



Digitisation Toolkit

Introduction to digitisation

What is digitisation?

To digitise is to convert an object, data or an image into electronic format. The term *digitisation* is often used when diverse forms of information such as objects, text, sound, images, audio or audio-visual are converted into an electronic digital code that can be read by computers or other electronic devices.

Turning from analogue (original representation) to digital ensures that the format can be viewed by using computer software and then made available throughout the world via the internet. We digitise at State Library primarily to provide access to others about Queensland memory and to protect and preserve heritage materials. The end product is referred to as *turned digital*.

Born digital is material that originates in digital form and requires a digital device to be used. Both *turned* and *born digital* should be captured using best practices to ensure future access to the files. We encourage all Queensland communities to consider digitisation of collections as a way to represent and share Queensland memory.

Why digitise Queensland's memory collections?

Queensland memory is owned by all Queenslanders and is made up of cultural heritage materials found throughout the State in many different communities and organisations. Each community can build Queensland memory by creating, sharing and preserving collection contents through digitisation of analogue materials

Digitised materials also enable access in many online places, websites and archives and provides access to a digital copy whilst so that fragile materials can be preserved.

Getting started

Before undertaking the process of digitising your collections, take some time to ask your organisation the following questions:

- What is your key message and how does it align with your community's strategic plans?
- Why do you want to digitise? Does digitising support your strategic plan?
- What do you want to digitise?
- What do you have that is significant Queensland Heritage content?

- Where does your collection sit in your community?
- What do you need to start?

Considering these questions and providing answers to them will ensure that your organisation is getting the most value out of your digitisation work.

Handy digitisation planning tips:

After asking these questions, you may find yourself overwhelmed with where to start, so we've compiled a number of handy tips to help get you started and keep you on the right track:

- Create a digitisation plan and process that is based on your unique heritage collection
- Ensure that your plan is based on your key messages and strategic plan
- Be realistic about what you can digitise and make accessible each year
- Ask yourself, do you have the right equipment and knowledge about digitisation standards?
- Stay away from project-based digitisation, instead opt for a holistic plan about where you want to go in the future and what your key messages are
- Ask yourself how you will make your digitised content available
- Ensure that you utilise digital preservation standards so files are available long-term
- Include everyone in your organisation in your digitisation planning
- Evaluate your plan and processes each year and adjust as needed
- Envision what digitisation success looks like for your organisation and work accordingly

Next steps:

With these digitisation planning tips at your disposal, you can now look at taking the next steps in your digitisation process. Here are a few that we would recommend:

- Outline your organisation's digitisation plan for the next year. Be sure to add any major events and occurrences that you need to be prepared for, as well as other factors that add value to your organisation
- What do you need to do before digitisation? Purchase equipment, update skills?
- Look for community grants for digitisation funding
- Do you have a budget? And do you have funds ready?

Useful website:

- SLQ Capture Standards www.slq.qld.gov.au/about-us

Need further information?

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