
Progress Report: June 1, - August 31, 2008

NHPRC EMCAP Tool

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NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL RESOURCES

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TO: Lucy Barber, National Historical Publications and Records Commission
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SUBJECT: North Carolina, Kentucky, and Pennsylvania's Electronic Mail Preservation
Collaboration Initiative, Grant Number NAR RE-05701-07

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The Electronic Mail Preservation Collaboration Initiative aims to build a prototype tool for the collection and preservation of archival electronic mail. Staff from the states of North Carolina, Kentucky, and Pennsylvania have teamed together to leverage their knowledge and skill sets to help design and test a tool that will collect electronic mail, maintain a copy of the original email and the attachment, as well as transform the email itself from its native format to an XML format based on an XML schema. The team is also developing on-line training materials. In addition, once the tool has been designed and tested, we will deploy this tool to participating pilot partners for phase two testing and feedback. The project team includes: Kelly Eubank (NC), project director, Druscilla Simpson (NC), head, IT Branch; David Minor (NC), programmer; Ed Southern (NC), head, Government Records Branch; Mark Myers (KY), electronic records archivist; Glen McAninch (KY), head Technology Analysis and Support Branch; Linda Avetta (PA), information technology generalist administrator; Cynthia Bendroth (PA), head Division of Records Administration and Image Services.

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Information Technology Environment:

In North Carolina, the IT resources continue to be consolidated under Information Technology Services. In order to complete this consolidation in a timely manner, staff from the Department of Cultural Resources Information Technology group (DCR-IT) dedicated part of their time to assist in this effort. As a result, many of the projects in which they are involved were put on hold. The programmer on the EMCAP project was pulled off of many of his projects in order to help with the consolidation; therefore, much of the programming work for EMCAP was put on hold. However, NC did open firewall ports to the Secretary of State's office and the Office of the Governor and worked toward the collection of email. We were set to transfer email from the Governor's office beginning in June.

We made the decision early in the project to collect copies of the email rather than the "originals" during the grant. In this manner, we could continue to collect email via the normal procedures but still be able to test this strategy without risking the integrity of the originals. This decision has resulted in some interesting developments. In June, we learned that one of the state partners in NC uses Outlook Express rather than MS Outlook. Express is a stripped-down version of Outlook and lacks much of the functionality, including the ability to copy email. In one such instance, Claire Ennis in the Governor's office of Community and Citizen Affairs, using Express, would have had to copy each individual email and move it to the EMCAP folder rather than move an entire folder. In order to facilitate the collection process, the IT support person for the Governor's office set up a fully functioning MS Outlook client to use. Second, the server at the Governor's office shut down while IT support staff for both agencies was on vacation, putting the project on hold until the end of June. Because it was close to July 1, the Governor's office staff suggested waiting until July 1 to transfer e-mail via EMCAP. We both agreed that she would use the EMCAP tool but we would also continue to transfer the email via CD. In July, the Governor's Office of Citizen and Community Affairs successfully transferred 15,178 messages to the EMCAP server. In reviewing the emails transferred via both methodologies, we noticed a discrepancy of sixty-seven emails. Once the .pst output is functioning in EMCAP, we will compare the two files and try to determine the difference in the number of emails transferred.

In August, the Governor's office again experienced difficulty transferring emails due to the large amount of email on their server. The help desk staff at the Governor's office made some changes to their IT environment which resulted in a successful transfer. Claire moved an additional 9,000 messages over to EMCAP for a total of over 21,000 in their EMCAP account.

The EMCAP partners voted to extend the timeline of the grant from August 2008 to February 2009. The group submitted a letter to NHPRC which was approved. The new end date for the grant is February 28, 2009. This is a no-cost extension.

Programmer Update:

The programmer under contract finished his work on the EMCAP tool. David Minor, of DCR-IT, has been looking at the code and cleaning it up. Initially, he thought he would not have to do that much but after he began looking at it, he realized he had to do more clean-up than he anticipated.

Training

Also during this period, NC began working with and training the pilot partners at the Secretary of State's office. The Electronic Records unit met with the Local Area Network administrator for the Secretary of State's office to discuss particulars of GroupWise. Several meetings took place from June through August to determine participants in the pilot and technical requirements. Small issues slowed progress in this area—firewall requests had to be approved, staff was on vacation, scheduling meetings was difficult, etc.

The discussions with the Secretary of State's office culminated in a training meeting with Secretary of State Staff who would be utilizing EMCAP. Ed Southern, Pam Ingle and Megan Durden met with participating staff in the Corporations Division. Prior to the meeting, the staff's email had been configured with an EMCAP account with no technical issues. The majority of the meeting was split between an overview of the grant project and the specifics of moving messages in GroupWise, and a discussion of the SOS retention schedule and what messages are archival. One technical concern was a possible disparity in the versions of GroupWise clients being used and how this would affect the tutorial. Mark Cain will follow up with the ERU about this.

Based on these discussions, the staff of the SOS office plan to review the schedule and set up a consistent folder system for all of them to use (four or five folders), and they will play with the EMCAP tool a little more over the next two weeks to make sure everything is working and that it makes sense to them. September 2 will be the first official transfer date.

In Kentucky, the Commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives was trained in the use of EMCAP in person and via a user manual. Kentucky Retirement Systems were given training on management of e-mail in June.

Pennsylvania and Kentucky:

Pennsylvania had its hmail server installed at the end of June. During July and August revisions were made to the user manuals North Carolina had created for using EMCAP with Outlook 2003. Pennsylvania's scope is limited to testing within the agency (Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission). Ten executive staff were identified to be trained and individual training for each began the end of August. To assist users and make it easier for them to use EMCAP, folders were created for each individual based on the Commonwealth General Administrative Retention and Disposition Schedule.

In addition, the Pennsylvania team is slated to do e-mail-specific training for the new Right-To-Know-Law that will take effect January 1, 2009. The training is scheduled to take place in September and October and although EMCAP isn't a part of the training, the lessons we are learning regarding e-mail management and the laws in our fellow states has provided a real opportunity to enlighten the public service staff in Pennsylvania.

Outreach

Druscie Simpson, Glen McAninch (KY) and Cindy Bendroth (PA) attended the NAGARA meeting in July and presented on EMCAP. The tool was very well received although many people wanted to know about accessing emails after a transfer. See “[Chasing the E-Tiger: Addressing Issues with New Tools for E-mail](http://www.nagara.org/)” (on NAGARA web site <http://www.nagara.org/>)

In August, the EMCAP group presented at the Society of American Archivists on the EMCAP tool as well as the XML schema developed as part of this project. Many people expressed interest in the tool and in access to the messages collected in the tool. Of particular interest is a way to access and search across these accounts. Ricc Ferrante of the Smithsonian Institute presented the XML schema at the Electronic Records Section of SAA. This presentation garnered quite a bit of interest from the archival community. Staff from North Carolina was invited to the *Preserving Historical Correspondence* symposium to present on EMCAP in November. This symposium will be hosted by the Smithsonian Institution Archives and the Rockefeller Archives Center.

Potential Partners

North Carolina

NC is still in discussions with Emergency Management. After September, the IT staff will have more time to work on this as hurricane season will have slowed somewhat.

Pennsylvania

As previously noted, it appears that PA may be only able to test within their agency, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Should another opportunity arise, we will certainly pursue it.