Digital Challenges Facing the National Archives of Japan:
Towards the Application of Digital Technologies and Cultivation of Archival Profession in the New Reiwa Era

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Presentation Outline

Introduction

1. The Path towards a Digital Government
2. Digitization of Existing Paper Materials
3. Training Archivists in the Digital Era

Conclusion
1 The Path towards a Digital Government
- Preparing for an increase in the acquisition of diverse digital records
1 The Path towards a Digital Government

Recent developments related to the transition to a digital government...

1) Digital Government as a Growth Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Act/Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Basic Act on the Advancement of Public and Private Sector Data Utilization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Digital Government Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Digital Procedure Act</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2) Digital Government for Regaining Trust


- In principle, the creation and obtaining of administrative documents are required to be systematically managed based on electronic media as the original/master copy
- Government as a whole aims at introducing a full-fledged electronic management system by 2026
- NAJ needs to take measures to enable the long-term and stable use of historical public records and archives transferred to the NAJ
1 The Path towards a Digital Government

Table: Number of digital records transferred to NAJ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Volumes</th>
<th>Number of Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 The Path towards a Digital Government

Major issues to acquiring born digital records...

1) To reinforce systems and to improve the efficiency of operational procedures
2) To update technologies and available formats to accept diverse records
3) To build and operate a system that enables stable and reliable long-term preservation

Plus, need to design better systems starting from the creation and obtaining of records AT ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCIES!
2 Digitization of Existing Paper Materials
- Using digital technologies to improve accessibility of materials
Main objective of the digitization of the NAJ holdings is to improve accessibility, according to the concepts of “Any time”, “Anywhere”, "to Anyone", “Freely”, and “Free of charge”.

Two Digital Archive systems run by NAJ

- Japan Center for Asian Historical Records
  - Approximately 31.31 million images are available online

- National Archives of Japan Digital Archive
  - Approximately 289,000 volumes and 21.62 million images (19.3 % of entire holdings) are available
2 Digitization of Existing Paper Materials

For better accessibility...

- Renewal of NAJ Digital Archive in 2016
  - Enabled the support of smart devices
  - Improved a viewer for large-sized images
  - Implemented functions such as image download and SNS sharing

- Distribution of "Standard Specifications for Digital Archives"
  - Conducted a full revision of the Standard (established in 2009) in 2018
  - NAJ Digital Archive offers cross-file search with 17 archival institutions' systems throughout Japan
3 Training Archivists in the Digital Era
- Based on the Preparation of “Standard of Tasks and Competencies for Archivists”
3 Training Archivists in the Digital Era

Growing importance of training professionals to take full advantage of the knowledge and technologies related to “DIGITALIZATION” of records/archive management

Reflecting on the fundamental question:

“What does archivist do?”
Key point of our plan concerning how to secure and train archivists:

(1) To prepare the "Standard of Tasks and Competencies for Archivists" specifying the tasks to be performed by an archivist.

(2) To consider the Standard as a base to cultivate the profession, making universities etc. reflect its contents in their education and training programs.

(3) Creating a certification system for the competencies and requirements of an archivist to be established in the Standard.

⇒ “Standard of Tasks and Competencies for Archivists” was finalized in Dec 2018
3 Training Archivists in the Digital Era

Structure of the Standard

1 Missions of Archivists
2 Ethics and Fundamental Positions of Archivists
3 Tasks and Necessary Knowledge and Skills of Archivists
   Tasks are divided into (i) appraisal and selection/collection development, (ii) collection management, (iii) public access, and (iv) outreach and communication services, and explained with 22 subcategories
4 Others

Standard of Tasks and Competencies for Archivists (English ver.):
http://www.archives.go.jp/about/report/pdf/TasksandCompetencies_NAJ.pdf
Next step to take...

2019. 3
Archivist Certification Preparatory Committee for the Framework for the Archivist Certification System

Members: Experts recommended by academic associations, Researchers, Educators, Record Management Specialists and Journalists

2020 Start the Certification System (to be expected)
Conclusion
Conclusion

To sum up...

1) NAJ need to be actively involved in providing expertise, as advancing implementation of digital records management constitutes a large national project
2) NAJ is required to properly respond to changes in social demands, and continuously improve our provision of long-term and stable access to records
3) In order to consider how to make full use of the huge and diversified records created by digital technologies, archivists must reconsider the very concepts of the tasks themselves

Our Digital Challenges:

- Active application of digital technologies
- Cultivation of archivists
Thank you