

Appraisal Policy and Strategy

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Definitions: Policy & Strategy

Policy:

- A course or principle of action adopted or proposed by an organization or individual (Oxford English Dictionary)
- A guiding principle used to set direction in an organization, (or for a government) (Bizmanualz).
- A policy will contain the 'what' and the 'why' (Wikipedia)
- Policies are developed within
 - A legal framework
 - An organizational mission
 - An ideological framework



The regulatory environment in which policies are developed includes:

- Statute and case laws, and regulations governing the sector-specific and general business environment, including laws and regulations relating specifically to records, archives, access, privacy, evidence, electronic commerce, data protection and information,
- Mandatory standards of practice,
- Voluntary codes of best practice,
- Voluntary codes of conduct and ethics, and
- Community expectations about acceptable behaviour for the specific sector or organization. (ISO15489.1 s.5)



Mandates for policies

Public archives derive the mandate (authority) for their policies from:

- National or state archives law, local government law, Freedom of Information law, Privacy & Data Protection laws, Evidence Law, Financial reporting law, etc

Business archives derive the mandate for their policies from:

- Company law, financial reporting law, Laws governing the particular business, environmental law, etc
- They can use public archives' policies, strategies and standards as models for their own practice.

Both can draw on standards, codes of ethics & business cases for benefits to the organization, community expectations



Collecting archives

Collecting archives can draw their mandate from:

- Mission statements, aims and objectives (their own, or that of their parent organization);
- Standards, codes of ethics, etc.



Good policy

”There *are* constants in good policy making - an intellectual rigour about issues, a commitment to procedural integrity and a willingness to experiment and learn through implementation and adaptation”

(Althaus, Bridgman & Davis, 2007, p.2)

Established practice (‘We have always done it this way’) should NOT be mistaken for policy!



POLICY IS:

- Intentional, designed to achieve a stated or understood purpose;
 - Involves decisions and their consequences;
 - Structured and orderly;
 - Political in nature;
 - Dynamic.
-
- It is a statement by the government [or an organization] about its intentions. (Althaus, Bridgman & Davis, 2007)



Definitions: Strategy

Strategy:

- A plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim (Oxford English Dictionary)
- A methodology used consistently to achieve a long-term or overall mission or aim
- A plan for implementing policy



Definitions: Procedures

Procedures:

- A series of actions conducted in a certain order or manner (Oxford English Dictionary)
- A series of steps to be followed as a consistent and repetitive approach to accomplish an end result (Bizmanualz).
- Procedures contain the 'what', the 'how', the 'where', and the 'when' (Wikipedia).
- Procedures should not be confused with strategy



Structural relationship

Policy

Strategy

Procedure



A Policy will include:

- The source of mandate and authority to implement the policy
- Aims and objectives of the policy
- Statements about
 - Who is responsible for implementing the policy;
 - How the policy will be implemented (strategies);
 - How the policy will be communicated;
 - Codes, standards and benchmarks by which the policy implementation can be evaluated;
 - When and how the policy will be reviewed.



An Example: NAA Appraisal objectives

1. To preserve concise evidence of the deliberations, decisions and actions of the Commonwealth and Commonwealth institutions relating to key functions and programs and significant issues faced in governing Australia.
2. To preserve evidence of the source of authority, foundation and machinery of the Commonwealth and Commonwealth institutions.
3. To preserve records containing information that is considered essential for the protection and future well-being of Australians and their environment.



NAA Appraisal objectives

4. To preserve records that have a special capacity to illustrate the condition and status of Australia and its people, the impact of Commonwealth government activities on them, and the interaction of people with the government.
5. To preserve records that have substantial capacity to enrich knowledge and understanding of aspects of Australia's history, society, culture and people.
(NAA. *Why records are kept.*)



Is it enough to have a policy?

Policy:

- Must be implemented (Need a strategy for this)
- Must be communicated (Need a strategy for this)
- Everyone must know their responsibilities and accountabilities (Need a strategy for this)
- Responsibility for the policy must be assigned (someone must be primarily accountable for the implementation of a policy)



Legislation and policy fail if there is a lack of strategy

- Swedish legislation requires that all public documents are accessible for all citizens, from the time of creation.
- 40% of all 290 Swedish municipalities could not produce Council minutes from 1999 (Lundell & Lings, 2011)
 - Kept in ‘legacy’ (outdated) electronic systems that are no longer functional
 - No preservation or migration strategy for digital archives in these municipalities



Speculating on what went wrong

- A lack of communication of requirements to those responsible for implementation
 - Possibly a lack of explicit policy within the municipalities concerned;
 - IT managers and others do not know or understand the law and their consequent professional obligations;
 - Archivists have failed to work with strategic allies;
 - Archivists have failed to gain strategic attention to the need to plan for preservation.



E-Government in Sweden

- Sweden formed the e-Government Delegation to establish national strategies for public e-services
<http://en.edelegationen.se>

Mission:

- Facilitate citizens' communications with public agencies, make every day work less complicated and implicitly set free time for the citizens to spend on other activities;
- Make life easier for enterprises, large and small;
- Increase efficiency and thus save money





The eGovernment Delegation

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[eGovernment projects](#)

[IT standardisation](#)

[International efforts](#)

[Reports](#)

Terms of reference

To strengthen the development of eGovernment and create good opportunities for inter-agency coordination, a delegation for eGovernment is being established. [ToR 2009:19](#)

The eGovernment Delegation has received an additional mandate on public information and social media.

[ToR 2010:32](#)

News

News from the Secretariat

Peter Krantz and Dano Costouvsqi are back to the Secretariat of the Delegation. Peter has been on parental leave and Dano has been

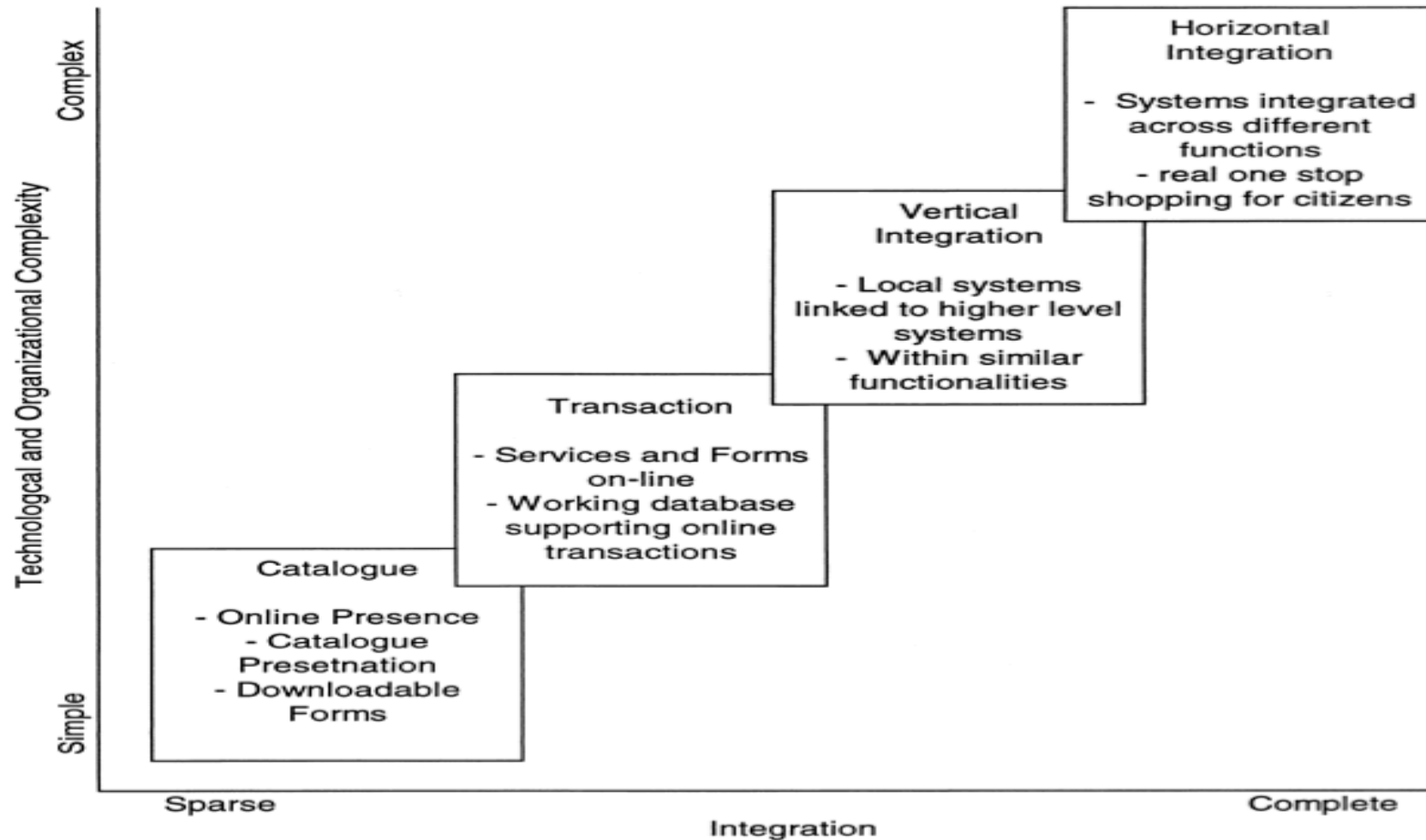


2010-12-22

[E-identification Board and Swedish e-identification](#)

The recently established E-identification Board will in the beginning of January

E-Government maturity model: Where's the gap?



Layne & Lee (2001)

Where's the gap in the maturity model?

In this model

- There is no digital information management strategy:
 - NO policy or strategy for appraisal of e-government service websites
 - NO strategy for appraisal of records created in these services
 - NO strategy for preservation and long-term access to archives of e-government services



Förstudie om e-arkiv och e-diarium

Rapport



Appraisal strategies 1

'Top down'

- Functional Appraisal
- Documentation Strategies (Booms, Samuels)
- Macroappraisal (Cook)
- Minnesota Method

'Bottom up'

- Focuses on the records creators' view of what should be kept – Jenkinson and Schellenberg

'Top down' and 'Bottom up' strategies can be combined



Macroappraisal's main characteristics are:

- It is both theory and strategy;
- It involves a top-down approach;
- It is research-based;
- It demands an analysis of functions (structures) before records;
- Archival value is primarily found in the evidence of functions;
- Representations of contemporary society form the documentary heritage;
- Future researcher use is unimportant; and
- “Hot spots” are found in the interaction between citizen and state. (Loewen, 2005: 94)



Macroappraisal

- Canada
- Netherlands PIVOT project
- Australian NAA attempt (Cunningham & Oswald)
- South Africa?



Functional appraisal

- Linked to functional description
 - Australia
 - Sweden (to be implemented by 2013)



Minnesota Method

- A strategic 'top-down' approach to appraisal of private archives is the Minnesota Method
- Developed by the Minnesota Historical Society



Minnesota Method

The Minnesota Method collecting strategy includes:

- defining a collecting area;
- analyzing existing collections;
- determining the documentary universe, including relevant government records, printed and other sources;
- prioritizing industrial sectors, individual businesses, geographic regions, and time periods from which records will be sought;
- defining functions performed by businesses; and
- the collecting levels needed to document major functions.
(Jimerson, 1998) reviewing Greene & Daniels-Howell, 1997)



Provenance

- This principle holds that the significance of archival materials is heavily dependent on the context of their creation, and that the arrangement and description of these materials should be directly related to their original purpose and function. (Henson, 1993: 67)



Appraisal problems arising from dependence on provenance

- Duranti (1998: 177) criticises a straightforward dependence on this view of provenance:
- The principle of provenance, as applied to appraisal, leads us to evaluate records on the basis of the importance of the creator's mandate and functions, and fosters the use of a hierarchical method, a 'top-down' approach, which has proved to be unsatisfactory because it excludes the 'powerless transactions,' which might throw light on the broader social context, from the permanent record of society.



Approaches to broadening strategies for description; access; appraisal

- Cross-cultural provenance
- The 'Mandela Model' builds on the idea that provenance can be more than what Mandela himself created. It looks to the complex web of interrelated systems in which records *about* Mandela were created. Interrelated parts of this system include the dominant culture at particular moments itself, judicial systems, and systems of social resistance, and Truth and Reconciliation (Sassoon, 2007)
- Parallel provenance (Chris Hurley)



Documenting and collecting strategies

- Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants
<http://www.nla.gov.au/oh/fafcm/>
 - Oral History project at the National Library of Australia
 - Recommended by 2 Senate Community Affairs References Committee reports: *Lost Innocents: Righting the Record - Report on Child Migration* (August 2001) and *Forgotten Australians - A report on Australians who experienced institutional or out-of-home care as children* (August 2004).



Forgotten Australians & Child Migrants

- The importance of records for people to find out:
 - Who they are,
 - Why they were placed in care, and
 - The names of family members.
- Records that are important in their search, for example child endowment payment records, are seen as financial records and have been subject to blanket destruction orders over the years.
- Records could potentially be destroyed when there may be people who wish to use them for litigation purposes.



Appraisal strategies 2

Disposal freezes aim to prevent destruction of records of special interest.

Current examples from NAA:

- Records affecting the rights and entitlements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- Eligibility to join a Commonwealth superannuation scheme;
- The Vietnam War;
- Atomic testing conducted in Australian territories, including test sites and personnel associated with the testing.

'Top down' because the decision comes from an archival authority; 'Bottom up' –it focuses on specific records.



Records disposal freeze

- A **records disposal freeze** has been enacted in South Australia in the context of legal cases which may be brought about by a state based inquiry into children in care, known as the Mullighan Inquiry.
- Purpose driven (related to the Inquiry);
- Time specific; and
- Is therefore seen as more specific and more manageable.

http://www.archives.sa.gov.au/files/management_GDS27.pdf



The NAA Indigenous records freeze

- Has a moral rather than legal underpinning;
- Is non-specific (very broad and recently extended to include records relating to stolen wages);
- Is not popular with agencies and records practitioners.
- Note that *all* of the records freezes concern the rights and well-being of citizens



Reappraisal and De-accessioning

- Controversial
 - Can be driven by economic factors (cost of storage)
 - Should not be undertaken lightly
- Reasons must be:
 - Policy-based
 - Well-documented
 - Appropriately communicated

How can we justify reversal of earlier archivists' decisions about records that reflected their view of what constituted social memory in their time?



Policy and accountability

- Organizations and governments are accountable for policies and their outcomes, but:

‘few archival institutions have a history of thoroughly documenting how selection decisions are made, much less recording the rejection of materials or explaining their weeding policies’. (Sassoon, 2004: 41).

- Documenting these decisions in both the government and private contexts (when it is done) provides an essential layer of information about custodial context; and
- Enables insights into the social, institutional management and economic drivers that influenced the decisions.



Documentation and professional accountability

- How do archivists document and account for their decisions about what is kept and not kept, what is collected or rejected?
- Are these strategies adequate?
- To whom should archivists be accountable?
- Chris Hurley (2005, p.230) notes:
- There is no 'forum' in which archivists are accountable for appraisal;
- There are no criteria ... by which their actions can be judged.



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Thank you



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