

Deeds of Gift as a Tool to Facilitate Born Digital File Processing and Preservation

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Abstract: Institutions with a specific collecting focus on architecture and design records have been attempting to address the complex landscape of accessioning, processing, preserving, and providing access to born-digital design records for some time. This is a multifaceted issue requiring both subject and technological expertise, as well as addressing additional legal and collection complications around software licensure and accessibility of proprietary software. The CAD/BIM Taskforce has begun to investigate the legal and collecting challenges through a deeds of gifts analysis. The CAD/BIM Taskforce is a sub-group of the Society of American Archivists' Design Records Section and focuses on researching digital design records mainly in the Computer Aided Design (CAD) and Building Information Modeling (BIM) formats. We hypothesize that a more proactive approach, starting with the acquisition process would better prepare institutions collecting design and architectural records to address technical and contextual/workflow issues.

The CAD/BIM Taskforce intends to compare how Deeds are written currently by examining extant deed of gifts contributed by various institutions. In archives, deeds of gift frequently take the form of a contract establishing conditions governing the transfer of title to documents and specifying any restrictions on access and use. Additionally, we will see how born digital records are being addressed generally and then see if digital design records are being addressed specifically, if at all. Lastly, we hope to address the minimum fundamental requirements a deed should include as well as look at broadly all opportunities to add integral language around the technological dependencies institutions should be addressing.

About the Author:

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