

Interim Rescue Repository – Draft Proposal

Yale University Library, February 6, 2004 (revised March 3, 2004)

Meg Bellinger, Frederick Martz, David Gewirtz, Audrey Novak

The Problem

An increasing number of projects in the Yale University Library are generating or acquiring digital content (images, video, audio, full text, data sets) along with varying levels of metadata and public interfaces for access to this material. Most of these projects urgently need a long-term (or even a short-term) digital preservation strategy. Candidate content includes (at least):

- Visual Resources Collection (VRC) image masters (Luna Insight content)
- Assets in various formats generated by the ELI American Digital Imaging Project
- Beinecke Digital Studio (at least master TIFFs)
- Economic Growth Center (EGC) Mellon-funded digitization project
- Divinity imaging projects
- Medical Library image collections
- Digital Conversion Facility (DCF) output
- Digitization of Fortunoff Holocaust video testimonies (SAMMA project)
- Born-digital material from MSSA and Beinecke
- Archival copies of online e-collections and databases, supplied by vendors on tape and CD
- Manuscripts and Archives Digital Images Database (MADID)
- Map Collection
- Walpole Library Digital Collection (digitized prints)
- Law Library digital text projects
- Art Gallery images

The lifecycle management of this content has become a clear necessity as the volume continues to grow. The digital masters for much of this material are in immediate danger of permanent loss through media decay, physical damage, technological obsolescence, or difficulties in archival management. New initiatives such as the EGC and Fortunoff projects need a logical destination for the archival copies of their digital content. In the EGC project the terms of the grant include a commitment to long-term retention. **We clearly have much work to do in developing retention policies, best practices, as well as infrastructure and resource allocation, but in the interim, we propose a flexible and agile/quick short-term solution.**

The Interim Rescue Repository

The concept behind the Rescue Repository is to provide a centrally supported system for the short-term safekeeping of these endangered materials. This repository will constitute the first step toward the evolution of a long-term, OAIS-compliant digital preservation archive. Our goal is to begin accepting an initial collection by the end of summer 2004. In December LMC approved our request for \$50,000 in equipment funds to begin the development work in the Library Systems Office and the AM&T/Library Group for a scalable repository server. In the interest of achieving economies of scale and the benefits of collaboration, we propose that this development is best achieved as a coordinated effort and in partnership with other library units such as Beinecke, Medical, and MSSA who are already investigating independent solutions of their own. We need to bring other units such as Arts and Divinity into the discussion. The Rescue Repository and an envisioned production preservation archive, to come later, would in no way replace the online systems intended to deliver content to readers. Rather a principal objective of the repository would be to pool expertise and resources in order to provide a managed environment for the protection of digital masters that will be needed to create derivative objects for current and future user-oriented applications.