

Info-byte:
Appraisal of Digital Records

The main considerations

- Content — what is the record system's informational and historical value? Consider also the additional value of manipulability and linking capacities in electronic systems
- Context — what business functions created the records, what is the evidential value?
- Structure — what does it tell about the business process?
- Technical appraisal — can the repository support the system from a technical perspective?

Digital records appraisal requires an element of technical analysis

Technical analysis means:

- Is it readable?
- Is there adequate documentation?
- What are the acquisition and processing implications?
- What are the preservation implications?

Functional appraisal

Because identification of series in databases or a multi-media systems is problematic, functional appraisal can be effective for digital records. It means that we can appraise the business functions and select records for preservation based on the functions that generated the records. Functions are more stable over time than the electronic systems used to support them.

Remember!

The same archives and records management principles should apply whatever the media of the record.

