

KANSAS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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OVERVIEW

The Kansas Historical Society (KSHS), established in 1875, is an Executive Branch state agency. Designated as the trustee of the state in 1879 and as the repository of official government records in 1905, the Historical Society collects and preserves the story of Kansas history. In the State Archives division, there are 8 full time positions that are responsible for our agency's digital curation activities. These positions and percentage of time typically spent on digital curation are:

- State Archivist 10%
- Digital Initiatives Coordinator 90%
- Digital Archivist 90%
- Digital Specialist 30%
- Digital Assistant 70/80%
- Digital Initiatives Photographer 100%
- Electronic Records Archivist 60%
- Government Records Archivist 40%

KSHS also has an in-house, dedicated IT team available for digital curation activities. The team is comprised of a Database Administrator, a Systems Administrator, and an Application Developer. We also receive IT support from our vendors including newspapers.com, NextScan, Preservica, Archive-It, Image Science Associates and HubTack.

DIGITAL CURATION ACTIVITIES

The State Archives houses both digitized and born-digital material in the digital collection. The scope of these items reaches across our manuscripts and public records departments and includes photos, documents, maps, audio-visual material, and a large collection of digitized and born digital newspapers. The State Archives currently stores about 100 TB worth of items in a variety of storage environments. KSHS utilizes multiple systems of discovery for our digital collections.

We have five “home-grown” systems that include our archives and museum catalogs, KansasMemory.org, the newspaper database, and Dart (our internal content management system). Other points of access for our material include Ancestry.com, newspapers.com, Newsbank, Territorial Kansas Online, Civil War on the Western Border, Chronicling America, Family Search, ATLAS (Associated Topeka Libraries Automated System), and Archive-It.

Information about our digital collections is shared internally through multiple systems. Staff can update Dart and the museum catalog with notes about accessions, updates to the collection, and any other relevant information. Information about our newspaper collection is shared through the newspaper database. This database houses inventory information about both our analog and digital newspaper collections. There is a significant portion of our collection stored on servers and information about those items is kept in inventory spreadsheets.

The digital collection at the State Archives includes workflows for both born-digital and digitized material. These categories include:

Digitized

- Non-Newspaper, Digitized on site
- Non-Newspaper, digitized by a partner Non-Newspaper, digitized by a vendor
- Newspaper, Digitized on site
- Newspaper, Digitized by partner
- Newspaper, Digitized by vendor

Born Digital

- Newspapers
- Government Records
- Manuscripts/Photos
- Archive-It

These workflows vary in scope and complexity, but some major phases of each workflow as they currently exist include creation or acquisition, staging, description, and storage. The curation lifecycle typically ends at this point, as few long-term preservation activities are being completed on our digital collection. There have been periodic attempts to generate and check fixity information on our newspaper collection. We also record initial fixity information as part of the digitization workflow on our non-newspaper, digitized in-house items, but we do not currently complete ongoing fixity checks against those checksums.

The Historical Society uses many tools and environments to complete our digital curation workflows. These include:

- Preservica
- Dart (our own system)
- Network Drives for storage

- DIT (custom software that's part of Dart and Museum Catalog)
- FADGI compliant software- Golden Thread
- Newspaper database
- Rsync (used to acquire born-digital newspapers)
- Archive-It
- BagIt (used as part of the Chronicles in Preservation Workflow)

GOALS FOR DIGITAL CURATION

The State Archives has identified three digital curation goals that we would like to achieve.

1. We would like to develop structure to the digital curation process. This includes developing a realistic and scalable digital preservation plan. Ideally, we would have written documentation available across the agency.
2. We want to focus on a tiered approach to digital preservation, which will allow us to prioritize content and create appropriate preservation environments for each prioritized category. We would then like to actively seek out that digital content.
3. Consistent implementation of the preservation plan.