exist across your born-digital collection materials?"

This activity also serves as a preparatory step for the Scenarios for Use and Access Exercise.

Scope:

The FCoP Software and Collections Inventory is what is sometimes referred to as a Random (or spot) inventory. Random (or spot) inventories are extremely limited in scope. They are primarily used to verify the location of a *representative sampling* of objects. Because of the limited scope of the inventory, Random (or spot) inventories are often also referred to as a "collection audit".

For this exercise your random (or spot) inventory should include:

- The software you have in your collections
Recurring complex and/or proprietary formats that could inform how you prioritize your software curation and emulation work moving forward.

If you have already selected a use case to focus your software curation and emulation explorations, focus your spot inventory/search on software that could be relevant to your use case. Again, this isn't a comprehensive inventory - but it should include a sample representative enough to identify gaps, raise questions about workflows and advance group discussions.

Suggested Timeline:

NOTE: The spot inventory and short answer questions are intended to be completed asynchronously by more or more participants. However, group learning comes when a larger stakeholder group or department is convened after Steps 1-4 have been completed and a discussion is facilitated to reflect on the findings and responses to the short answer questions.

- (One week) Complete the spot check inventory and the short answer questions.
- Synchronous call or in-person discussion based on the results of asynchronous work.



Instructions:

1. Determine which members of your FCoP team/work colleagues need to be involved in the inventory. Support and participation from your internal stakeholders is a crucial component/goal of the cohort data gathering tasks we will undertake.
2. Establish your scope/focus for your spot inventory and develop internal timeline/due dates to ensure that the inventory is completed by a specific deadline.
3. Complete the [Software and Collections Inventory Spreadsheet](#)
4. Upon completion of the inventory, document responses to the following short answer questions:
 - What was the scope or focus of your inventory?
 - (Did you limit your spot inventory to one kind of software, or to a certain type of software dependent material? How did you determine how many records might provide a healthy spot check - and help to identify gaps and other patterns?)
 - List all of the data sources you referenced or searched to complete your inventory?
 - Did you encounter difficulties locating software that you knew was stored in your collections?
 - Did you encounter anything unexpected in your collections and software inventory that would be useful in the context of emulation, sharing, etc.
 - Was it difficult to determine the use and access restrictions associated with the software that you identified in your inventory?
 - Was it difficult to determine the dependencies associated with collections and software objects that you identified in your inventory?
 - Did this process raise any questions internally regarding policies, requirements and local user constituencies?