SECTION B: PROJECT PLANNING

Project planning should take a number of elements into consideration. The purpose or goal of the final collection should inform any decisions made during the planning phase i.e. are you digitizing materials for shorter term use (access) or longer term use (preservation)?
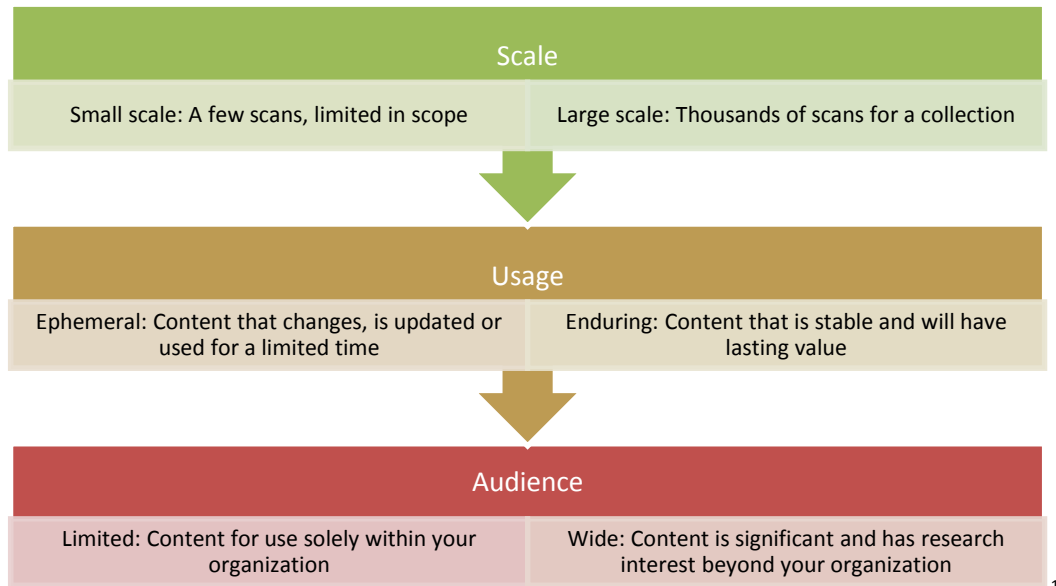

Figure 1. This chart provides three dimensions that inform strategic planning decisions: Scale; Usage; and Audience.

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[1] Adapted from a flow chart in "Digitization Guidelines" from UMass Amherst Library's Digital Initiatives: http://www.library.umass.edu/assets/aboutus/attachments/UMass-Amherst-Libraries-Best-Practice-Guidelines-for-Digitization-20110523-templated.pdf

B1: COORDINATION, FINANCIAL, HUMAN RESOURCE AND TECHNOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Digitization is a complex and costly endeavour for any organization. Several issues and considerations need to be addressed prior to embarking on digitization activities and projects, including but not limited to the following:

- Selecting what material to digitized and how it will be used, accessed, and maintained;
- Identifying intellectual property right considerations;
- Sufficient funding and staff resources for project start-up and long-term maintenance and preservation;
- Flexibility to respond to rapid the growth and evolution of technology;
- Meeting changing user expectations.

In addressing the above challenges associated with digitization, a number of fundamental principles are grouped below to help guide decisions about what and how to digitize material:

Big picture coordination considerations:

- Determine the cost-benefit implications for all new digitization projects (see Selection Criteria below for more information);
- Ensure compliance with moral rights, intellectual property legislation, and copyright;
- Consider the preservation implications of any systems in place to manage digital records;
- Consider the standards, formats and documentation that are required for digitization projects that can be cost-effectively preserved;
- Minimize risk.

Financial costs and resource considerations:

- Long-term preservation strategies are an inherent cost of digitization;
- It is necessary to allocate adequate and appropriate resources and infrastructure for sustained access and preservation;
- It is necessary to ensure sufficient trained staff is available to manage the processes required to preserve collections

Human resource considerations:

Digitization projects require a combination of skills from a variety of staff with different areas of expertise. Individual digitization projects (either Grant-Based or Ongoing) require a team approach, may be initiated and managed by any employee. Each project should have a project manager, who is responsible for coordinating and planning the activities associated with the digitization project.

- Project management skills;
- Knowledge of cataloguing and metadata schema;
- Familiarity with conservation methods;
- Understanding of the techniques and methods for the specific analogue media to be digitized; for example, photography or sound recording;
- Subject matter specialists (e.g., archivists, librarians, scholars, etc.);
- Familiarity with community specific protocols and practice;
- Information technology skills (e.g. database development, computer programming);
- Administration skills.

Technical considerations:

- Digitize at an appropriate level of quality to avoid re-digitizing and re-handling of the originals in the future;
- Digitize an original or first generation (i.e. negative rather than print) of the source material to achieve the best quality reproduction possible;
- Create and store a master file that can be used to produce surrogate files and serve a variety of current and future user needs;
- Ensure originals are maintained, as digital copies are not a substitute for originals;
- Use file formats and compression techniques that conform to existing cultural heritage standards;
- Store digital files in an appropriate environment, using system components that are non-proprietary and interoperable with other systems;
- Create backup copies of all files on the best devices or media possible and have an off-site backup strategy;
- Create meaningful metadata for all digital images and files;
- Document a migration strategy for transferring data across generations of technology;
- Plan for future technological developments.
- Monitor data as necessary

B2: SELECTION OF MATERIALS

The purpose for digitization projects and daily scanning activities generally fall into one of the following categories:

- **Information Sharing:** To enable users to directly access and use, a range of materials where copyright and agreements allow

- **Supporting Research:** To build a critical mass of digital content to support research, programs, and activities.

- **Preservation:** To preserve rare and fragile materials and those at risk of format obsolescence, while also improving access to their content by providing digital copies of the items for use.

The value (or worth) of the materials, as well as the positive aspects of access to them in electronic form, will rationalize the amount of time and effort spent in accomplishing a digitization project. All digitization activities and projects need to consider the following selection criteria:

- *Value*

    - **Informational Value** – records that provide significant information on key people, places, events, objects, periods, activities, processes, and projects, etc.

    - **Administrative Value** – records that have functional usefulness to an organization

    - **Archival Value** – rare or unique cultural material with intrinsic value to its users

- *Use and Demand*

    - Highly used or accessed materials

    - Materials that are currently difficult to access

- *Risk*

    - Materials at risk of loss or deterioration

    - Rate of technological change

- *Rights*

    - Intellectual property rights and moral considerations

    - Materials made available for research

    - Information in the public domain

B3: OWNERSHIP, CONTROL, ACCESS AND POSSESSION (OCAP)

In the past, Indigenous people were not necessarily consulted in regards to the collection of information for the purposes of research or otherwise. Due to the lack of consultation and unclear guidelines for ownership and access, research and any consequent use of information gathered is viewed as an inherently political act. Ownership, control, access and possession (OCAP) is "self-determination applied to research". OCAP's approach to policy offers a way out of the confusion and ethical dilemmas of existing Indigenous research and information management. [2]

These principles apply to "research, monitoring and surveillance, surveys, statistics, cultural knowledge and … all aspects of information, including its creation and management."

Researchers and individuals from outside the Nation must adhere to the ethical guidelines for participatory research and community involvement, and the Nation needs to create ethical research policies that define the types of information activities for their community.

The following strategies are excerpted from OCAP:

- Be clear about what you want and do not want to get from research and determine priorities

- Become informed and share information about research initiatives that impact your community or constituency. Seek to improve First Nations representation in decision-making venues (e.g. university and government committees).

- Refuse to participate in processes that do not respect OCAP or First Nations protocols.

- Seek advice and support from Elders and leadership. Educate the leadership and raise the profile of research and information management issues.

- Develop culture-based frameworks, methods, tools, training, review, and reporting strategies.

- Model good research practices by following stringent ethical guidelines and community and cultural protocols.

- Build research skills among people in your community or organization.

- Access research funding sources with criteria and processes that are community/Indigenous friendly.

- Identify respectful researchers and cultivate long-term relationships with them.

- Collaborate with other like-minded Indigenous groups and communities.

- Build on successful First Nations initiatives and processes.

- Negotiate written agreements or memoranda of understanding that spell out the research relationship with your community/organization and your research partners.

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[2] Schnarch, Brian. "Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP) or Self-Determination Applied to Research: A Critical Analysis of Contemporary First Nations Research and Some Options for First Nations Communities." *Journal of Aboriginal Health*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Ottawa: National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2004)

- Require review prior to publication of research/information involving your community or constituency.

- Alternatively, agree to a right to dissent – an elegant solution to the conflict between academic freedom and OCAP, whereby each party can include their own interpretation in any publication.

- Contract, rather than partner with, researchers which makes clear the lines of accountability.

- Involve numerous parties in various capacities which will avoid having one party overwhelm and control.

- Develop a code of research ethics, guidelines, policies, by-laws or legislation where applicable. Once in place, ensure they are disseminated, understood, and respected.

- Set up a research review board.

- Develop information sharing strategies and agreements that maximize distribution of information while protecting sensitive information.

B4: Research and Information Protocols Template

Name of Policy: Research and Information Protocols (Version ##)

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of these protocols is to ensure that, in all research that involves or relates to the _____ Nation, the _____ Nation is able to protect its people, culture and history and to ensure that appropriate respect is given to them. Information is central to the work of the _____ Nation. Like other core assets -- people, physical infrastructure, financial resources, and technology -- information must be managed to enable the government to meet its policy and service goals.

EFFECTIVE DATE

YYYY-MM-DD

BACKGROUND

These protocols apply to all persons conducting research projects that relate to the _____ Nation, including its treaty negotiations, who wish to consult with members of the _____ Nation and use their oral history, cultural heritage resources, the Traditional Use Study Library, the _____ Nation archives or other cultural information. These protocols apply equally to researchers working on behalf of the _____ Treaty Council and to those working for other groups, agencies or organizations both within and outside the _____ Nation. First Nations have been repositories of information from time immemorial. Information is central to the well being of First Nations.

PURPOSE

These protocols seek to manage existing as well as newly created information in a way that is respectful to all parties involved. Like other core assets – people, physical infrastructure, financial resources, and technology, information must be managed to enable a First Nation to preserve and access its culture, to meet its policy and service goals, to plan and make good decisions for the Nation and to meet its accountability obligations.

Information is managed to meet requirements for the Nation as a whole, including languages requirements, what information is used, how it is organized, described, etc., as well as the specific requirements determined by operational needs and accountabilities. As the Nation increasingly uses information technologies to implement these requirements, integrating information management requirements with technology planning ensures that digital information is protected, accessible, shareable, and usable over time and through technological change.

PROTOCOLS

Researchers must familiarize themselves with the _____ Tribal and Treaty Councils, the Elders Group and the _____ Nation member bands and observe their respective governing rules and protocols concerning communications within the community, such as approaches required to access the relevant information and knowledge.

All requests for information, use of cultural heritage resources, use of the Traditional Use Study Library and the _____ Nation library, resources and interviews with community members or groups must be addressed in writing to the _____ Nation Council Administrator or another individual designated by the _____ Nation. The request must set out the aims; scope and anticipated results of the research project, including the potential impacts and any possible risks. The Administrator or other designated individual will provide details of the request to the _____ Nation Councils and any other appropriate group or person for their review. After receiving any comments and advice from the _____ Nation Councils and any other group or person who has been requested to provide advice, the Elders Group will approve or deny the request. *(Note: Cultural heritage resources include moveable heritage resources, sacred or heritage sites and documentary heritage resources.)*

If approval is given by the Elders Group for the research project to proceed, researchers must consult with the Elders Group and any other groups or individuals which the Elders Group directs them to contact in order to determine who are the appropriate community members or groups to approach for the particular types of information being sought.

After consulting with the Elders Group and anyone else that the Elders Group has directed them to contact, researchers may approach individual community members or groups for interviews. Where researchers intend to interview an individual or group, they must provide them with information about the purpose and nature of the research activities, including the potential impacts and any possible risks, prior to seeking their consent. No individual may be interviewed alone or as part of a group unless that individual has given his or her informed consent.

Where appropriate, researchers must ensure that a representative cross-section of community experiences and perceptions is included in their research.

Researchers have an obligation to inform participants that they have the right to indicate that some or all of the information they are providing is to be treated as confidential. If a participant indicates that certain information is to be treated as confidential, the researcher must request that the participant identify the purposes, if any, for which that information may be used.

Researchers must abide by any requests for confidentiality made to them by participants.

No pressure may be applied to induce participation in research.

Participants must be informed that they are free to withdraw from the research at any time.

Researchers must fairly compensate participants by providing suitable financial honoraria and reimbursing any of the participants' expenses.

Researchers must give credit in their research report to all participants.

Researchers have an obligation to assess the potential impacts on and any possible risks of the project to the _____ Nation or its members and to inform the Elders Group, the _____ Nation Councils of those impacts and risks. Wherever possible, conflicts between interests within the community must be identified and resolved in advance of commencing the project.

Research must support, to the extent possible, the transfer of skills to individuals in the community and increase the capacity of the community to manage its own research.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Researchers have an obligation to provide the Elders Group, the _____ Nation Councils with an opportunity to review the research results and provide comments before the final product is completed.

Researchers must provide one copy of the final product of the research project to all _____ Nation Councils and appropriate groups.

IMPLEMENTATION

This Code must be included in all research contracts with individuals, groups, agencies and organizations conducting research authorized by the _____ Nation.

Every person to whom this Code applies is required, prior to commencing their research, to sign an agreement stating that they have read and understand the Code and that they agree to be bound by it.

It is be the responsibility of the _____ Nation Council to monitor the implementation of the Code and to make decisions regarding its interpretation and application, as well as compliance with its provisions.

REVIEW

The _____ Nation Council will review this Code at least once every calendar year.

AMENDMENTS

From time to time, the _____ Nation Councils may by mutual agreement amend this Code.

COPIES OF CODE

An up-to-date copy of this Code, including any amendments that have been adopted, may be obtained from the _____ Nation Council office.

ADOPTION

This Code comes into force once it has been approved by the _____ Nation Council.

Approved by: [_____]   Elders Group representative

Approved by: [_____]   Authorized representative of _____ Nation Council

B5: Naming Conventions

- Give the digital file a meaningful but short name[3] to a maximum of 25 characters. [4]

- Use only the ASCII characters 0-9 and a-z in file names and use underscores or hyphens rather than spaces. Avoid upper case letters, whenever possible.
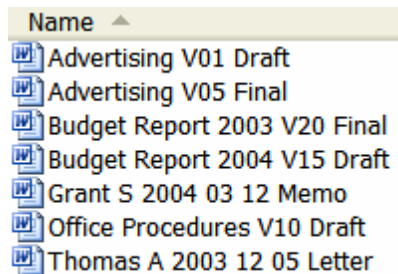
  - Example:

    - Correct: advertising_draft_2012-01-23.docx

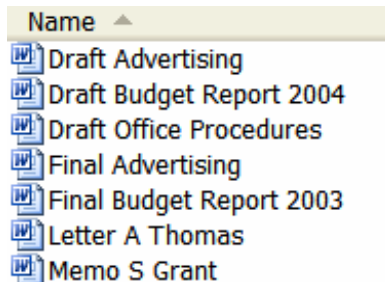   - Incorrect: January 23 draft Advertising.docx

- Avoid using common words such as "draft" or "letter" at the start of file names as this can result in documents being grouped together when they should not be.

  - Example:

    - Correct:

Name ▲
Advertising V01 Draft
Advertising V05 Final
Budget Report 2003 V20 Final
Budget Report 2004 V15 Draft
Grant S 2004 03 12 Memo
Office Procedures V10 Draft
Thomas A 2003 12 05 Letter

    - Incorrect:

Name ▲
Draft Advertising
Draft Budget Report 2004
Draft Office Procedures
Final Advertising
Final Budget Report 2003
Letter A Thomas
Memo S Grant

- Always use the default 3 character file extensions: .tif, .jpg, .wav, .mp3, .pdf; and always use a period before these extensions.

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[3] In production environments it may be better to use the file naming sequencing that is afforded by the technology rather than using mnemonic file names as these can speed up processing and help avoid human error.

[4] It is prudent to confirm with IT support that all parts of the system support the 25 character maximum.

B6: CHECKLIST OF CRITERIA[5]

	A detailed description (inventory) of the material to be digitized
	Condition assessment of materials to be digitized
	Copyright clearance: Identify all rights concerns and plan for access protocols and restrictions that may be necessary
	A detailed project schedule and work plan
	Definition of the roles and responsibility of new and existing staff
	Identification of public/community/researchers access goals
	Identification of professional standards and best practices (technical/metadata)
	Creation of policies for access/digitization/standards/preservation
	Identification of technology requirements
	A detailed budget itemizing income and expenses
	Digitization and description of materials
	Outline how the community will be informed of the project
	A description of the plans for digital preservation of the digital files

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[5] Adapted from a checklist from IKBLC's BC History Digitization Program application