California State University Libraries

# DAMS Self Evaluation Toolkit Final Report

Prepared by the Digital Archives Working Group

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# Executive Summary

In summer 2020, the Digital Archives Working Group (DAWG) initiated the DAMS Self Evaluation project in order to measure campus interest and readiness for a transition to a unified digital asset management for digital archives. Over the next year, the DAWG designed and piloted an Evaluation toolkit (Appendix A). The toolkit was based on the DAMS Maturity Model, a corporate tool for assessing holistic DAMS systems, which DAWG modified to fit the specific CSU Digital Archives use case.

DAWG launched the toolkit in late fall 2020, requesting feedback from stakeholders across the system. Nine campuses returned the toolkit, all with different levels of completeness. While the toolkit was not extensive to complete, DAWG recognized that libraries were burdened with planning for reopening after the 2020-2021 remote instruction year.

Major takeaways from the completed evals are as follows:
- 100% of respondents would use a unified systems in some capacity
    - 56% are interested in using a system-wide DAMS for their Digital Archives
    - 44% are interested in contributing metadata for a system-wide search
- 89% of respondents cited lack of staffing as a major issue facing the project
- Common themes emerged around content policies and discoverability issues
- Most respondents noted a lack of defined workflows being an area of concern

Major areas of continued study:
- More data is needed from individual campuses, including current systems, collection size, and cost share, staff ability
- More planning and conversations are needed with the metadata working group

# Background & Definitions

The pursuit of a unified DAMS system has a long history. The Scholarworks (Institutional Repository) Initiative has existed in some form for approximately twelve years, predominantly as a mechanism for CSU-wide institutional repository collaboration. With the installation of DSpace instances at multiple campuses (all hosted through the Chancellor's Office), each campus developed workflows, policies, and branding independent of each other. In some cases these practices were only applied to item types that are typically considered institutional repository materials, in other cases this also applied to item types typically hosted through a digital library platform. Other campuses implemented other digital asset management systems, including CONTENTdm, Luna, and others. As of Fall 2021, there is broad and disparate use of DAMS systems across the CSU, which has complicated the discoverability and access of digital archive materials that represent our communities.

The Digital Archives Working Group (DAWG) began work on this project near to its inception in Spring 2020. DAWG is a working group within the Digital Repositories Committee and was formed as part of the charter of the ScholarWorks [Digital Archives Working Group](). The DAMS Self Evaluation Toolkit (Appendix A) provided a method of self evaluation for campuses in the CSU to assess their readiness and capacity for implementation/migration to the Systemwide Digital Asset Management System (DAMS) for digital archives collections.

## About the Toolkit

The toolkit is derived from the [DAMS Maturity Model](), a tool created to measure the functionality of enterprise digital asset management systems, primarily in corporate and marketing settings (MarTech). The model, in its original form, is used for corporate entities' DAMS, which typically serve an internal group of users, namely, employees and partners who work inside the company. Thus, DAWG modified the model to fit a university library use case, ensuring that the model focused more broadly on outside users.

While DAWG adapted much of the original model to fit a CSU use case, the toolkit retained much of the holistic approach to measuring all aspects of the system landscape, including: people, content (assets), systems, and processes (workflows). These aspects are described below:

- People: technical, functional, and communicative capacities of personnel who will be involved in the project
- Content: digital assets, metadata, discoverability, and use cases for the project and collections
- Systems: security, usability, infrastructure, and preservation of current software and systems
- Processes: workflows, governance, and integrations of current digital archives work

The toolkit provided these definitions along with guiding questions for respondents to answer and think through their specific campus' situation.

## Scoring and Measurement

DAWG chose to maintain the scoring method used in the original DAMS Maturity Model as it allowed for a good assessment of an institution's status in an area, without being critical. The scoring method is listed below:

**Ad Hoc (1 point)**
**Operational (2 points)**
**Optimal (3 points)**

Each section of the toolkit (people, content, systems, and processes) provided a different definition of the scoring metrics above, focused specifically on the area being analyzed. These definitions can be found in the Toolkit (Appendix A).

# Results

Nine campuses returned toolkits that were factored into the results outlined in this section, representing 40% of the 23 campuses in the CSU (not all of which have digital archives). While 40% is significant, some of the toolkits were not in a complete state and only provided data and language for some sections. Despite this, much information was gleaned to help make recommendations for further data collection in pursuit of the project.

## Unified System Use/Adoption

The most unanimous takeaway from the data is that 100% of respondents stated that their campus would use/participate in a Systemwide DAMS in some capacity. 56% of respondents stated that their campus would use a unified system as their primary DAMS, while 44% stated that they would like to submit their metadata to make their assets more accessible in a unified search. There was no one characteristic of those respondents who stated they would use a unified system as their primary DAMS. Some campuses stated that they would be interested in leaving their current systems due cost or stability; some campuses currently using DSpace (a system inappropriate for digital archives) expressed interested in migrating to a more supportive system; one campus had no current digital archives, but were interested in obtaining a system that would allow them to begin a program.

For those campuses interested in contributing their metadata, most were either happy with their current system and workflows or had recently dedicated significant time to deploying a new system and were not interested in repeating the process. All these campuses were interested in making their materials more accessible to a broader audience. Some cited eagerness to

participate in a program similar to Calisphere or DPLA, that would allow more users to search digital archival materials in a centralized place.

# Category Evaluation

## People

Campuses who completed this section of the evaluation averaged a 4.5 score when evaluating personnel, ranking between the ad hoc and operation measurements.

*Strengths*
While most campuses identified room to grow in terms of staff training and technology use, most campuses possess skilled practitioners who understand the best practices and workflows needed to run their current programs and needed to implement a new system. Some campuses noted communication issues with various library entities, especially information technology, but most expressed positivity towards administrative understanding of the role of digital archives programs within their institutional missions.

*Weaknesses*
89% of respondents noted a lack of staffing as a major issue not only for the implementation of a unified system in the future, but for their current digital archives practices and workflows. Workload issues of campus staff will need to be factored into the timing and duration of a unified implementation.

## Content

Campuses who completed this section of the evaluation averaged a 5.25 score when evaluating their current digital archives content, which includes assets, metadata, and policies.

*Strengths*
While not all campuses have the staff capacity for regular content creation, description, and ingest, those that do feel that this is being done consistently and to standard. Many campus programs are supported by trained student workers who maintain digitization during academic semesters.

*Weaknesses*
Nearly every respondent noted a lack of defined policies and documentation as issues that needed to be addressed on their campus. This was true for nearly all processes including creation, description, and ingest. Additionally, most campuses identified discoverability issues with their digitized and/or completed collections, as they were often siloed across different platforms. Lastly, there are currently no defined preservation workflows for digital archives from the campuses that responded to the self evaluation. While a lack of policy and documentation is

not ideal, this does create opportunities for the creation and adoption of unified policies and workflows were the project to be undertaken.

## Systems

Campuses who completed this section of the evaluation averaged a 6.6 score when evaluating their current digital archives systems, speaking specifically to their current software used for storing and discovering their digitized collections. Most comments in this diverged between campuses that rely on DSpace to store assets (most negative) and campuses that use another system to store assets (mostly positive). It can also be noted here that several campuses who chose not to complete the self evaluation at all did so based on a recent migration to a new system, which they were satisfied with.

*Strengths*
While all respondents expressed familiarity and understanding of their systems from long time use, most strengths were highlighted by campuses that did not use DSpace. Strengths identified included autonomy to create new users and manage workflows and overall usability. Most specific features are those that are also included in the [OTHER DAWG DOCUMENT].

*Weaknesses*
Most weaknesses were specific to campuses that use DSpace as their primary DAMS. These weaknesses included autonomy issues, integration issues, and metadata issues.

## Processes

Campuses who completed this section of the evaluation averaged a 3.8 (ad hoc) score when evaluating their current processes, which included analysis of workflows, governance/policies, and integrations.

*Strengths*
Several campuses feel confident in their ability to document basic workflows. Most campuses identify a shared interest from staff of the importance of policy and workflow development, even where none currently exists.

*Weaknesses*
Nearly all respondents highlighted a lack of defined policies and workflows as being an issue for their digital archive programs. As mentioned in the content category, a universal lack of policy leaves space for adoption of unified policy and governance, as well as the adoption of new workflows.

# Analysis

While different levels of digital archive infrastructure exist across the system, campuses are struggling with many of the same issues. Many of these issues could be solved by a unified system (and the accompanying workflows, policies, and discoverability), which would improve overall best practice and access to the historical and cultural information housed within the CSU.

Most campuses possess the technical ability and skills to implement and manage a unified DAMS system; however, there will be concerns that relate to staff workload, especially at campuses that already have large digitization programs. The lack of defined policies and workflows across the system present individual problems for each campus; however, this deficit also presents an opportunity for campuses to adopt unified policies and share in the creation and maintenance of documentation.

# Next Steps

It will be important to provide the library team at the Chancellor's Office with more specific information is needed from all campuses in the system. The data sheet (see Appendix) should be completed by all campuses that currently have digital archive programs or wish to have them in the future. This information will be vital to developing a cost model for a unified system so that the system can determine its feasibility. Considering the response rate from the self evaluation project, DAWG may need the assistance of COLD to obtain this information from the individual campuses.

Appendix A.

# Digital Asset Management System

# Self Evaluation Toolkit

Developed by the [Digital Archives Working Group](#)

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# About

DAWG is a working group within the Digital Repositories Committee and was formed as part of the charter of the ScholarWorks [Digital Archives Working Group](#).

The following toolkit provides a method of self evaluation for campuses to assess their readiness and capacity for implementation/migration to CSU Systemwide Digital Asset Management System (DAMS) for digital archives collections. The toolkit is divided into four areas that assess:

- **People** (technical, functional, and communicative capacities of personnel who will be involved in the project)
- **Content** (digital assets, metadata, discoverability, and use cases for the project and collections)
- **Systems** (security, usability, infrastructure, and preservation of current software and systems)
- **Processes** (workflows, governance, and integrations of current digital archives work)

This toolkit is adapted from the [DAM Maturity Model](#), a system designed for corporate, enterprise DAMS. Members of DAWG edited this model for the specific needs of libraries, special collections, archives, and users.

# Data Sheet

Please complete and return this data sheet to provide the DAWG with information regarding .
Please enter your answer in the right-side column.

| Campus Information | |
|---|---|
| Campus Name | |
| **Participation** | |
| Are you interested in migrating your current and future digital collections to a shared system-wide digital asset management system (DAMS)? (Yes/No/Maybe) | |
| If you are NOT interested in migrating to a shared system-wide DAMS, would you share your metadata so users can search your materials among those throughout the CSU? (Yes/No/Maybe) | |
| **Usage** | |
| Number of digital objects (files + metadata) in your current DAMS: | |
| Average number of digital objects added per year: | |
| Estimated combined file storage for digital objects (Gigabytes): | |
| Estimated combined file storage for preservation files (Terabytes): | |
| **Costs** | |
| What do you spend annually on a DAMS licence(s) for digital collections | |
| What do you spend annually on file storage (preservation and/or access files)? | |
| What do you spend annually on personnel for digital collections projects? Add only the fraction of time each spends on actual digital collections or archives when calculating labor costs. | |

# How to Use this Toolkit
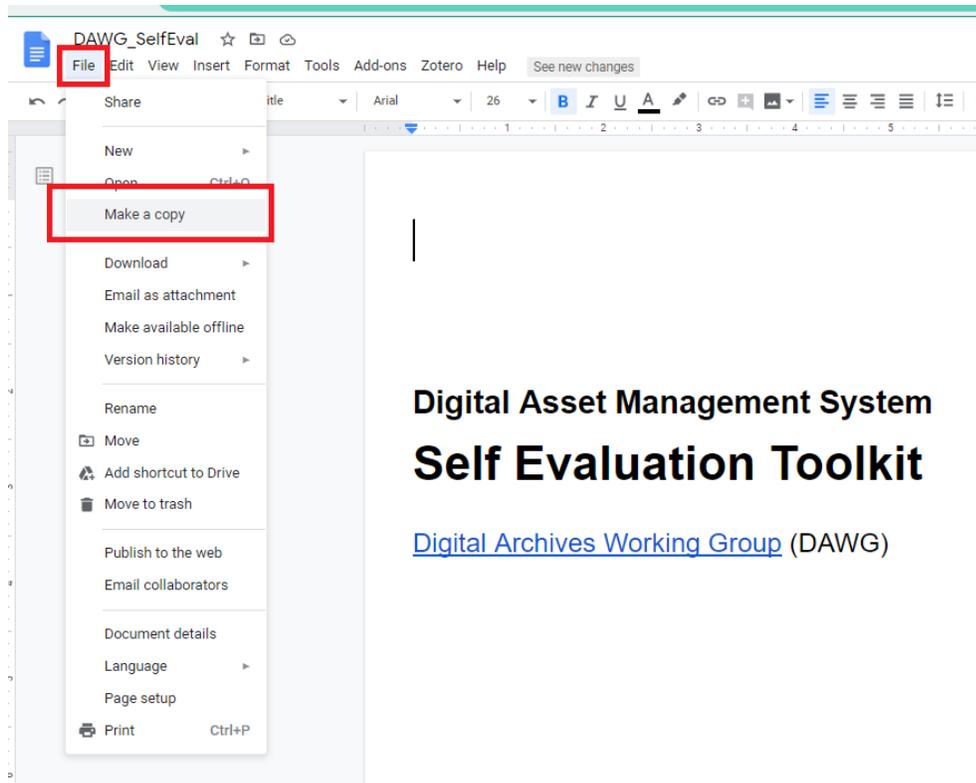


To complete a copy of the self evaluation for your campus, **make a copy of this document before editing**. See the screenshot above for instructions on how to make a copy of a document within Google Docs. Feel free to type directly into the tables or make notes within the document.

On the following page, you will find an example of a completed section of this Eval. Please use this example as a model for how to complete the document. This tool is for self evaluation, but if you are open to sharing your completed version with DAWG, please share or send a copy of the document with elizabeth.blackwood@csuci.edu.

Please take note of (1) how long it takes you to complete the self evaluation, (2) about how many staff members you needed to speak with to answer the questions and (3) any sections or questions that do not seem relevant to you. Once finished, please complete the Data & Feedback section at the end of the toolkit and share a copy of your completed evaluation with the Committee (please send the feedback to elizabeth.blackwood@csuci.edu). DAWG values any feedback you have about the toolkit.

# Example of Completed Table:

Number used to determine score

*Ad Hoc (1): Some casual understanding/practice of digital asset management/digital archives technology and best practice, including repository management, systems workflows, and terminology. Little to no communication with stakeholders with regard to mission, use, and purpose.*
*Operational (2): Specific understanding and experience creating and managing digital collections, formative workflows in place, some communication of purpose.*
*Optimal (3): Deep understanding, expertise, and experience managing digital collections; open and effective lines of communication with stakeholders; clearly communicated mission and understanding*

Questions to help guide decisions between ad hoc, operational, optimal. Answers are not required

| Term | Definition | Guiding Questions |
|---|---|---|
| Technical Ability | The technical and infrastructure capabilities needed to sustain digital archives activities | • Who maintains servers, storage, and digital infrastructure?<br>• Who oversees specific systems and processes?<br>• How comfortable are staff with new or necessary technical processes? |

**Evaluation and Description:** *My campus is operational (2) in terms of technical ability. Although a small shop, the primary stakeholders (librarians, programmers, relevant staff, and some administrators) are comfortable with using new technology and implementing new systems; though there are barriers to implementing systems through the campus' central IT.*

Space to answer questions or elaborate on self evaluation

| Functional Ability | The Level of understanding of digital archives (vs. other digital content) and the specific challenges/best practices that relate to them | • What staff are involved in your digital archives workflows?<br>• What best practices (i.e. copyright, reformatting, preservation, etc.) are currently in place and how are they enforced?<br>• What training will need to occur in or order to sustain or improve best practices? |
|---|---|---|

**Evaluation and Description:** *My campus is operational (2) with functional ability. Staff have a robust technical ability. Though preservation standards are inconsistent and not enforced; staff and stakeholders require training in file curation, standards, and best practices. Understanding of copyright will also be a challenge.*

| Communicative Ability | The level of communication and understanding between technical and functional areas | • What is communication like between the digital archives and institutional/central/library IT?<br>• How well does administration understand these relationships and challenges?<br>• How does the work of the digital archives align with the institution's overall mission? |
|---|---|---|

**Evaluation and Description:** *My campus is operational (2) with communicative ability. Communication between Library and institutional IT is healthy; however, the specific IT needs of the digital collections are not communicated. Administrative understanding of these challenges is inconsistent at various levels. However, work of the digital archives does align with the overall mission.*

**Institutional Strengths** *My campus has competent librarians and staff that can support well-communicated and understood technical goals.*

**Institutional Weaknesses** *Communication across stakeholders and administrators will be challenging; staff need training*

**Score: 6**

Overall score for the section based on choice of ad hoc (1), operational (2), or optimal (3)

# Digital Asset Management System
# Self Evaluation

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# People

Ad Hoc (1): *Some casual understanding/practice of digital asset management/digital archives technology and best practice, including repository management, systems workflows, and terminology. Little to no communication with stakeholders with regard to mission, use, and purpose.*
Operational (2): *Specific understanding and experience creating and managing digital collections, formative workflows in place, some communication of purpose.*
Optimal (3): *Deep understanding, expertise, and experience managing digital collections; open and effective lines of communication with stakeholders; clearly communicated mission and understanding of purpose.*

| Term | Definition | Guiding Questions |
|---|---|---|
| **Technical Ability** | The technical and infrastructure capabilities needed to sustain digital archives activities | <ul><li>Who maintains servers, storage, and digital infrastructure?</li><li>Who oversees specific systems and processes?</li><li>How comfortable are staff with new or necessary technical processes?</li></ul> |
| **Evaluation and Description:** | | |
| **Functional Ability** | The Level of understanding of digital archives (vs. other digital content) and the specific challenges/best practices that relate to them | <ul><li>What staff are involved in your digital archives workflows?</li><li>What best practices (i.e. copyright, reformatting, preservation, etc.) are currently in place and how are they enforced?</li><li>What training will need to occur in or order to sustain or improve best practices?</li></ul> |
| **Evaluation and Description:** | | |
| **Communicative Ability** | The level of communication and understanding between technical and functional areas | <ul><li>What is communication like between the digital archives and institutional/central/library IT?</li><li>How well does administration understand these relationships and challenges?</li><li>How does the work of the digital archives align with the institution's overall mission?</li></ul> |
| **Evaluation and Description:** | | |
| **Institutional Strengths** | | |
| **Institutional Weaknesses** | | |
| **Score:** | | |

# Content

| Ad Hoc (1): *Unorganized, with few or no policies, strategies, or standards in place; inconsistent creation and maintenance of content across the organization; formats and standards drift with staff changes.* |
| --- |
| Operational (2): *Some centralized organization and policy; mostly consistent application of content policies and procedures; awareness of areas that need improvement or updates* |
| Optimal (3): *Content policies, procedures, and standards in place; consistent training and adherence to policies, procedures, and standards; plans or strategies in place to update out-of-date information; awareness and action around changing standards in the broader field of metadata, asset life cycles, etc. in digital archives.* |

| Term | Definition | Guiding Questions |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assets** | Refers to managing authoritative digital assets as information. Key lifecycle stages are: acquisition/creation, ingestion, derivatives, processing and transformation, distribution, and preservation | <ul><li>Does the organization have defined policies or workflows for digitized and/or born digital content?</li><li>What internal standards exist for asset acquisition/creation?</li><li>What sources does the organization use to follow changes or updates to industry standards?</li><li>What documentation exists with regard to assets?</li><li>Are policies/workflows for long-term preservation of assets in place?</li></ul> |
| **Evaluation and Description:** | | |
| **Metadata** | The quality and consistency of information about the digital assets. Also consider if the schemas, models, vocabularies, and standards are well defined and documented. | <ul><li>Does the organization use a file naming policy/procedure?</li><li>What metadata standards or schema does the organization use for digital collections?</li><li>Is metadata consistently applied?</li><li>Are tags used?</li><li>Is metadata updated when changes are made to the policies/procedures?</li></ul> |
| **Evaluation and Description:** | | |
| **Discoverability** | How users navigate library services to search for and retrieve assets. | <ul><li>How is the DAMS accessed (on the library website, through the catalog, etc)?</li><li>What information is available about the DAMS for the end user</li><li>Do other library staff know how to access and provide instruction around the DAMS?</li><li>Does metadata provide for effective searching?</li></ul> |
| **Evaluation and Description:** | | |
| **Use Cases** | User stories or situations that describe the functional capabilities of the DAMS. | <ul><li>Do any use cases exist?</li><li>Who are all of the people who interact with the DAMS internally?</li><li>Who are the end users?</li><li>Does the information provided answer the questions provided in the use cases?</li></ul> |

| |
|---|
| **Evaluation and Description:** |
| **Institutional Strengths related to Information** |
| **Institutional Weaknesses related to Information** |
| **Score:** |

# Systems

| Ad Hoc (1): *Little to no long term system planning; limited use of permissions and user roles; project-specific infrastructure; poor usability; minimal communication with IT; significant system silos resulting in manual processes.* <br> **Operational (2)**: *defined security controls; proactive, but informal relationship with IT; some multi-platform support; minimal complaints about usability* <br> **Optimal (3)**: *Long term system plans in place; system security matches institutional requirements and security controls are clearly defined; open lines of communication with IT that results in formalized coordination.* |||
|---|---|---|
| **Term** | **Definition** | **Guiding Questions** |
| **Security** | The requirements in place (or necessary) for the system to fit within the broader organization. | <ul><li>What authentication is required to perform tasks in the DAMS?</li><li>What levels of permissions does the institution use or need?</li><li>What institutional requirements are in place?</li></ul> |
| **Evaluation and Description:** |||
| **Usability** | Refers to the ease-of-use of various user and configuration interfaces | <ul><li>How intuitive are internal workflows?</li><li>Are there staff or user complaints about usability?</li></ul> |
| **Evaluation and Description:** |||
| **Infrastructure** | The set of interconnected systems that support the structure of digital archives and wider library work. | <ul><li>What systems are integrated into the DAMS and vise versa?</li><li>What level of change can happen without IT intervention?</li><li>How is communication/coordination with IT?</li><li>Are there long term plans for infrastructure change management (hardware upgrades; storage; etc.)?</li></ul> |
| **Evaluation and Description:** |||
| **Preservation** | Systems ability to support the long-term preservation of assets | <ul><li>Does the system include built-in preservation functions?</li><li>Can an external preservation system be integrated with the system?</li><li>Are preservation functions automated or manual?</li><li>What standards/best practices for digital preservation are utilized?</li></ul> |
| **Evaluation and Description:** |||
| **Institutional Strengths related to Systems** |||
| **Institutional Weaknesses related to Systems** |||
| **Score:** |||

# Processes

| | |
|---|---|
| **Ad Hoc (1)**: *Few or no standardized procedures for asset life cycles; minimal integration of systems; governance structures and documents are non-existent or self imposed; minimal documentation; few intentional processes or integrations*<br>**Operational (2)**: *Functional workflows with some documentation; policies and governance in place for key areas or work, some intentional integrations*<br>**Optimal (3)**: *Formalized workflows; continual refinement of workflows; centralized development of governance structures; policies and procedures are easily accessible and widely distributed;* | |

| Term | Definition | Guiding Questions |
|---|---|---|
| **Workflow** | Refers to defined processes and steps in place to perform work accurately and efficiently. | ● What are the defined workflows in your digital archives work?<br>● How often are these workflows adjusted?<br>● Are the workflows documented?<br>● Are new staff trained on workflows? |
| **Evaluation and Description:** | | |
| **Governance** | Ensures that DAM strategies and policies are actually implemented and that required processes are followed. | ● What groups, structures, or policies are in place for governance?<br>● Where do policies or documentation live?<br>● Who can access policies and documentation?<br>● How often are the governance documents refined and updated? |
| **Evaluation and Description:** | | |
| **Integration** | Facilitates efficient data transference within and between systems and processes. | ● What systems are integrated into your workflows?<br>● Are the integrations automated or brute-force?<br>● Are system integrations often disrupted or broken during updates?<br>● Do staff understand the integrations? |
| **Evaluation and Description:** | | |
| **Institutional Strengths related to Processes** | | |
| **Institutional Weaknesses related to Processes** | | |
| **Score:** | | |

# Data & Feedback

| How long did the self evaluation take you to complete? |
|---|
| |
| **How many additional workers did you need to contact in order to complete the self evaluation?** |
| |
| **Were there any sections or questions that did not seem relevant to you?** |
| |