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Digital Preservation of Holdings

From the DLA's collection program a special responsibility to preserve unique digital holdings arises, which, being »born-digital«, principally cannot be further reproduced and also cannot be redundantly acquired or cooperatively indexed.

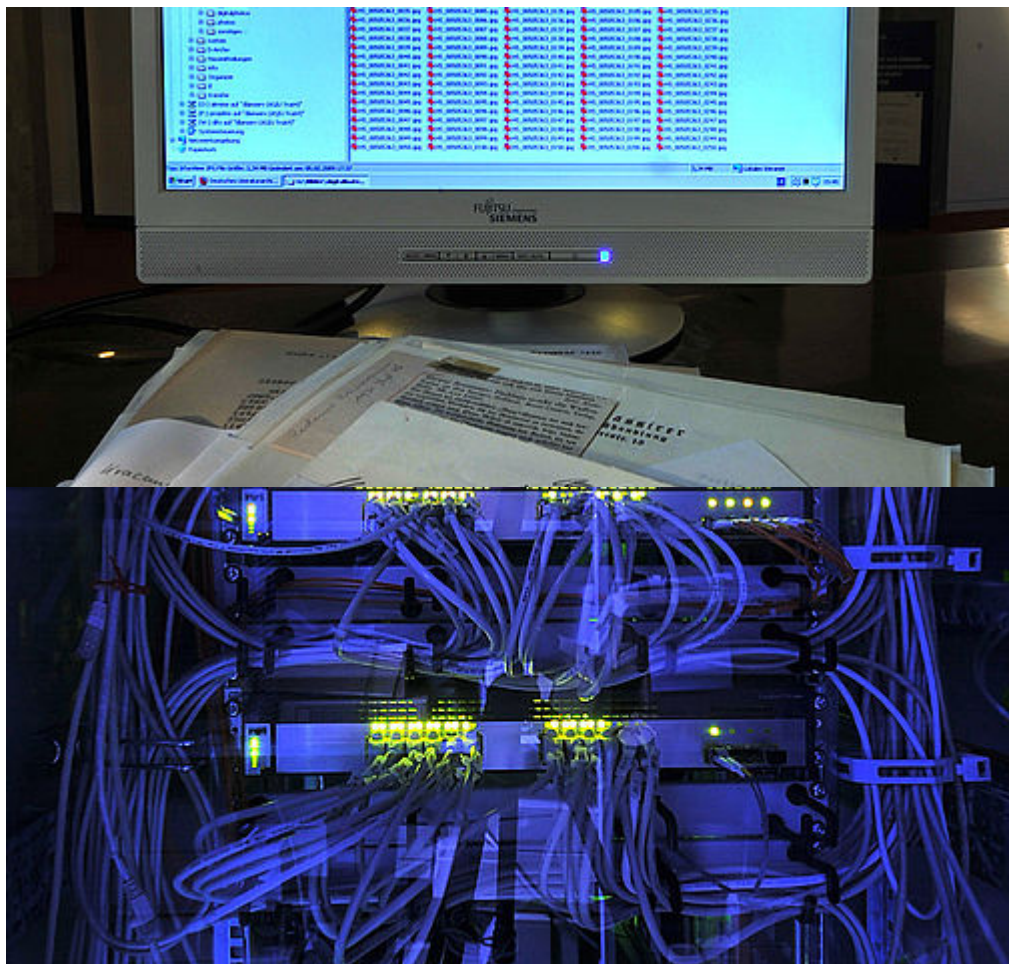
Thomas Strittmatter's papers were the first with digital holdings, acquired in 2000. Through this first case, the DLA was able to develop a model for the preservation and indexing of digital archive holdings that can effectively be used on static textual material on a manageable scale.

The acquisition of entire PCs from authors in more recent years, however, shows that methods developed for floppy disks of manageable size cannot be scaled up for large quantities of data.

An illuminating example of this problem are the papers of Friedrich Kittler, scholar of media and literature (1943-2011): the 756 replicated data storage devices (floppy disks, CD-ROMs, but also nine hard drives) already exceed the size of our entire digital archive of more than ten years; a simple selection of relevant files from around 1.7 million original files is not possible. Therefore innovative software tools for the automatic analysis of large, unstructured packs of data are being developed. These tools will make the selection and

indexing of relevant files possible.

The DLA meets these growing quantitative and qualitative challenges and aspires to ensure the permanent preservation of authentic information objects and facilitate their use as a reliable long-term digital archive. For the time-sensitive preservation of bit streams of digital media (according to the principles of the [BitCurator Project](#)), our efforts have largely been successful. The long-term conservation of authentic usability and appropriate, secure access remain great challenges for the digital preservation of holdings.



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