Good Reads: Digital Data Practices and the Long Term Ecological Research Program

This paper was the recipient of the best peer-reviewed paper award at the Digital Curation Conference in 2007. It provides a great perspective of LTER data practices and challenges, and an enlightening discussion on the consequences of automated data processing in our pipelines.

Citation:

Karasti, H., Baker, K.S. and Schledit, K. 2007. Digital Data Practices and the Long Term Ecological Research Program. Third International Digital Curation Conference, 11-13 Dec 2007, Washington, DC, USA
(http://interoperability.ucsd.edu/docs/07Karasti-Baker-Schleidt-DCC07.pdf)

Abstract:

This paper explores data curation in a Long Term Ecological Research (LTER) setting. It describes a number of salient data characteristics that are specific to the discipline and outlines some central features of the curation approach cultivated within the US LTER network. It goes on to identify recent developments within the international LTER program relating to data issues: increasing heterogeneities due to LTER networking, integration of data from additional disciplines, and new technologies in a changing digital landscape. Information management experience within LTER provides one example of the recurrent balancing inherent to the work of data curation. It highlights (1) taking into account the extended temporal horizon of data care, (2) aligning support for data, science and information infrastructure, and (3) integrating site and network level responsibilities. LTER contributes to the inquiry into how to manage the continuity of digital data and to our understanding of how to design sustainable information infrastructure.

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