



## Archives of Ontario Digitization Strategy 2008-2010



A NEW HOME FOR THE ARCHIVES IN 2009

## Introduction

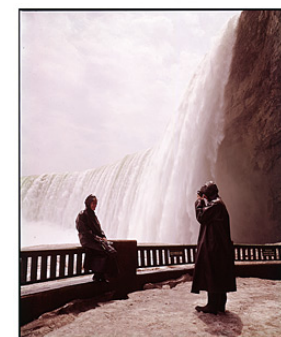
The Archives of Ontario is the guardian of Ontario's documentary memory and since 1903, has been providing innovative leadership in collecting, managing and preserving the records of the Government of Ontario and promoting and facilitating their use by present and future generations.

Our customers have access to a unique and multi-faceted collection that includes records dating back to the late 16th century and contains everything from hand-written ledgers to electronic files, hand-drawn maps, architectural drawings, photographs, films and sound recordings.

We encourage and facilitate access to our records through ongoing strategies to meet our customers' evolving needs and to enhance the customer experience.

The **Archives of Ontario Digitization Strategy 2008-2010** builds from the overall Archives of Ontario Strategic Plan (2007-2010) in the area of Innovation in Bringing Our Past Alive and Excellence in Custodial Strategies and Practices.

The Archives is committed to improving access to records by developing and implementing a digitization strategy. This document addresses our efforts to digitize and make available historical documents to the public online.

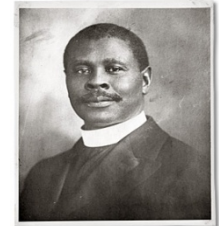


### Digitization Objectives

By digitizing our collection we aim to achieve the following objectives:

**1** **Access to Collections**

- » Provide broader access to our collections throughout Ontario and beyond.
- » Become leaders in digitization within government and the archival community.



**2** **Customer Needs**

- » Address growing expectations of customers to access digital records in this age of digital technology
- » Attract new customers and a younger demographic through digital records aligned with outreach and educational programming initiatives



**3** **Promoting Archives and Ontario**

- » Showcase our collections to help promote Ontario heritage and culture.
- » Improve our profile through the web to attract new donors and develop new partnerships



**4** **Preservation of Collections**

- » Enhance preservation of records by reducing handling of the original records
- » Allow our most fragile and valuable collections to be accessed

**5** **Cost Effectiveness**

- » Determine the willingness of customers to pay for value-added and convenience services resulting from digitization.

## Guiding Principles and Considerations:

The following key principles will guide our digitization strategy

### Customer needs

To satisfy our current customers, anticipate their needs and the needs of future customers, we strive to:

- » Collect improved information about our customers' needs and expectations as it relates to digitization
- » Review and streamline systems , services and processes to better meet our customers' needs for digital records
- » Develop new educational resources for use in Ontario schools.
- » Develop a plan to focus our outreach activities where they will have the greatest impact.



### Access to digital records

We are committed to making our digital records available to a wide range of customers and members of the public. We aim to:

- » Provide open access, free of charge where possible
- » Explore business models for paid service and revenue generation



### Intellectual Property

To protect Intellectual Property and Copyright:

- » We will obtain permission and copyright for records we intend to digitize that fall within copyright.
- » Where rights holders cannot be identified or permission obtained, we will restrict access to the materials.



### Guiding Principles and Considerations:

The following key principles will guide our digitization strategy

#### Cost effectiveness

To implement digitization projects in a cost effective way, we will:

- » Seek funding from available sources and partnerships where possible
- » Gain an in-depth knowledge of the financial costs and benefits of pay and free access options and suitability of record candidates for fee paying use

#### Maintenance and preservation

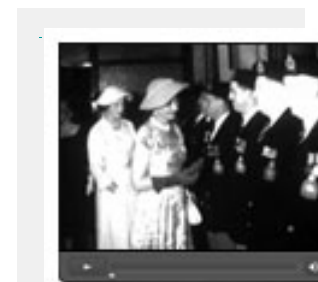
To ensure the ongoing maintenance of digital records, we aim to:

- » Store all our digitized records in a scalable, resilient and secure storage environment
- » Explore the long-term effectiveness of digital preservation
- » Ensure that items from our collection selected for digitization are handled in accordance with best practices and original records continued to be preserved.

#### Technical aspects of digitization

To comply with accepted standards for creating, managing and providing access to digitized material. We will:

- » ensure that all digitized items are easily discoverable and searchable.
- » use widely accepted national and international standards and practices for digital capture, storage, preservation and access.
- » ensure that digitized content is accompanied by consistent, high quality metadata and descriptions
- » develop effective business processes to integrate digitization into our business operations over time



### Approach to Digitization

The Archives of Ontario will use a combination of three key strategies for digitizing and making our holdings available online:

#### » Develop and Build Partnerships

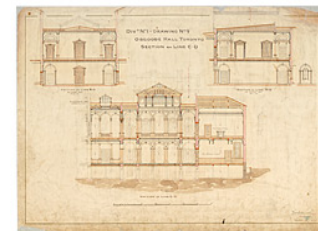
- Explore and establish partnerships with organizations from a variety of sectors (private, internal OPS, non-profit, educational, Government) to digitize and make collections available.
- Partnerships will enable us to digitize more of our collections than we could on our own, through both resource and expense sharing.
- Develop digitization projects in partnership with service and technology providers, internal and external funding bodies and other sponsors and donors, user communities such as genealogists and other content holders.

#### » Make available existing digitized records

- Gather and assess the archival materials that we have already digitized (ie. through reproduction requests or for preservation initiatives), and ensure they are available online.

#### » Implement new internal digitization projects

- Utilize our own equipment and internal resources and project teams to conduct digitizing projects.
- Ensure all future online exhibits and visual database initiatives align to the overall Archives of Ontario digitization strategy



## Prioritization

We will follow basic principles for prioritizing our digitization efforts. We will give priority to digitizing records that:

- » meet the needs of one or more of our major customer groups.
- » meet a demonstrated and high priority preservation need
- » are of high use and will support pilot projects to investigate revenue generation potential critical for funding further digitization
- » attract external funding and partnership within our overall strategy



## Key Priority Projects 2008 to 2010

In the 2008/09 fiscal year, pilot projects to digitize a small sample of collections will be initiated to allow us to explore digitization methods and business models for digitization . A small number of records from the following collections will be digitized:

- » The Hawke passenger lists
- » Ontario maps
- » Horwood architectural drawings
- » Bankruptcy indices
- » Ontario Government tourism films
- » Battle of the Crysler's farm: War of 1812
- » First Annual Report of the Archives of Ontario, 1903

In the 2009/10 fiscal year, we will continue to complete the digitization projects listed above. In addition, we will focus on the development and implementation of a strategy for the digitization of records related to vital statistics.

