

Content migration needs skills migration

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A combination of accelerating media decay and technology obsolescence compels audio archivists to migrate analogue recordings by digitisation with ever-increasing urgency. Yet at the same time the very skills needed to do this are being lost as older generations of technical specialists retire. The problem is especially acute in small and medium sized institutional collections and in mixed media archives worldwide which often lack sufficient capacity to build and sustain technical expertise in legacy media among today's 'digital natives'. While the requirement for technical training is widely recognised, what is the best way to achieve it? Distance learning courses or group workshops can be effective ways to share specialist knowledge quickly. The British Library Sound Archive has tried a different approach: intensive, on-site, practical training internships in purpose-built studios. The merits of this method will be discussed.