Harvesting the Government of Canada Web Presence

At
Library and Archives Canada

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Legislative Context:
Mandate

Library and Archives of Canada Act  (S.C. 2004, c. 11)

Preamble
WHEREAS it is necessary that

(a) the documentary heritage of Canada be preserved for the benefit of present and future generations;

(b) Canada be served by an institution that is a source of enduring knowledge accessible to all, contributing to the cultural, social and economic advancement of Canada as a free and democratic society;

(c) that institution facilitate in Canada cooperation among the communities involved in the acquisition, preservation and diffusion of knowledge; and

(d) that institution serve as the continuing memory of the government of Canada and its institutions;
Multiple authorities exist within the *LAC Act* that empower it to collect government information:

- **Section 10: Legal Deposit**
  - *Covers all publications that are published in Canada, including those from the GC.*

- **Section 12 & 13: Government and Ministerial Records**
  - *Covers the disposition, transfer, and right of access to government records.*
Library and Archives of Canada Act
OBJECTS AND POWERS
Sampling from Internet

Section 8. (2):
“In exercising the powers referred to in paragraph (1)(a) and for the purpose of preservation, the Librarian and Archivist may take, at the times and in the manner that he or she considers appropriate, a representative sample of the documentary material of interest to Canada that is accessible to the public without restriction through the Internet or any similar medium.”
LAC’s Web Harvesting: Background

• LAC began harvesting the Government of Canada web presence in 2005
  – In total LAC has collected it three times (2005, 2006, 2007)
• LAC’s means of making this harvested data accessible is the Government of Canada Web Archive (GCWA)
• LAC suspended GC domain harvests in 2008
  – A period of acquisition and resource evaluation policy renewal
  – Harvesting of individual domains or sites has continued by official request:
    • Since July 2008, LAC has processed 132 requests for preservation harvesting of GC websites
Government of Canada Web Archive

Advanced Search

Find results that contain the words

and do not contain the words

and were archived between
Start Date (yyyy-mm-dd) (yyyy-mm-dd)

and are of the following type
Any Type

and are from the website
(e.g. canada.gc.ca)

Go! Reset
Collection Overview

• LAC’s web archival collection is ~15 TB
  – 7.5+ TB (183 million objects collected in 3 domain crawls) is available for consultation through the GCWA
  – ~8 TB have been collected since 2008, but this data is not yet accessible for technical reasons
    • About half of this data is non-governmental
  – LAC has web archival holdings of the Electronic Depository Services Program Checklists as of 1995:
    • http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/201/301/liste_hebdomadaire/
    • http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/201/301/weekly_checklist/
Here today, gone tomorrow
pm.gc.ca

2006-02-05

2006-02-10
Gone today, but preserved @ LAC: A short listing since 2008

- Governor General’s websites and blogs
- PCH: Websites on the various Royal Tours
- State funerals: Roméo Leblanc & Jack Layton
- The Iacobucci, Oliphant, Major, and Cohen Commissions
- INAC/AANDC’s Aboriginal Portal
- First Nations Statistical Institute
- National Aboriginal Health Organization
- National Council of Welfare
- Federal Healthcare Partnership
- Canadian Employment Insurance Financial Board
- National Round Table on the Environment & Economy
- DFAIT: Afghanistan.gc.ca
- DFAIT: G8 and G20
- INAC → AANDC
- CIDA → DFAIT
- HRSDC → ESDC, etc.
Since 2008, LAC has curated several thematic web collections for major cultural, political, and historical events. These collections include but are not limited to GC web resources.

Project topics include, for example:

- Canada’s participation in the Olympic games
  - Beijing 2008, Vancouver 2010 (1.5+ TB), London 2012, Sochi 2014
- 100th Anniversary of the Calgary Stampede
- War of 1812 commemoration
- Keystone Pipeline Development
- Canadian Arctic Sovereignty
- Lac Mégantic Rail Disaster
LAC’s Web Harvesting: Current Status

- LAC began a 4th crawl of the Government of Canada web domain in Sept 2013:
  - *Official Languages Act*, TBS Directive on Web Accessibility
  - Data collection outsourced to Internet Archive’s “Archive-It” service
  - Data will be returned to LAC and made accessible via an upgraded GCWA
2013 GC Domain Harvest: Preliminary Results

• Some GC websites successfully captured as of October 28th 2013:
  – Governor General
  – Prime Minister’s Office
  – Privy Council Office (PCO)
  – Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS)
  – Finance
  – Canada Revenue Agency
  – Auditor General
  – Justice and most of the Commissioners and Ombudspersons
  – Parliament (PARLinfo and LEGISinfo)
  – Supreme Court, Federal Court, Federal Court of Appeal
  – StatsCan
  – Public Safety, RCMP
  – DFAIT (and now CIDA)
  – DND and subsidiaries
  – PWGSC, Service, HRSDC
  – Citizenship and Immigration
  – Industry and its subsidiaries
  – Heritage
  – AANDC and the suite of Northern websites
  – EC, DFO, Climate, Weather, Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
  – Canada.gc.ca
  – Canada Gazette
  – Publications.gc.ca
As of October 28th 2013, we had collected:

• 271 seeds (all major domains, e.g., gg.ca; pm.gc.ca)
• 11,536,589 digital objects
• 879 gigabytes of data

Expected completion of project:
Early November 2013
Next Steps

- LAC is currently defining its long term business strategy and technical requirements for a renewed Web Harvesting Program
- LAC’s web harvesting infrastructure will be updated to modern (IIPC) standards
- The GCWA will be updated to provide access to all of LAC’s web archival holdings (~15 TB)
  - Migration of legacy ARCs to ISO standard WARC	s
  - GCWA will be migrated to the “blue” WCAG compliant GC template
Next Steps

• Complete the project and communicate to clients, stakeholders and the public (once sites are added to the public Archive)

• In consultation with stakeholders, departments and central agencies:
  – Develop a long-term, robust GC web harvesting strategy
  – Align go-forward strategy with GC-wide initiatives including Web Renewal, Open Government, and other IM initiatives as they arise.
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