Preparing sites for archiving

Knowing when to archive

Before revamping or taking offline (a part of) your website, you may want to archive it a last time by removing all content and files that have no future (historical, legal, political, research, cultural, ….) value.

Checklist

Ask yourself the following questions to help you decide if the material is worth keeping.

Significance
Is the content in the long term valuable, taking into account my mandate and audience?

- does the long-term value of the content justify its preservation? Has it significant political, legal, information, use, research, social, cultural, historical, or artistic value for the community I serve? How closely do these values support and align with my institutional mission and mandate?
- how easily will the content become outdated?
- how will the institution's stakeholders and/or the public be affected if this digital heritage is not preserved?
- for whom should this material be kept? How, how often and by whom was the content accessed and used while still online? Does my audience have specific expectations about what they will be able to do with the material when it is re-presented?
- is the content essential to understand the web page? Has it added value? E.g. an (advertising) banner is usually not essential.

Sustainability

- can I, taking into account technical and legal constraints, preserve the content for long term access and use?
- do I have content that is protected by intellectual property rights (e.g. copyright); that is confidential or private; that is affected by data protection rules ...?
- are specific rights required to transfer or migrate the material to different file formats and physical carriers?

Availability

- is the content unique?
- am I the only one providing this content?
- if not, am I the one best placed (e.g. taking into account my mandate and audience) to provide long-term access to the content?
- remove unnecessary images, audio-visual media and scripts
- remove all content for which you don't hold the long-term copyright and/or which contains personal data
- check and correct broken links
- remove orphan pages and files