

State Government Digital Preservation Profiles

Vermont A

July 2006

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Introduction

The state government digital preservation profiles available on this Web page are based on information collected from those state and territorial library, archives, and records management units that completed CTG's State Government Digital Information Preservation Survey. CTG administered the survey to all state and several territorial librarians, archivists, and records managers in early 2006. See baseline report for details.

The profiles are organized by state or territory and the library (**L**), archives (**A**), and records management (**RM**) units that were represented in the survey response. (For example, "**Alabama ARM**," which is the first responding unit in the drop down menu below, refers to the **archives and records management** units from Alabama in one survey response.) For some states, respondents also included agencies other than library, archives, and records management. These profiles are marked with an asterisk (*) and the other units that contributed to the survey response are specified in the profiles.

To select a different profile, click on the Introduction/Select Profile link located on the top left of the screen.

You can also view consolidated tables showing how all the state/territory responding units replied to selected questions in the survey. (This is also found in Appendix E of Preserving State Government Digital Information: A Baseline Report.)

STATE PROFILES CONTACT

G. Brian Burke, Project Manager
Center for Technology in Government
University at Albany, SUNY

Section 1. Responding Unit(s)

Name of state or territory.

Vermont

Name and affiliation of individual(s) who responded on behalf of the state or territory.

Tanya Marshall, Assistant State Archivist, Vermont State Archives, Vermont Office of the Secretary of State.

This profile includes information provided by the following units for this state:

- Archives

Section 2.1a. Setting Standards for EXECUTIVE Agencies

The following units have authority for setting standards, specified below, for digital information created or maintained by EXECUTIVE agencies. Multiple boxes are checked to reflect authority that is shared or delegated.

	Authority not assigned	Library has authority	Archives has authority	Records Management has authority	Others (See below)
Setting data management standards and or guidelines for information creation (e.g., metadata, file formats).			X	X	X
Setting information technology standards and or guidelines for information creation (e.g., state approved software applications).			X	X	X
Setting standards for information retention and disposal (e.g., retention periods and methods of disposal) for various series/types of digital records and publications.			X	X	X

Other standards and the units with authority over setting them.

The State of Vermont has the Department of Information and Innovation whose responsibilities include: proving direction and oversight for all activities directly related to information technology, including telecommunications services, information technology equipment, software, accessibility, and networks in state government. This department is generally the resource State agencies and departments use when seeking new IT systems, etc. But the Department rarely addresses data management standards, IT standards (other than statewide contracts), and record retention/disposition.

Additional information.

The State Archives did not officially exist until 2003, and therefore State agencies and departments are only beginning to realize our existence and what we have to offer. The State Archives has limited authority for setting standards, mainly to 'coordinate' with others the use of standards with State agencies, departments, and courts. Vermont's Commissioner of Buildings and General Services may 'devise and advise as to the use of standard books or forms for the keeping of records, except such records as are otherwise regulated by law.' For the part, State agencies and departments are charged with setting their own standards for records and information.

Section 2.1b. Services Provided to EXECUTIVE Agencies

The following units provide the services, specified below, to EXECUTIVE agencies. If services are provided by multiple units, the appropriate boxes are checked.

	Services not provided	Library provides services	Archives provides services	Records Management provides services	Others (See below)
Storage for digital information.				X	
Consultation and training services on digital information creation.			X	X	
Consultation and training services on digital information management.			X	X	X
Consultation and training services on digital information preservation.			X	X	X
Consultation and training services on digital information preservation.			X	X	X
Preservation (e.g., migration, reformatting).			X	X	
Access (e.g., search engine).			X		X
Certification (e.g., trustworthiness of system, backups sufficient).			X		

Other services provided and the units that provide them.

The State Archives offers advice to agencies and departments on an ad hoc basis; the Secretary of State's Office also offers guidelines for Trustworthy Information Systems. Our approach is consistent with R&D in the area of digital information recordkeeping and preservation and long-term issues and needs. The State Archives did not officially exist until 2003, and therefore State agencies and departments are only beginning to realize our existence and what we have to offer.

The Commissioner of Buildings and General Service provides an imaging service to agencies, encouraging them to scan records and store them on CDs as a space saving measure. In some cases, saving electronic files to CD for storage at the State Records Centers has been encouraged.

Our Department of Information and Innovation works with agencies who want to use IT as part of their workflow. Little emphasis, if any, has been placed on long-term data access and preservation needs.

Additional information.

The State of Vermont does not have a sound approach to digital information and there is little integration or information sharing among the three entities from whom agencies may seek advice and direction. However, there is a proposal before the Vermont General Assembly this year that calls for greater attention to the records and information management needs of the Executive branch and an integrated, enterprise-wide approach. See: <http://vermont-archives.org/LegReport06.pdf>

Section 2.2a. Setting Standards for LEGISLATIVE Agencies

The following units have authority for setting standards, specified below, for digital information created or maintained by LEGISLATIVE agencies. Multiple boxes are checked to reflect authority that is shared or delegated.

	Authority not assigned	Library has authority	Archives has authority	Records Management has authority	Others (See below)
Setting data management standards and or guidelines for information creation (e.g., metadata, file formats).			X	X	X
Setting information technology standards and or guidelines for information creation (e.g., state approved software applications).			X	X	X
Setting standards for information retention and disposal (e.g., retention periods and methods of disposal) for various series/types of digital records and publications.			X	X	X

Other standards and the units with authority over setting them.

The Legislative Branch has a Legislative Information Technology Committee that is charged with 'the coordination and integration of information technology in the legislative branch in order to ensure that legislative records that are created, received, stored, or transmitted by that technology enhance legislative goals and priorities and conform to Vermont's recordkeeping requirements.' Membership includes both the State Archivist and Commissioner of Buildings and General Services -- as advisors.

Additional information.

The State Archives has been involved in the Legislative branches tape preservation initiative, which calls for the improved management of the Legislature's electronic records. See: <http://vermont-archives.org/LegCommTape.pdf>

Section 2.2b. Providing Service to LEGISLATIVE Agencies

The following units provide the services, specified below, to LEGISLATIVE agencies. If services are provided by multiple units, the appropriate boxes are checked.

	Services not provided	Library provides services	Archives provides services	Records Management provides services	Others (See below)
Storage for digital information.				X	X
Consultation and training services on digital information creation.			X	X	X
Consultation and training services on digital information management.			X	X	X
Consultation and training services on digital information preservation.			X	X	X
Consultation and training services on digital information preservation.			X	X	X
Preservation (e.g., migration, reformatting).			X	X	X
Access (e.g., search engine).			X		X
Certification (e.g., trustworthiness of system, backups sufficient).			X		

Other services provided and the units that provide them.

The Legislative Branch has a Legislative Information Technology Committee that is charged with 'the coordination and integration of information technology in the legislative branch in order to ensure that legislative records that are created, received, stored, or transmitted by that technology enhance legislative goals and priorities and conform to Vermont's recordkeeping requirements.' Membership includes both the State Archivist and Commissioner of Buildings and General Services -- as advisors.

Additional information.

No information provided

Section 2.3a. Setting Standards for JUDICIAL Agencies

The following units have authority for setting standards, specified below, for digital information created or maintained by JUDICIAL agencies. Multiple boxes are checked to reflect authority that is shared or delegated.

	Authority not assigned	Library has authority	Archives has authority	Records Management has authority	Others (See below)
Setting data management standards and or guidelines for information creation (e.g., metadata, file formats).			X	X	X
Setting information technology standards and or guidelines for information creation (e.g., state approved software applications).			X	X	X
Setting standards for information retention and disposal (e.g., retention periods and methods of disposal) for various series/types of digital records and publications.			X	X	X

Other standards and the units with authority over setting them.

The Vermont Judiciary has several committees established to deal with its records, including electronic court records. Both the State Archives and Department of Buildings and General Services have advisory roles with the Judiciary.

Additional information.

Since April 2004, the Vermont Judicial Records Program (VJRP) has served as an intermediary between the State Archives and the Court Administrator's Office to improve recordkeeping and the preservation of the State's judicial records. As the court system moves to e-filing, etc., VJRP plans to play a greater role. The URL is: <http://vermont-archives.org/records/vjrp/>

Section 2.3b. Providing Service to JUDICIAL Agencies

The following units provide the services, specified below, to LEGISLATIVE agencies. If services are provided by multiple units, the appropriate boxes are checked.

	Services not provided	Library provides services	Archives provides services	Records Management provides services	Others (See below)
Storage for digital information.					X
Consultation and training services on digital information creation.			X		X
Consultation and training services on digital information management.			X		X
Consultation and training services on digital information preservation.			X		X
Consultation and training services on digital information preservation.			X		X
Preservation (e.g., migration, reformatting).			X		X
Access (e.g., search engine).			X		X
Certification (e.g., trustworthiness of system, backups sufficient).			X		X

Other services provided and the units that provide them.

The Vermont Judiciary has its own IT department, which services as the primary source for consultation and training on digital information. Through VJRP, the State Archives has strengthened its relationship with the Judiciary on records management issues and hopes to play a greater role as the Judiciary moves more to digital information.

Additional information.

No information provided

Section 3. State Government Digital Information Preservation Activities

This section includes descriptions of past or current digital preservation activities in the state.

TITLE OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT DIGITAL INFORMATION PRESERVATION ACTIVITY:

Legislative Committee Tape Project

SHORT DESCRIPTION:

The 2004 session of the general assembly appropriated \$50,000 to the state archives to convert analog (reel to reel and cassette) tape recordings of legislative committee hearings to digital form. The goals of the project are to preserve the recorded testimony and create consistency of storage by having all past and current testimony captured on CDs.

LINKS TO RELATED WEB SITES OR PROJECT DOCUMENTS:

<http://vermont-archives.org/LegCommTape.pdf>

CONTACT FOR THIS ACTIVITY:

Gregory Sanford, State Archivist
26 Terrace Street, Montpelier, VT 05609
gsanford@sec.state.vt.us

TITLE OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT DIGITAL INFORMATION PRESERVATION ACTIVITY:

Secretary of State's Office Electronic Records Web site

SHORT DESCRIPTION:

This site is intended to be a resource to people who are looking at the record issues related to e-government. E-government refers to the use of information and communications technologies to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of government. Because this office manages the Archives of the State of Vermont we have a special mandate to ensure that Vermont's e-government programs create reliable and authentic records that are preserved over time. In the absence of widely established electronic recordkeeping standards within Vermont State government, this page offers links to laws and legal decisions, rules, policies and guidelines established by other states and entities.

LINKS TO RELATED WEB SITES OR PROJECT DOCUMENTS:

http://vermont-archives.org/records/electronic/elec_rec.html

CONTACT FOR THIS ACTIVITY:

Gregory Sanford, State Archivist
26 Terrace Street Montpelier, VT 05609
gsanford@sec.state.vt.us

Section 4. Training Needs for Digital Preservation Related Activities

Level of training needed for the digital preservation capabilities, specified below.

	Training already provided	Basic training needed	Advanced training needed
Identify the type and amount of digital information throughout the state.			X
Select and appraise state government information in digital form.			X
Identify key stakeholders related to specific digital information (other local/state agencies, other states, private sector, etc.).			X
Negotiate and make agreements with key stakeholders to preserve digital information.			X
Acquire state government information in digital form for holdings.			X
Manage state government information in digital form (metadata, reformatting, etc.).			X
Manage the ingest of digital information into a repository.			X
Manage the long-term storage of digital information in a repository.			X
Develop mechanisms to monitor the long-term usability of state government information in digital form.			X
Make state government information in digital form accessible to users.			X
Produce a disaster and recovery planning for state government information in digital form.			X
Manage copyright, security, and other legal issues of relevance to state government digital information.			X
Other (See below).			X

Other training needed for digital preservation capability.

Managing culture change!

Additional information on existing training programs.

No information provided

Section 5. State Government Digital Information Currently At-Risk #1

This section includes examples of state government digital information that is at-risk of deteriorating or being altered or lost through format or technological obsolescence, policy or procedural gaps, or financial constraints.

DESCRIPTION OF AT-RISK STATE GOVERNMENT DIGITAL INFORMATION:

Electronic information systems, state Web sites, records that were imaged and stored on CD (and paper was destroyed) are statewide concerns.

CONDITIONS CAUSING INFORMATION TO BE AT-RISK:

There is no agency or department with full authority to address state records, regardless of format, and agencies and departments are at will to seek services and advice. There are no standards or requirements at the State level, although agencies will adhere to Federal regulations for managing digital data if required. It is up to the agency or department to develop its own policies for managing their digital information.

State Government has viewed records largely as a storage issue. Questions related to records rarely address digital records, as the focus is largely on reducing paper volumes. As a result, many agencies, when provided with the opportunity to scan their records and save them to CD, have reformatted their paper records to electronic. However, little or no attention has been paid to long-term access or preservation needs for these records.

STRATEGIES CONSIDERED TO PRESERVE AT-RISK STATE GOVERNMENT DIGITAL INFORMATION:

The State Archives has been working with all three branches of State government and with local governments on creating a strong and sound archives, records, and information management culture. Our strategic plan focuses on five stages in which agencies or departments must pass through in order to create effective and efficient records and information management programs. More details of the strategic plan are available at: <http://vermont-archives.org/records/vjrp/records/tools/RMsteps.pdf> and <http://vermont-archives.org/records/vjrp/records/tools/FunctionAnalysis.pdf>

Examples of government digital information that was not preserved and is no longer accessible.

The State Archives was not authorized to work with State agencies, departments, and courts for the identification and preservation of State archival records until 2003. Therefore the extent of State records in the State Archives' custody is very limited. Our knowledge of what exists and no longer exists in the State Records Center and in state offices is very limited. However, the following Vermont digital information are known to be no longer accessible: numerous reel to reel tapes; early Vermont District Court records (from the late 1970s and 1980s); and non-current version of State agency or department Web sites. We would not be surprised to learn that databases and other electronic records that were not purposely migrated to new systems are no longer accessible and that a large portion of records imaged by the Department of Buildings and General Services are not actively being preserved (planned migration).

Section 6. Enterprise Architecture

The following section describes the state's and corresponding units' awareness of and involvement in their state's Enterprise Architecture efforts.

Aware of state's Enterprise Architecture efforts.

Yes

Involved in state's Enterprise Architecture efforts.

Yes

Nature of involvement in the state's Enterprise Architecture efforts, if appropriate.

Section 5 of Act No. 71 (2005) charged the secretary of administration and the state archivist 'to jointly develop a comprehensive strategy for the management of all records created by state agencies.' The strategy should include analysis of current records management programs required under 3 V.S.A. §218; the use and management of electronic records; and the development of records management training.

Links to relevant documentation that describes the unit's involvement in the state's Enterprise Architecture efforts.

<http://vermont-archives.org/records/vjrp/records/tools/FunctionAnalysis.pdf>

Section 7. Additional Thoughts or Comments

The greatest challenge that we face in Vermont is the need to change our State's concept and view of records, particularly when there exists no one single agency, department, or office with authority to invoke such change. Without statutory requirements, agencies and departments may, and often do, are left to their own devices to effectively and efficiently manage their digital resources.