

# digital ARCHIVAL STORAGE MEDIA

The storage media and required devices you choose will have a lasting impact on your digital archive. Spending some time to learn about the available options will help you make informed decisions.

## EXTERNAL & NETWORKED DRIVES

...come in a variety of sizes that can store the digital content of multiple users across a network. Today's external drives can store multiple terabytes of content; may require an external power source of their own, and tend to be large, stationary devices designed to be permanently attached to a computer or network. Small, portable drives typically have much smaller capacities, but do not require an external power source.

## ONLINE STORAGE SERVICES ( "The Cloud" )

...provide free or fee-based storage space to which you upload your content. A good option for backing up files of small to medium size on an ongoing basis, or storing sets of moderately sized files. NOTE: Transferring very large files or complete backups of large amounts of data can take a day or more. Beware of connection "timeouts". To help ensure that your digital content will be archived, be sure to rely on another storage method for your primary backup.

## CDs/DVDs/BLU-RAY DISCS

...among the most ubiquitous storage media available. With a typical capacity of 700MB, CDs are inexpensive, accessible, portable, and easily labeled. They are also easily broken, and file retrieval requires a CD drive. DVDs have a higher storage capacity, while BDs can store more than CDs and DVDs, a maximum of 50GB.

## FLASH DRIVES

...have various storage capacities, ranging in size from 100MB to over 64GB. Portable, durable, reliable, and fast, their compact design and USB technology make them an ideal means of transporting data to multiple machines. But their storage capacity is too small for large collections of media files.

## DATA TAPES (data cartridges, DAT tapes, MiniDV)

...require a tape drive for data to be copied and stored, and range in capacity from 20GB to multiple terabytes. A good option if you have multiple external hard drives full of data.

Storage media options include CDs, DVDs, Blu-ray discs, flash drives, data tapes, portable external drives, and web-based storage services. Most of these options can store a limited amount of digital content and will require you to own or have access to specific devices for the creation, access, and use of your archived material. Each storage media has advantages and disadvantages. But whichever storage media you select, one of the most important things to remember in archiving your digital content is the **LOCKSS principle**.

### LOCKSS:

lots  
of  
copies  
keep  
stuff  
safe