COPPUL's Ongoing Role in Digital Collections: Discussion Paper
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Background:

In discussing the role that COPPUL members can play in the digital realm, we have kept the new **COPPUL Strategic Plan** firmly in mind. We have also reviewed the **Digital Preservation and COPPUL Libraries** discussion document that Steve Schafer and Carol Hixson prepared in October 2007. While we continue to believe that digital preservation is a critical element in digital collection management (an area now increasingly being referred to as digital curation), we believe strongly that digital preservation processes are different and have broader application than just to converted materials.

The Canadian research community is moving forward on many fronts in the area of developing sustainable digital collections. While earlier efforts focused on the creation of digital content, more attention is being paid now to making sure that our digital content, whether created by us, licensed by us, or archived by us, is sustainable. Some of the key players across Canada are Library and Archives Canada, CARL, and other regional library and archival communities.

What unique role can and should COPPUL play in this area?

We propose several directions where we believe COPPUL can make an important contribution:

1) Education of COPPUL members about the challenges and responsibilities of digital curation. With the LOCKSS project and the array of digitization activities across COPPUL libraries, it seems that COPPUL does have a fair bit of experience and this warrants exposure. We could develop our own continuing education programs or sponsor the delivery of existing programs to COPPUL members.
2) Better definition of the LOCKSS project
3) Support for other broader initiatives coming out of LAC, CARL, etc.
4) Examination of the role of the COPPUL Digitization Group: Should it exist? What should it be called? What should it try to do? If a Committee were established, one of its charges would be to decide if/what unique role COPPUL might play. The work of the COPPUL Digitization Group focused on processes for converting analog documents to digital documents and the formation of digital collections by this means.