**Introduction**

Digital preservation has been discussed as an important consideration for archival work since 2000. Shortly after, literature also began predicting the development of digital preservation as a purchasable service. Despite early awareness, long-term digital preservation is still not an inherent component of recordkeeping and archival practice. As a result, obsolescence, hardware failure, insecure storage, and human error continue to threaten the integrity and longevity of digital records. And although many cloud-based archival activities have been embraced, preservation services have been slow to develop and even slower to be trusted.

**Research Question**

**What factors encourage or inhibit public sector agencies’ trust in digital preservation services?**

To address this, I conducted a literature review, studied unpublished results of a related survey directed by another research team, and organized focus groups with government records stakeholders.

**Survey Review**

In the summer of 2016, researchers at Victoria University of Wellington (New Zealand) and Queensland State Archives (Australia) conducted an international survey on archival perceptions of digital preservation.  

I was given access to their unpublished findings; the results supported many themes identified in the literature review.

**Findings**

- Lack of funding, lack of time for planning, and lack of resources were identified barriers. However, 91% of respondents have information stored on hardware that is, or will soon be, obsolete.
- Asked to rank four issues related to digital preservation, in order of what concerns their institutions the most, accessibility was top priority, followed by authenticity.

**Focus Groups**

An important message emerged in both the literature review and survey: regardless of the motives and means of archival institutions, communication between records stakeholders is key to pursuing digital preservation.

Upcoming focus groups will further explore this critical factor by asking archivists, records managers, IT personnel, and management to come together to consider their own institutional environment and identify factors that will play a significant role in decisions to purchase digital preservation services.

The focus groups will take place with records stakeholders in agencies under the direction of the Queensland State Archives (QSA). In addition to overseeing state recordkeeping and identifying items for permanent retention in the archives, QSA also advises public agencies on their own recordkeeping practices.

QSA is at the center of this research because they are currently, formally seeking digital preservation services. They are also looking into incentives and feasibility to encourage local-level digital preservation. This is a rich, informed environment for further research.

Focus groups will consist of three parts:

1. Discussing digital records and the key players in stakeholders’ environments
2. Considering a model proposed by QSA for local implementation
3. Assessing how motivators and disincentives identified in literature and survey results manifest in agencies engaged in investigating digital preservation services

Findings will be disseminated to encourage more effective communication when advocating for digital preservation and services.