

REPORT

Round table “Digital preservation in Italy: experiences face to face”

National Library, Florence

27th of May 2008

The Round Table on “Digital Preservation in Italy: experiences face to face”, organised by Fondazione Rinascimento Digitale¹ (FRD) in collaboration with the DigitalPreservationEurope² project, was held at the National Library of Florence on the 27th of May 2008.

Several of the main Italian institutions from ALM, e-health, e-government, research institutions, ICT and media attended the round table to ascertain the state of art of digital preservation in different sectors in Italy and identify common points of interest, obstacles, emerging topics and new trends. The goal of the event was to identify possible areas of cooperation, stimulate synergies and coordination mechanisms around digital preservation at national level that could also be linked in the DPE international framework.

More than 90 participants attended the morning session where 22 speakers covered the major issues in digital preservation, starting from their professional experience. The presentations gave a quick overview on different subjects, from an outlook on the Italian presence on European projects, and going through the national experiences on digital preservation of public administrations, universities, research centres, and SMEs. All the slides plus other material suggested by the speakers and experts are available on the FRD web site.

The afternoon session was organised around 6 workgroups, where the speakers and the attendees discussed the main topics in relation to:

- Digital repositories
- Open source in long term preservation
- Legal aspects
- Persistent identifiers
- Durability of storage media
- e-health

Each workgroup had a moderator with the task of stimulating the debate around the main topics emerged from the morning session, and drafting a final report with the state of art, the main issues, and opportunities for cooperation.

Since the workgroups were very effective and proactively cooperating, Fondazione Rinascimento Digitale is in the process of developing a follow up to this event, by providing a space on the FRD website to organise specific sections for discussion groups to ask questions, share information, or exchange ideas with experts from different domains. Future areas for cooperation identified are as follows:

1. **Digital repositories:** in Italy at least three independent projects (one of them is ‘Magazzini digitali’ (Digital Stacks)³ supported by FRD and the Florence National Library) are working

¹ <http://www.rinascimento-digitale.it>

² <http://www.digitalpreservationeurope.eu>

to install a OAIS compliant digital repository: this could be a good opportunity to share experience and compare approaches. The workgroup will look for other initiatives related to the topic to enlarge the network for cooperation.

2. **Open source in long term preservation:** during the debate, information about many projects using ‘open source software’ arose. In particular, three important initiatives could be instrumental in reinforcing the cooperation in the cultural sector: the national agency for informatics in public administration (CNIPA) has an observatory to stimulate the community and catalyse user activity and feed-back on the main open source tools; FRD has conducted a survey about the most diffused open software in Italy in the digital libraries sector; Regione Toscana has a competence centre on open source and is available to cooperate to stimulate the user community.
3. **Persistent identifiers:** the test-bed on the National Bibliographic Number (NBN)⁴ was presented and many comments were collected. With the DOI representative the interoperability issue between NBN and DOI was analysed.. The main development following the debate is that the NBN prototype will be tested within the Central Library of the National Council for Research (CNR) and applied to the ‘technical reports’. The DOI representative proposed to meet again in order to study the challenge of interoperability among different name systems.

The feedback of the round table was outstanding and need for regular, similar events was expressed. A follow up is planned in October 2008 on digital preservation addressed to the Open Access community.

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³ <http://rinascimento-digitale.it/indexEN.php?SEZ=228>

⁴ <http://rinascimento-digitale.it/indexEN.php?SEZ=531>