

Libraries and Archives in the Digital Age: Best Practices Exchange 2007

The Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records hosted Best Practices Exchange 2007: Libraries and Archives in the Digital Era (BPE 2007) at the Crowne Plaza San Marcos Hotel in Chandler, Arizona, May 2-4, 2007. The conference website can be accessed at <http://www.bpexchange.org/2007/>.

BPE 2007 was open to practitioners in government and university archives and libraries; educators/researchers in the fields of library science, information science, technology, archives, and records management; and product developers working to create systems for managing and preserving digital assets.

There were 103 registered attendees from 32 states and provinces, 61 organizations including representatives from federal, state, university, library, historical society, archives, records management, private industry and other institutions.

The BPE 2007 conference provided an opportunity for attendees to present projects and experiences, successes, failures and lessons learned. Multiple small group Exchange Sessions were conducted simultaneously, allowing for more in-depth and intimate "round table" type discussions. These sessions covered six broad tracks related to digital information in the government environment. These tracks included Metadata & Discovery, Access, Preservation, Technology, Project Management & Outreach and Emerging Issues.

Over the course of the two and a half day conference, there were 56 presentations. Attendees who expressed interest in presenting and sharing specifics of their experiences on a particular topic led exchange session discussions. State Library staff was on hand to facilitate and record the salient points of the discussion. Participants in each session shared their own experiences, ideas and knowledge. The major themes and ideas generated from the small sessions were discussed at the large group sessions that took place each day.

Brewster Kahle, Director and Co-Founder of the Internet Archive and Jeff Hatch-Miller of the Arizona Corporation Commission were featured keynote speakers. Commissioner Hatch-Miller spoke about funding state programs and services, and shared strategies on how to communicate your organizations' needs, goals and values to legislators. Brewster Kahle provided an incisive presentation on the advancement of universal access to all knowledge.

The conference reception was hosted and sponsored by the Zelma Basha Salmeri Gallery of Western American and Native American Art. Food and drink was provided by AJ's Fine Foods, a subsidiary of Bashas' Inc. The vast collection of oil paintings, watercolors, acrylics, pastel and charcoal drawings, pen and inks, bronze, wood and natural stone sculptures, wood-turned bowls, basketry, pottery, kachinas and jewelry was greatly enjoyed by all in attendance.

BPE 2008 will be hosted by Montana State Library, the Montana Historical Society Research Center, the State Library of Montana and the Montana Records and Information Management Division of the Secretary of State's Office, May 21–23, 2008 in Helena.