Making the Old New Again: Practical Emulation for Long Term Digital Preservation & Access

Tuesday January 14th 11am-12pm International Room, Sterling Memorial Library Emulation has huge potential as a strategy for maintaining access to old digital content from documents, to images, 3D models, digital art, scientific workflows, research data, custom code, desktop snapshots (e.g. snapshots of politicians, authors, developers and celebrities PCs) and entire networked environments. A significant barrier to access to emulation solutions is being removed through the work of the beFLA Emulation as a Service Project. This presentation will discuss how the bwFLA project's software is able to provide on-demand, web-browser based remote access to emulated software environments for use in accessing old content, migrating old content, and validating preservation strategies. The presentation will also describe how emulation can be applied in a variety of context to aid in the long term preservation of and access to old digital content. Presenter: Dirk von Suchodoletz is a lecturer and principal researcher at the chair in "communication systems" at the Institute for Computer Science in the University of Freiburg, Germany. Dirk studied mathematics, economics and politics at the Georg August University of Goettingen and received his Ph.D. in 2008 with a thesis on "Requirements towards Emulation as a Long term Preservation Strategy". Dirk joined the efforts in the German nestor initiative on long term preservation in 2005 and became the chair's project leader in the Planets EU-project in 2006. Through the preservation action research he has collaborated with practitioners at the major memory institutions like the British Library, the National Libraries of the Netherlands, Denmark, Australia and Austria as well as national archives. He is one of the founding members of the Open Planets Foundation and the nestor working group on emulation. His current research interests are in mobile telecommunication networks, privacy, grid computing and digital preservation. His main focus is on questions in Long term preservation of digital objects and full scale computing environments, such as reliable emulation, automation of preservation workflows, digital software archiving and reference workstations for end users access to diverse original environments. He is currently investigating the foundation of "Emulation as a Service" technology, a cloud service providing remote access to a wide range of different emulation services allowing for object migration, access and interaction in their original environments. Dirk is currently a scientific advisor in the two year bwFLA project aiming at the implementation of practical emulation based access workflows. The planned follow-up project about to start in 2014 will deal with emulation enabled reading room systems for libraries and centralized advanced emulation services.

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