

**INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS AND  
INSTITUTIONS**

**AND**

**INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION**  
**Representing book and journal publishers through national, regional and specialised  
publishers associations**

**PRESERVING THE MEMORY OF THE WORLD IN PERPETUITY:**

**A JOINT STATEMENT ON THE ARCHIVING AND PRESERVING OF DIGITAL  
INFORMATION**

**BACKGROUND**

Preserving digital information is becoming an increasingly urgent challenge for both libraries and publishers of books and journals, as the amount of digital information is growing quickly and preservation policies and techniques for this format of material remain unsettled. While many electronic publications are produced in both print and digital formats, although not always at the same time or in identical versions, more and more material is produced as "born digital", that is, it has no print equivalent. It is estimated that much of this type of material has already been lost, as some producers have deleted their electronic publications without recognising the importance of planning for a long-term archiving process. The need is pressing. While the costs of long-term archiving are high, the cost of doing nothing would be disastrous.

Libraries have traditionally taken care of the publications they have acquired, and have saved the physical artifact to safeguard the information contained in it. With digital information the safeguarding of the content becomes more of a shared responsibility between the producer and the collector of the information. While both publishers and libraries are committed to maintaining digital files, efforts to date are inconsistent, fragmented and underfunded.

**PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Both IFLA and IPA wish to work together to obtain some practical and long-term results in the area of digital preservation. They therefore advocate the following principles and recommendations:

1. An increasing amount of information published only in electronic form has enduring cultural and documentary significance and is just as important as information published in more traditional forms.
2. The long-term availability of this information is required and action must be taken now to make this possible.

3. Both organizations will work to make long-term archiving and preservation a key agenda item internationally.
4. Both organizations will encourage the development and implementation of industry standards, systems, and research for digital archiving and preservation, including identifying funding opportunities to support such work.
5. While publishers generally can ensure the short-term archiving of their publications so long as these publications are economically viable, libraries are best-placed to take responsibility for long-term archiving through appropriate arrangements with publishers.
6. Since national libraries have the mandate to acquire and preserve the published heritage in their respective countries, and most are experimenting with the acquisition of digital publications, these libraries, with other leading libraries and organizations, should take the lead responsibility for long-term archiving of digital publications;
7. A publisher/library working group will further develop joint initiatives regarding the technical, economic and policy issues of digital preservation including, where appropriate, the establishment of co-operative initiatives with other organisations which are investigating these issues.

Adopted by the IFLA/IPA Steering Group, meeting in Paris, 27th June 2002