Where Lone Arrangers fear to tread

Whoa, Silver! It’s the Digital Wild West out there. And then you are supposed to preserve it.
Saddle up!
Let’s do some scanning

- University of North Texas Libraries ‘The Portal to Texas History’
- 416 repetitive images related to ‘longhorn cattle’ described in Dublin Core
- Collection since reduced to a few dozen

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Now what?

- CLIR study of Digital Cultural Heritage Initiatives (DCHI) and their sustainability (Zorich, 2003)
  - Burgeoning access via technology to archives, manuscripts, libraries and museums
  - Treated as ‘one-off,’ finite projects
  - Many small institutions with no plan
  - Many proponents believed that they were solving a ‘preservation’ problem
Now what?

• Portals for aggregating cultural heritage information
  • Digitized historic materials
  • E-publishing of born-digital journals and monographs
  • Databases of cultural heritage bibliographies, etc.
Now what?

• ‘No digital archiving budget exists for these projects; many... did not realize that the costs would be so great as to require one.’ (Zorich, 2003, p. 26)

• The preservation problem: Institutions overwhelmed with archiving their digital collections
Funding

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• ‘Increasingly, DCHIs are looking external sources for long-term preservation and archiving of their resources, realizing that they cannot continue to do this on their own.’ (Zorich, p. 27)
Funding

- Grant/single source
- Finite
- Projects get sidelined
- Appropriate for analog

Cost of doing business
- Continuous – forever
- Required for digital
- Lacking in small archives
Is this Lone Arranging?

- IMLS says a good program:
  - has a substantial design and planning component.
  - has an appropriate level of staffing with necessary expertise to achieve its objectives.
  - follows best practices for project management.
  - has an evaluation component.
  - markets itself and broadly disseminates information about the initiative’s process and outcomes.
  - considers the entire lifecycle of the digital collection and associated services.
Is this Lone Arranging?

- Trustworthy Repository Audit & Certification
  - Has a mission statement with a commitment to long-term retention
  - Has a plan for the data if the repository ceases to exist
  - Staff members know what they’re doing and there are enough of them
  - Continuing education opportunities are offered

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Is this Lone Arranging?

- Trustworthy Repository Audit & Certification
  - And so on...
    - Continuous source of funding
    - Adequate IT infrastructure
    - Preservation strategies are documented
    - Corruption and loss can be detected
    - Evidence of successful preservation
    - Adequate metadata for various functions from preservation to user satisfaction