

# Digital preservation of sound recordings

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## ABSTRACT

Because thousands of sound documents are lost every day as a result of the fragility and deterioration of recording supports, and the obsolescence of analogue recording and playback equipment, the preservation of the sound archives is at a critical point in its history. Currently, the transfer of analogue content to digital platforms is the only way to guarantee the survival of sound heritage. Therefore, the preservation of digital audio files constitutes a long-term safeguard that will eventually replace analogue backup methods used to preserve the world's audio heritage.

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**Keywords:** Sound Archives; Preservation; Digital Preservation; Digital Sound Preservation; Digitizing; Sound Documents.

## RESUMEN

### **La preservación digital sonora**

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La preservación de los archivos sonoros está en un punto crítico de su historia debido a que día a día desaparecen miles de documentos sonoros como consecuencia del deterioro y la fragilidad de los soportes en que han sido grabados, así como por la obsolescencia de los equipos de grabación y reproducción analógica. Hasta ahora, la transferencia de contenidos analógicos a plataformas digitales (digitalización) es la única forma de garantizar la existencia del patrimonio sonoro; por ello la preservación digital de archivos sonoros constituye una forma de salvaguarda a largo plazo que ha modificado los métodos de preservación de documentos sonoros en soportes analógicos.

**Palabras clave:** Archivos sonoros; Preservación; Preservación digital; Preservación digital sonora; Digitalización; Documentos sonoros.

## INTRODUCTION

For many years sound recordings have been a province separate from text documents. Such recordings were defined as non-library documents. This is understandable in light of the fact that sound recording is much newer than the print technology that underpins the collections of museums and libraries. Libraries only began to collect and classify audio documents in the twentieth century (Wright, 2012). In the opinion of Jean Weihs (2001), audio documents began to become ever more visible in the 1950s and 1960s in the United States and Canada. With the advent of sound recording technology, special catalogues of audio documents were implemented in libraries. Dayli (1967) showed that audio recordings require new approaches in terms of pro-

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