

Characteristics, Problems, and Countermeasures of Digital Management of Book Publishing Archives in the Context of New Media: Postprint

Authors: Xin Xinxin

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Abstract

Book publishing archive management constitutes an important foundational undertaking for publishing houses and forms a component of their overall development planning. Therefore, we must accord due importance to book publishing archive management, advance with the times, keep abreast of scientific and technological progress, leverage digital technology to optimize traditional archive management models, thereby enhancing the level and quality of book publishing archive management, and fulfilling the evidentiary reference, original record, information integration, and cultural accumulation functions of book publishing archives. This paper will examine the characteristics, problems, and countermeasures of digital management of book publishing archives within the new media context, aiming to elevate the level of digital archive management across the book publishing industry.

Full Text

Preamble

In the new media environment, digital technology has garnered significant attention across all sectors of society, and the book publishing industry is no exception. Book publishing is a complex systematic endeavor that generates historically valuable records in various forms—including text, graphics, audio, and video—either directly or indirectly throughout the process. These archives, such as manuscript files, editorial records, printing documentation, distribution records, and various administrative documents, serve critical functions as evidentiary references, original records, information integration tools, and cultural repositories. Consequently, archive management constitutes a fundamental aspect of a publishing house's operations and represents an integral component of its overall development strategy. Therefore, it is imperative to prioritize book

publishing archive management by keeping pace with scientific and technological advances, leveraging digital technology to optimize traditional archival management models, thereby enhancing both the efficiency and quality of archive management while fully realizing the functional potential of publishing archives.

In light of this, this paper examines the characteristics, challenges, and countermeasures of digital archive management for book publishing within the new media context, aiming to elevate the standard of digital archive management across the publishing industry.

1.1 Convenience

Digital technology has transformed traditional paper-based archival collection and preservation by enabling systematic storage of book publishing archives on computers or dedicated archival systems, thereby reducing filing workloads and accelerating retrieval speeds. Traditional archive management required consideration of numerous factors, including staff expertise, storage space availability, temperature and humidity control, and classification schemes, often resulting in confusion when archival materials exhibited overlapping attributes. Digital technology resolves these challenges by storing archives according to the principle of “one book, one file” with internal subcategories, enabling real-time filing, supplementation, and updates while preserving comprehensive graphic and textual information. Digital archives facilitate the creation of electronic catalogs and indexes, and by installing specialized book publishing archive management systems with network services, archivists can perform data entry, supplementation, and queries anytime and anywhere. This allows for immediate acquisition of archival materials and timely upload to the archival system. Authorized users can remotely access required information, effectively overcoming geographical and temporal constraints, reducing management and storage costs, and significantly improving operational efficiency.

1.5 Security

Ensuring the security of collected book publishing archives represents a primary responsibility for archive management departments. Two major concerns must be addressed: first, preventing physical deterioration from improper handling or storage conditions, and second, safeguarding against unauthorized access or theft. Digital storage effectively resolves both issues by eliminating physical wear from handling and protecting against environmental degradation such as oxidation. Electronic archives can be preserved indefinitely. Furthermore, digital technology enables classification of archives by importance level, with encryption protection for sensitive or confidential materials. Access privileges can be assigned to different user categories, establishing robust safeguards for archival security.

2.1 Low Level of Digitalization

Although the publishing industry has begun adopting digital technology for archive preservation, utilization remains limited. Most publishers currently employ hybrid approaches combining traditional and digital methods, while some continue relying entirely on conventional management practices. This not only impedes overall organizational development but also creates inefficiencies in archive management and retrieval, failing to capitalize on the full advantages of digital technology.

2.2 Incomplete Archive Management Mechanisms

Some publishing houses, despite recognizing the importance of digital technology, have invested insufficient resources and failed to establish comprehensive regulations for digital archive management, instead persisting with outdated systems. This misalignment with digitalization requirements results in ambiguous departmental responsibilities, weak motivation for staff to collect, organize, and digitize materials, and leaves archives in a fragmented, inadequately digitized, and non-standardized state, thereby hindering the digital transformation of book publishing archive management.

2.3 Lack of Professional Expertise Among Management Personnel

Book publishing archives encompass diverse materials requiring archivists to assess and categorize various document types and multimedia resources, demanding high professional competence. Currently, most archive managers in publishing houses serve in part-time capacities without dedicated archival training, lacking both professional expertise and proficiency in digital and multimedia technologies. This deficiency significantly constrains the realization of digital archive management.

2.4 Low Archive Utilization Rate

In practice, the majority of archival materials in publishing houses remain static, with delayed filing and incomplete management and borrowing mechanisms, preventing the full realization of archival value. Contributing factors include conservative management approaches, inadequate systems, absence of dedicated personnel, insufficient digitization, heavy manual workload, incomplete collection, and significant loss of detailed materials. These issues result in poorly structured systems, inconvenient retrieval processes, low utilization rates, and underutilization of archival functions.

3.1 Establishing Databases

Publishing houses can store vast quantities of materials in storage devices to create large-scale databases. Such databases provide the infrastructure for upgrading archive management systems and enable adoption of best practices

from library science for managing extensive collections. Database implementation optimizes and simplifies retrieval directories and indexes, allowing editors and related personnel to quickly and accurately locate required materials, thereby enhancing work efficiency. Given the wide variety of archival materials in publishing houses, specialized databases should be established for different categories, such as topic selection databases, contract databases, design specification databases, proofreading manuscript databases, and distribution record databases. These specialized databases not only facilitate archive management but also contribute to the overall development of the publishing house.

3.2 Enhancing Organizational Awareness of Digital Archive Management

In the new media environment, applying digital technology to book publishing archive management enhances security, integrity, and archival value. Therefore, all personnel—both archive managers and those who generate archival materials—must improve their understanding of digital technology and recognize the convenience it brings to preservation, retrieval, and updating. Publishing houses should invite digital technology professionals to conduct specialized training for all staff, helping them appreciate the advantages of digital archive management and its benefits for publishing operations. This will foster universal proficiency in digitization methods, ensure full cooperation with archive managers, and advance the organization-wide digitalization process.

3.3 Improving Archive Management Mechanisms

To achieve digital archive management in the new media environment, publishing departments must refine their management mechanisms and establish scientifically standardized digital archive systems. In accordance with the “Regulations on Manuscript Archive Management for Publishing Houses” issued by the National Press and Publication Administration, archiving projects and categories should be clearly defined. Implementing principles of unified leadership and hierarchical management will continuously improve archive management workflows and establish standardized digital filing formats. Specifically, editorial departments should collect, organize, and digitize archives for books under their responsibility; the chief editor’s office should manage editorial affairs archives; the printing department should handle printing archives; the distribution department should manage distribution archives; and administrative departments should process general affairs archives. All digitized materials from these departments should be submitted to the central archive room for unified filing to ensure completeness, authenticity, systematic organization, and standardization of archival materials.

Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.

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