

Addressing the uncertain future of preserving the past

Towards a robust strategy for digital archiving
and preservation

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Outline

- ➔ • Scope and objectives
- Short-term challenges
- Long-term challenges
- Way forward

Scope and objectives

- Study commissioned by KB asking to assess KB's e-Depot strategy in the context of wider developments in publishing and archiving:
 - The implications of the digital revolution for a national library's archiving and preservation function
 - KB's vision to become one of the main nodes in a 'safe places network' of digital repositories for academic publications
 - Extending it to an international remit
 - Guaranteeing (ex-)license holders perpetual access to electronic content

- Objectives:
 - Identify current outlook and key developments in:
 - scholarly communication
 - publishing
 - digital archiving and preservation
 - What are the uncertainties and disruptive trends for the future of digital archiving and preservation
 - What are the short/medium-term and long-term implications of these findings for a digital archiving and preservation strategy

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Digital archiving and preservation are important ...but intractable

- National libraries are well-positioned, but have only had a national remit thus far
- Most vulnerable content is hardest to reach
 - Many small publishers do not have archiving agreements
 - Grey literature
- A sustainable funding model is still to be found
 - There is no international consensus on whether digital preservation a public good
 - Who should be paying for it, and how?
- No consensus about access rights
 - Should archives be 'dark', 'dim' or 'light'?
 - Who should have access to content following a trigger event?
- Stakeholders' awareness of and trust in existing digital archive and preservation initiatives are not widespread

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Increasing long-tail value of publications

- With everything available online
- Higher demand for older (digitized) publications
- Use-statistics not widely available
- Citations are useful proxy for use



A more fragmented and heterogeneous scholarly record?

- Increasing use of grey and informal publication
 - Would lead to fragmentation of scholarly dissemination
 - Depending on development and adoption of new methods of review and evaluation
- From ‘supply-push’ to ‘demand-pull’
 - Increasing reliance on digital resources
 - Increasing relevance of information hubs
- Increasing use of novel types of (inherently digital) material
 - Dissemination of lab notes, datasets, executables, multi-media, etc.
 - Embedded links to dynamic components

Uncertainties in digital archiving and preservation

- Uncertain demand
 - How much
 - To what extent
 - Lack of
 - They ha

“We are not really concerned about preservation at the moment beyond the market demands. [...] Adoption of a new standard is a new opportunity for us to sell our content again.”

Publisher

- A future consumer market for digital preservation services?

“Third parties in other industries could assume a role in preservation of STM publications”

Systems developer

... & pensions, accountancy,

- Uncertain role of governments
 - Funding for preservation by (national) governments in the long term future (beyond the next budget period)
 - Sustainable supranational government funding
 - Copyright and VAT regulation likely to impact
- Continuing technological developments

“Governments are unpredictable paymasters, unforeseen reasons may influence funding decisions”

Government official

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Towards a robust strategy for digital archiving and preservation

- Build trust and awareness in the wider international stakeholder community
- Find a diversified financial basis, balancing user-payment and public funding
- Coordination between national libraries and preservation initiatives
- Assess the boundaries of the scholarly record and engage in the broader societal debate about this
- Continuously monitor emerging technological developments
- Monitor developments in scholarly dissemination
- **Initiate a process of robust planning addressing the uncertainties in the context of long-term digital archiving and preservation**

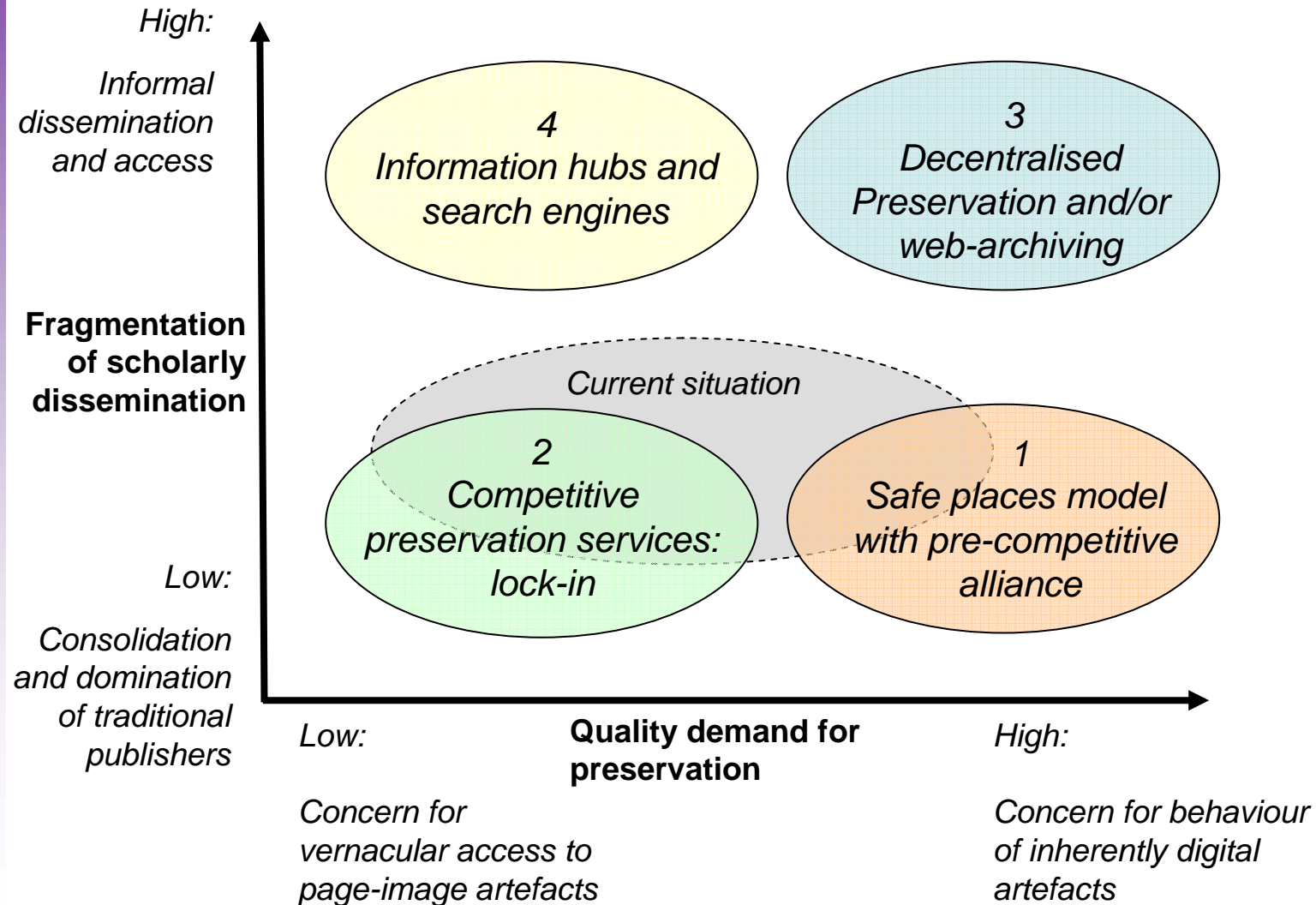
Initiate a process of robust planning

- Identified the drivers that are most important and most uncertain:
 1. Fragmentation of scholarly dissemination
 2. Demand for preserving behaviour of inherently digital artefacts

- Constructed four possible scenarios for the future of digital preservation
 - In 10-20 years
 - Each individual scenario is unlikely
 - But not inconceivable

- Test strategic options against the range of plausible futures

Test strategic options against plausible scenarios



Thank you



Koninklijke Bibliotheek
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