How Online Sociality and Free Terabytes are shaping Personal Digital Archives

Personal Digital Archiving Conference 2015
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Presentation Overview

- Introduction
- Study Methodology
- Literature Review
- Discussion of Findings
- Summary
INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Twitter.

Connect with your friends — and other fascinating people. Get in-the-moment updates on the things that interest you. And watch events unfold, in real time, from every angle.

Breakfast at the peak of Kilimanjaro with @didi_kabalan.

©2014 Twitter

Twitter and photo by @RoJoPro

3:15 PM - 10 Jul 2014

Phone, email or username
Password
Remember me - Forgot password?

New to Twitter? Sign up

Full name
Email
Password

Sign up for Twitter

Facebook

Capture and Share the World’s Moments

Instagram

Instagram is a fast, beautiful and
with friends and family.

Take a picture or video, choose a
and feel, then post to Instagram —
even share to Facebook, Twitter, a
new way to see the world.

Oh yeah, did we mention it’s free?

Sign up for Flickr

Smile.
Everyone gets a free terabyte.

Biggr. That’s right, a terabyte.
Spectacular. Share in full resolution.
Wherever. Available anywhere you go.

Sign In

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April 24, 2015
STUDY METHODOLOGY

PHASE ONE: Literature Review (ongoing)

PHASE TWO: Web-based Survey
Qualitative DATA analysis

PHASE THREE: One-on-one Interviews
Qualitative DATA analysis

ONGOING: Social Media Provider T&A
Case law review
Literature review

ARCHIVAL SCIENCE

Photography Studies
New Media Curation

Law
Journalism
PIM
HCI
SMS
Survey

502 Survey Respondents
19 - 70+ years
22 countries represented

90% use Facebook
46% use Twitter
39% use Dropbox
36% use Instagram

Interviews

- 18 interviewees
- 1 hour semi-structured (in-person / Skype / phone)

- 19-69 years of age range
- Australia, Canada, France, Sweden, United Kingdom, USA

**GUIDING QUESTIONS:**
- Describe your analogue and digital process (e.g., capture, sharing, storing).
- What are the major differences between the two processes?
- Do you add metadata to your images? If so, why is it important?
- In the past some people made physical photo-albums and passed them down to younger generations of the family or donated them to an archival repository. How will you pass-on your digital photographs?
Amateur Practices and Personal Use

82% FREE ACCOUNTS

Smart Phone preferred device for taking photographs.

Different platforms for different audiences. Different platforms for different purposes.

PDA 2015  JBushev@mail.ubc.ca  @CrowCamera  April 24, 2015
“Actually Facebook is almost like the shoebox. The family stuff goes there, the casual stuff goes there, the ‘this isn't really a great picture but it commemorates a moment’ goes there... Flickr and 500 Pixels are analogous to the frames on my wall. And Instagram is something new. The community is an element in what you create.”

Quote from Interviewee R_6A0LAJ02HsTvIOd
Emphasis on Sharing not Storing

Sharing Images is the most important feature of social media platforms.

Film-based photography: permanence & remembering.
Pixel-based photography: ephemera & consumption.
“So the volume that you take with digital, you couldn't really put that many pictures into photo albums. Like in Facebook I literally have hundreds of albums.”

Quote from Interviewee R_54FbkPyPX0Q0sap

“I think the first is a huge increase in volume. Basically for a lot of my adult life I didn't even have an analog camera and when I did take photos they were taken judiciously at events probably and family things. Now, because I have my phone and it has a good camera on it I take photos all the time.”

Quote from Interviewee R_bqQV06icpHN0h2l
Communicating Context through Metadata and Interface

- **74.50%** Add tags, comments, likes and ratings after upload.

- **45%** Add metadata before upload.

- Place
- Subject
- Name of creator
“For someone that doesn't have Facebook I take a screenshot of the Facebook post that has the image in it and the reply to it and send that off.”

Quote from Interviewee R_6A0LAJ02HsTvIOd

“I remove GPS by changing the settings on my phone. I remove that information for safety.”

Quote from Interviewee R_easfbXV2RodaTeR

“Yeah, I do think it's very important that identifying information be stored with the file. The big problem is that without that - too much context is lost.”

Quote from Interviewee R_a5fKz8rC0HQQy7X

“Giving credit where credit is due is number one. And it is useful information to the viewer. I think it provides some history to that image, at least from the get-go, after that who knows what happens to stuff on the Internet and where it ends up.”

Quote from Interviewee R_1XIADDL3SD1pNgF
Expectations and Trust

91% keep a copy: personal computer, external hard drive, mobile phone, cloud storage

6% Account Deleted

Legal Contracts
22% Did Not Read
58% Skimmed
20% Read
“Yeah I am no longer in iCloud. It was a nightmare and it continues to be a nightmare. It was not backing up quick enough or consistently enough to be trusted.”

Quote from Interviewee R_1XIADDL3SD1pNgF

“They're not on the cloud, so I back them up maybe three times a year on a hard drive. I just haven't quite figured out how to do it [cloud storage], the website to do it, or if I'm comfortable yet storing that kind of stuff out there.”

Quote from Interviewee R_2iqVMYJR8HX0sJf

“We pay for cloud storage to a company but it seems most of the time not to be working properly. You get a couple of terabytes of space but it might take a year and a half to upload to upload 500 gigs to it.”

Quote from Interviewee R_1ZzNiHocWKq7mzX
Summary

The changing nature of record-making and recordkeeping practices in the context of digital photography.
Transformation of photography from a material practice associated with permanence and remembering to a virtual exchange associated with performance and consumption. Increasing importance of social metadata and “place” in conveying the context of digital photographs.

The societal expectations of social networking and photo-sharing sites as repositories for ongoing access to and long-term preservation of digital photograph collections.
Confusion surrounding stewardship of personal digital archives.

“I feel that this is the greatest thing [Social Media Platforms] to happen to photography since the first camera was created.”

Quote from Interviewee R_6YA7PB1mDq3eJ5b