
Manifest of Digital Preservation

Xargon Wan

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CONTENTS

1	1. Media Definition	3
2	2. Inclusive Media Upload and Source Preservation	5
3	3. Digital Version Requirement	7
4	4. Media Availability	9
5	5. DRM-Free Policy	11
6	6. Versioning and Standardized Metadata	13
7	7. Open Publication After 10 Years	15
8	8. Irrevocability of Published Media	17
9	9. Pricing Considerations	19
10	10. File Formats and Compatibility	21
11	11. Distributed Preservation Network	23
12	12. AI Model Openness	25
13	13. FOSS Repository Preservation	27
14	14. Right of Ownership	29

The “Manifest of Digital Preservation” sets forth a comprehensive plan to safeguard digital content for the future. It covers a range of crucial aspects, including the protection of various types of media, ensuring easy access for all, removing digital rights management (DRM) restrictions, distributing preservation efforts, ensuring compatibility with evolving technologies, promoting open access to information, advocating for transparent use of artificial intelligence (AI), and preserving Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) repositories. By embracing these principles, the manifest aims to make certain that valuable digital resources remain available, usable, and accessible to everyone, emphasizing the significance of digital preservation in an ever-evolving technological landscape.

1. MEDIA DEFINITION

The term “media” encompasses art, images, documents, books, videos, audio, software, hardware, and physical project sources where applicable, created in the past, present, or future.

2. INCLUSIVE MEDIA UPLOAD AND SOURCE PRESERVATION

All past media within the defined scope must be uploaded. If no owner or rights are clear, anyone can upload. While preserving source materials is encouraged, lost sources may allow only the final product. Still, efforts to research and recover the sources should be ongoing for a comprehensive representation.

3. DIGITAL VERSION REQUIREMENT

Every media must have a corresponding digital version. This digital version should be submitted to public online libraries upon publication, although its immediate public accessibility may depend on the owner.

4. MEDIA AVAILABILITY

Every media must remain available in the public online library when the owner (company, organization, or individual) decides to remove it from the market, undergoes bankruptcy, company closure, expired license agreements, or any other reason that prevents further sale or distribution.

5. DRM-FREE POLICY

All media must be free of Digital Rights Management (DRM) mechanisms, which restrict users' rights to access and utilize the media. In cases where a media item is initially released with DRM, the owner must also provide and upload a DRM-free version of the same media. This DRM-free version should be made available alongside any DRM-protected versions, ensuring that users have access to unrestricted copies that align with the principles of open access and preservation.

6. VERSIONING AND STANDARDIZED METADATA

Each media item should have version control to track changes, and standardized metadata should be implemented. The metadata should include details such as title, author/creator, publication date, description, version, and relevant keywords/tags.

7. OPEN PUBLICATION AFTER 10 YEARS

Once a media item reaches 10 years of age, it must be openly published in the library. However, media owners may choose to encrypt the contents with a 10-year key that will automatically unlock upon expiration before the 10-year mark.

8. IRREVOCABILITY OF PUBLISHED MEDIA

Once a media item is published in the library, it cannot be removed and must remain freely accessible to everyone as free and open-source media.

9. PRICING CONSIDERATIONS

Media that are sold and younger than 10 years must be sold at an acceptable price. A pricing table should be established, considering factors such as the type of media, selling location, currency, age of the media, and any additional digital contents (add-ons). Exceptions may apply to luxury goods.

10. FILE FORMATS AND COMPATIBILITY

All media should be available in open formats to ensure long-term accessibility and compatibility. Open, widely accepted, and non-proprietary file formats should be prioritized to reduce the risk of obsolescence.

11. DISTRIBUTED PRESERVATION NETWORK

The online library should consist of a detachable front end, where users can freely contribute and customize their own interfaces using APIs. The backend, instead of relying on a central preservation organization, should be distributed and federated in a peer-to-peer (P2P) network. This decentralized approach allows for multiple state entities to maintain their own digital state archives and contribute resources. Individuals and groups can also join the network, ensuring the preservation of materials even in the event of changes in organizations' priorities. The management of encryption keys can be implemented on a blockchain with time-locked secrets in smart contracts, ensuring decentralization and immutability.

12. AI MODEL OPENNESS

The library must serve as a data source for artificial intelligence (AI) systems, enabling them to use preserved media for learning and analysis when they become public. To promote fairness and prevent concentration of power, AI models developed using these resources should follow open principles. This entails creating AI models that are open-source and compatible with licenses like GPL3 or similar. While these models can be sold, they should also remain open and accessible, ensuring a level playing field and broader benefits across the AI community.

13. FOSS REPOSITORY PRESERVATION

Every Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) repository must be cloned and preserved within the digital preservation system. This includes all code, documentation, version history, and associated assets. The preserved repositories should remain accessible and functional, enabling future developers to study, modify, and build upon the software even if the original hosting platform becomes unavailable or discontinued. This initiative promotes the long-term sustainability of FOSS projects and ensures that their contributions to the digital landscape are preserved for future generations.

14. RIGHT OF OWNERSHIP

Unless specifically rented (and consequently sold at a reduced price), each piece of media must be fully owned by the purchaser. The user has the right to retain, backup, edit, modify, gift, transfer, or sell the owned media. However, a media's license may prohibit copying and redistributing a previously purchased media for free to someone who does not own it, while maintaining media accessibility to the original sharer (essentially, you cannot pirate it, but you can sell it or remove it from your possession and give it to another, as if it were a physical good).