

The Digital Landscape of the Conservation Profession

Overview and Survey Preview

AIC 42nd Annual Meeting, Saturday, May 31, 2014



Conscientious Conservation:
Sustainable Choices in Collection Care

American Institute for Conservation | 42nd Annual Meeting | May 28-31, 2014 | San Francisco, CA

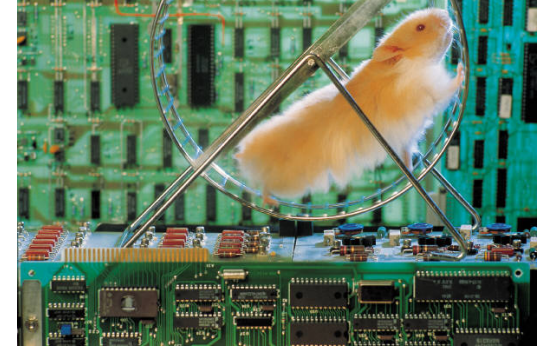
The Digital Landscape of the Conservation Profession



Project Goals:

- What digital resources are currently created and used in support of conservation and collections care
- What digital resources are most urgently needed
- How FAIC and other organizations might best support those needs

Funded by grants from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Samuel H. Kress Foundation, and Getty Foundation



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Project Components

- Review of existing digital resources
- Survey of users and creators of digital resources
- Meetings of key stakeholders
- Phone interviews with key stakeholders
- Recommendations/priorities for FAIC and other organizations

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Survey Goals:

- How do conservation, preservation, collections care professionals create, share, use digital resources?
- What are the needs and wishes for the future?

Sent in early May to AIC members, ConsDistList, on websites, to allied organizations. Approximately 560 full responses as of 5/20.

THIS IS A PRELIMINARY LOOK!

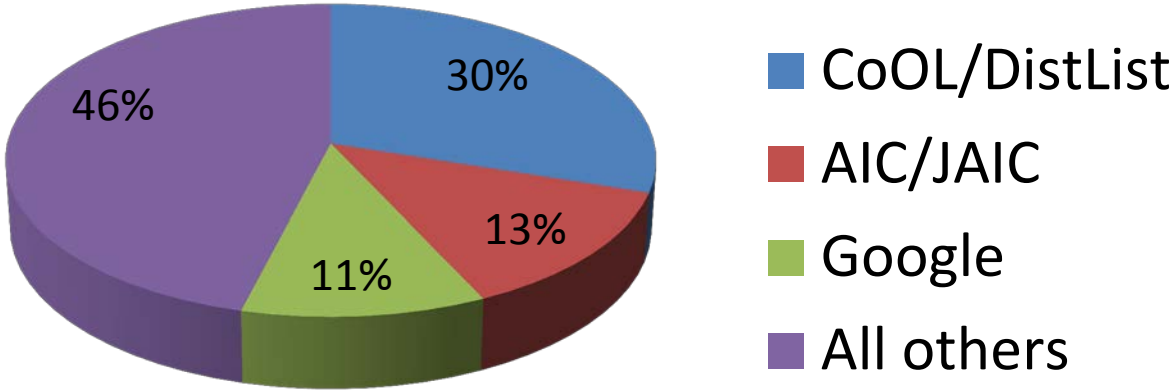
Survey – Online Searches



- 2/3rds of respondents search online for conservation/preservation/collections care information at least once a week
- 30% search online daily
- Only 14% search less than once a month

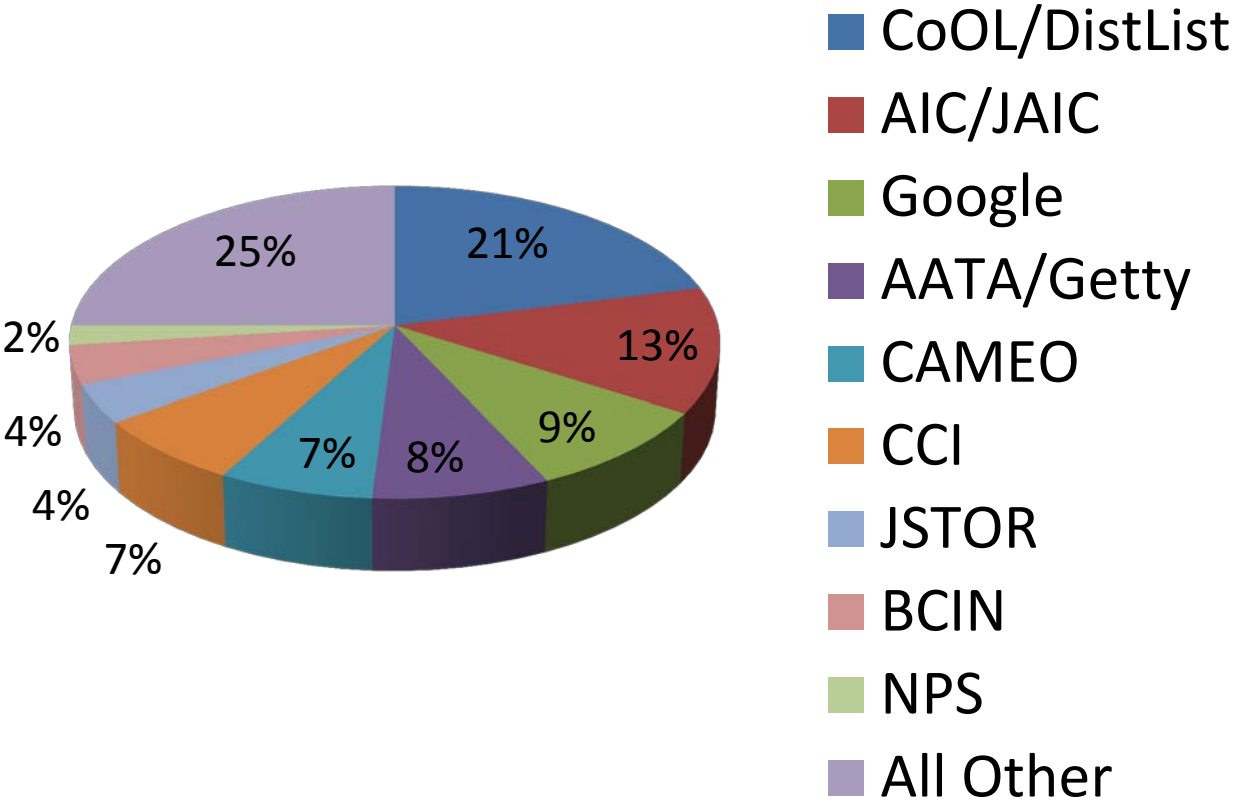


Survey – Top Online Resource Used





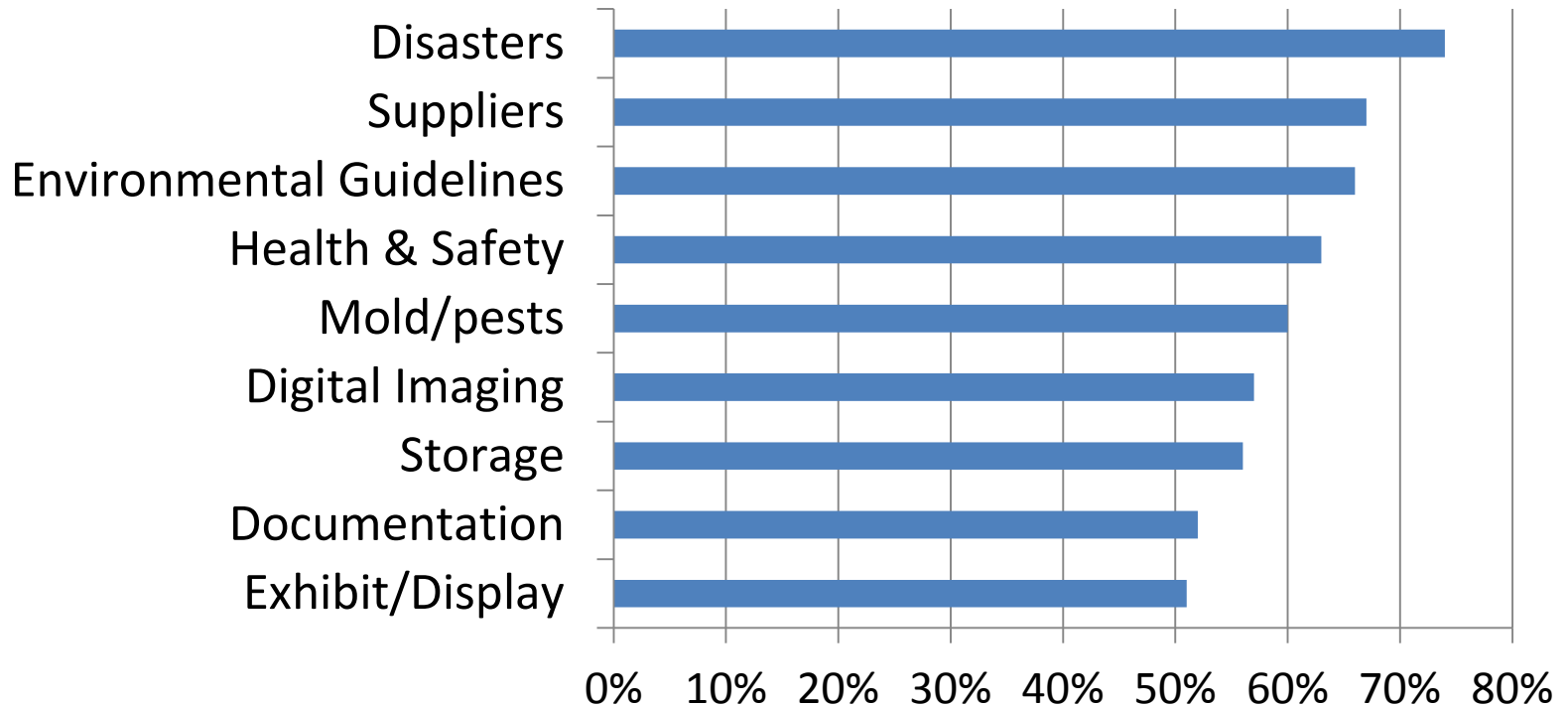
Survey – Top 3 Online Resources





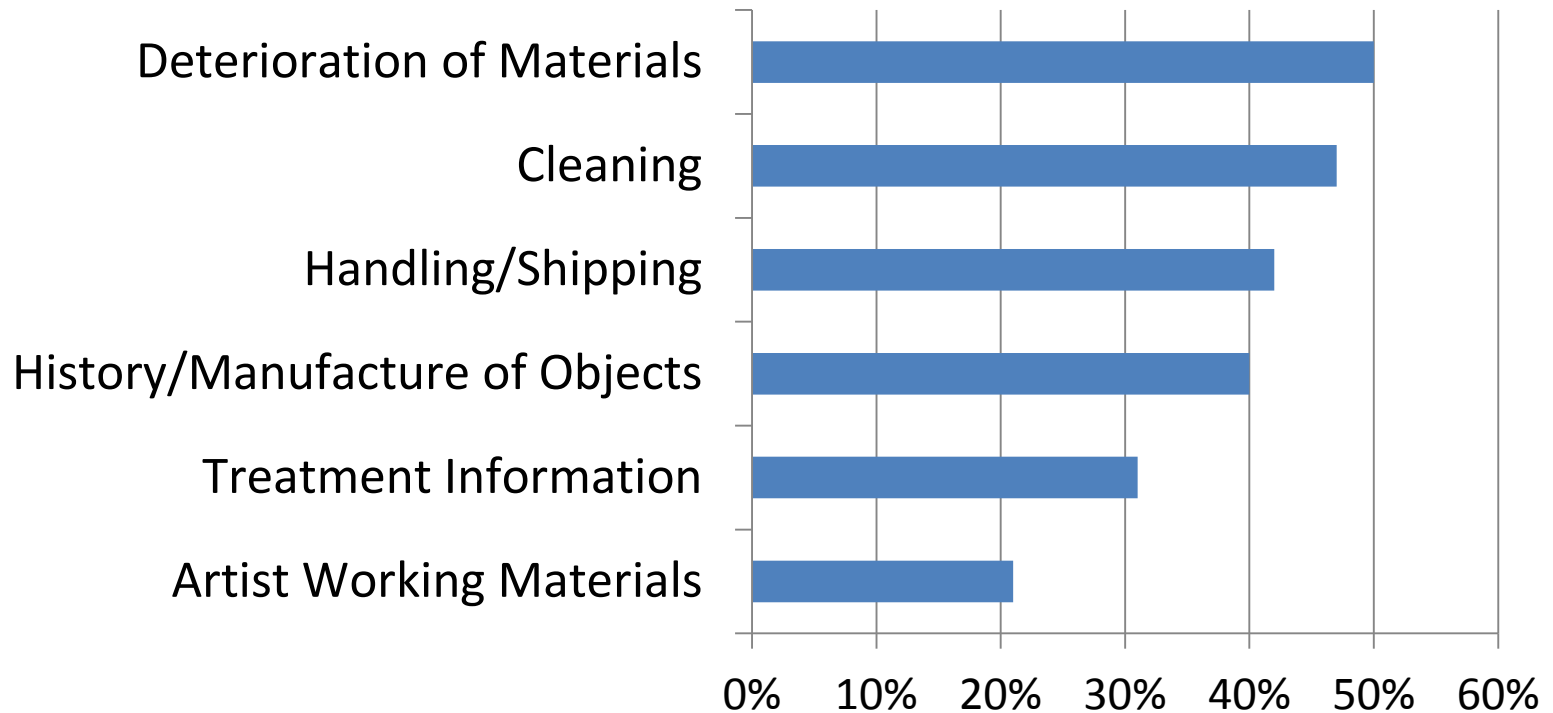
Survey – Successful Searches

% “Always” or “Usually” Successful



Survey – Not So Successful Searches

% "Always" or "Usually" Successful



Top Problems with Online Resources



70% - Lack of information specific to exact needs

49% - Lack of up-to-date information

43% - Concern about the reliability of information

32% - The time it takes to find/obtain the information

31% - Finding the right question/search term



Searches for Professional Information Online (training, jobs, etc.)

TOP 3 SOURCES:

30% - AIC (First choice of 44% of respondents)

18% - ConsDist/CoOL (First choice of 30%)

3 to 4% each - Google, Facebook, Linked-in

2 to 4% each - IIC, ICON, ICOM/ICOM-CC

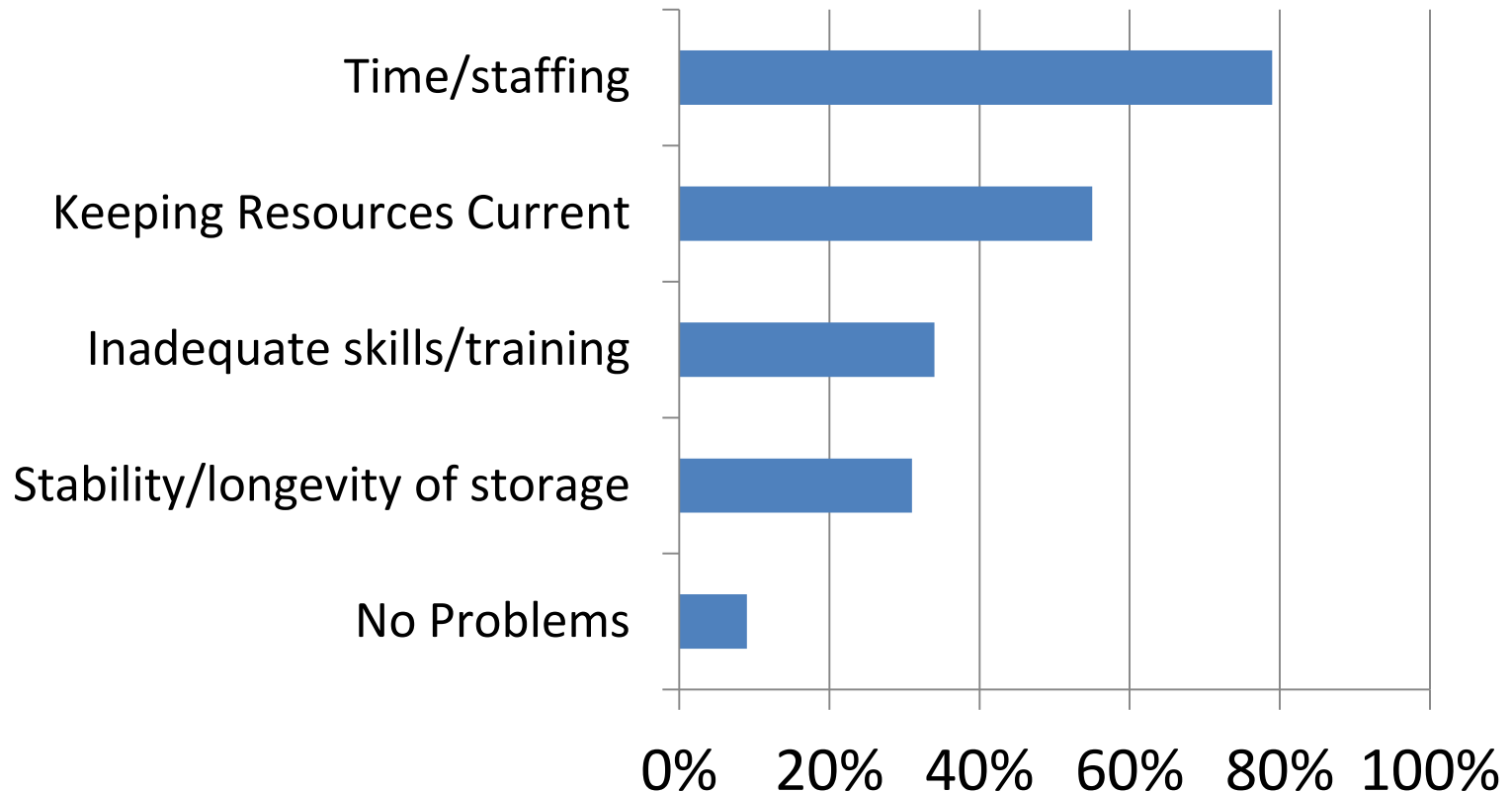
Creating and Maintaining Digital Resources



71% are involved in creating or maintaining...

- Documents
- Images (visible light)
- Other images
- Social media platforms
- Websites
- Datasets

Problems in Creating and Maintaining Digital Resources



Top Enhancements Desired



50% or more expressed “high interest” in....

- Better indexing of/search for information
- A repository for research findings
- A repository for conservation treatment records
- Archive of past conservation practices
- Clearer identification of trustworthy information

Digital Tools Used

- Image Management
- Document Management

(Less use of online collaborative workspaces)





Digital Skills Desired

MOST OFTEN CITED:

- Digital Asset Management
- Digital Imaging

FREQUENTLY CITED:

- Database creation and design
- Photoshop
- “Programming Skills”

Policy Issues

- Copyright/intellectual property issues
- Institutional/repository policies
- Time (lack thereof!)
- Standards/terminology needed





Respondent Profile

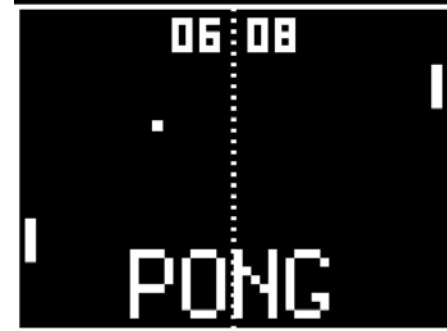
90% from U.S. (so far)

67% practicing conservators

35% in for-profit practice

33% in museum setting

Good distribution of experience and age ranges



Age and Responses

- Online search frequency for collections information about the same across ages. Ages 45-65 actually a bit more likely to go on line for this info.
- Younger respondents are more likely to look for, and more interested in, professional information on line (I suspect jobs!)
- Older respondents more interested in faster access to information and better online communications with colleagues.

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