The Effectiveness and Durability of Digital Preservation and Curation Systems

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Examine business models of eight commercial and not-for-profit initiatives to assess the challenges and risk factors faced serving their mission and needs of the market.
Five Selected Findings

Our findings should be approached as an *empirical snapshot* of the insights and perceptions gained through the case studies rather than broad characterizations of the DPCS marketplace.
1. In the Eye of the Beholder: What is a Digital Preservation System?

Digital preservation is a **situated and interpretive process** with goals and processes highly variable across different institutional settings.

It is inevitable to avoid “comparing apples and oranges” as heritage organizations use **various types of systems** toward meeting their digital preservation goals base on their **goals and resources**.
The term “preservation” has become devalued nearly to the point of having lost its meaning.

Providers are marketing their offerings as “preservation systems” regardless of actual functionality or storage configurations, many only addressing some aspects of the preservation work.
Organizations are moving towards cloud systems to enable **cohesive storage governance and fiscal management**.

Centralization of institutional storage policies can be a **constraining factor** in selection and implementing preservation systems.

Need for **nuanced comparison** of locally hosted and cloud storage configurations from technical, business, and ethical perspectives.
4. Local Workflows, Integration, and Interoperability

It is complicated to integrate disparate tools and systems required for lifecycle management of digital content.

No preservation system is truly turnkey and cannot be fully outsourced.

Preservation process requires different systems and technologies and adequate staffing with expertise.
Bitstream preservation is a fundamental requirement to monitor, back-up, ensure integrity but is *not sufficient to ensure long-term access and usability*.

It is a given that content types and storage configurations will continue to *evolve* therefore a key sustainability element is a *system’s ability to be agile, progressive, and responsive*.

Many heritage institutions *grapple with setting actionable policies and allocating adequate resources* to ensure continued access to digital content, especially as content types *proliferate*. 
Research Outputs Available at:
https://sr.ithaka.org/digital-preservation

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Thank you

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