COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR "PROMOTING SYNERGY BETWEEN THE ACADEMY AND THE CRM INDUSTRY"

Adopted by the Board of Directors, American Cultural Resources Association, January 2019

Drafted by Duane Peter (Chair) and the ACRA Task Force on
Promoting Synergy between the Academy and the CRM Industry

Communication is essential for increasing collaboration between academic professionals and those working within the CRM industry. Neither side fully understands the constraints and/or opportunities under which the other operates. Collaboration between academic professionals and those working within the CRM industry is not new; neither is it well established. Much work remains to encourage increased collaboration.

ACRA members (Duane Peter and Don Weir) will present recommendations of the Task Force for an upcoming ACRA Board vote. Members of the ACRA Task Force will present a forum at the 2019 ACRA conference to solicit support and to further define ACRA's commitment to the Task Force mission.

The following strategies will promote collaboration in pursuit of two key objectives: Research/Data Access and Education.

RESEARCH/DATA ACCESS

Syntheses of archaeological data have the potential to expand knowledge of the past and to advance public policy. For syntheses to be successful, they must include CRM data and must involve collaboration of CRM and academic archaeologists. By promoting data access and synthetic research, ACRA will effectively promote synergy between the academy and the CRM industry.

1. The Coalition for Archaeological Synthesis (CfAS) was recently formed to advance archaeological synthesis. CfAS is composed of "partner" organizations that include professional societies, CRM firms, academic units, non-governmental organizations, and archaeological cyberinfrastructure providers. CfAS is governed by a board elected by the partner organizations. It is currently funding synthesis studies based on an open competition and is developing additional funding for such studies.
    a. ACRA will join CfAS as a partner organization and will encourage member firms to become partners.
    b. ACRA will encourage member firms to propose and participate in synthesis studies.
2. Representing the industry, ACRA will encourage federal agencies at all levels to fulfill their legal responsibilities to make all digital archaeological data that document their investigations (broadly construed as datasets, documents, images, etc.) generated as part of public undertakings easily discoverable, accessible, usable, and preserved for future use in a responsible digital repository[1] capable of providing essential digital data curation services for databases, documents, and images as described in footnote 1. ACRA will also encourage its members, in their individual interactions with agency clients and regulators, to do the same.
    a. ACRA Task Force will develop a white paper encouraging digital curation for presentation to agencies.

      b. ACRA will attempt to meet with federal agencies at SAA meeting to encourage appropriate digital curation.

      c. ACRA and its members will encourage federal, state, and local agencies to include proper curation and dissemination of archaeological data in RFPs, SOWs, and as evaluation criteria for the projects they sponsor.

3. Results of this Task Force will be presented to the board of directors of the Register of Professional Archaeologists (RPA) for their added support. RPA could potentially clarify data curation responsibilities at several junctures in the [RPA Code of Conduct](#), especially at 2.1 and Standards of Research Performance, especially at Sections IV & V.

4. ACRA will demonstrate industry support for proper digital data curation and access at NCSHPO meeting.

5. ACRA will lobby the US Congress to provide oversight on agency actions to fulfill their legal responsibilities for data access and preservation for new projects and to provide funding to the agencies to assist in satisfying these responsibilities with respect to legacy data.

6. ACRA will encourage its member firms to work with private clients to ensure that, insofar as possible, the digital archaeological data they collect are made available for appropriate use (e.g., in a responsible digital repository capable of providing essential digital data curation services), consistent with our responsibilities as stewards of the archaeological record. Having data in a digital format in one place will allow future projects to be done more cost-effectively and will eliminate redundancy. Task Force members and allies will present this essential concept at national and regional industry meetings and in other venues.

7. ACRA's member firms, as leaders in the field, will deposit data from new projects in a responsible digital repository capable of providing essential digital data curation services so these data can be used in research and resource management by CRM professionals, the academy, and government. By doing this, the firms will highlight the quality of their work in the competitive environment and their commitment to enhancing the sustained value of the archaeological record.

8. ACRA will encourage member firms to deposit data from their legacy projects in a responsible digital repository capable of providing essential digital data curation services and to work with project sponsors to obtain any necessary permission to do so. This will be supported by conference sessions and newsletter articles focused on refinement of recommended practices.

9. Through SAA, RPA, SHA, and NCPE communication venues, academic professionals will be encouraged to train students about the importance of effectively curating the results of their research, recommended practices related to long-term data curation, and making their data easily and widely available.

10. ACRA, SAA, RPA, SHA, and NCPE will encourage collaboration at the local level – firms working with colleges and universities. Collaboration could emphasize:

      a. Enhancement of regional research contexts, including training opportunities for students.

      b. Development of a single clearing house for universities requiring or encouraging internships, perhaps via the ACRA website

11. Through SAA, RPA, SHA, and NCPE communication venues, academic professionals will be encouraged to suggest that graduate students writing theses or dissertations make use of legacy data.

12. Through SAA, RPA, SHA, and NCPE communication venues, academic professionals will be encouraged to develop research collaborations with CRM professionals that enable the utilization of CRM-generated data and widen the credit for research results to include relevant CRM archaeologists and firms.

EDUCATION

1. ACRA will develop a synopsis of skill sets needed by industry and will promote model education programs. A survey of industry may be necessary.
2. ACRA will communicate needs of industry to academic professionals through national meeting venues and advocates within specific departments.
3. ACRA will encourage industry support of student training (internships, independent studies) through conferences and newsletters.
4. ACRA will showcase both PhD and MA-level programs that are meeting CRM industry needs in exemplary ways. The initial concept is to have institutions provide synopses of how they are meeting industry needs through a special section in *The SAA Archaeological Record* and other outlets available via SHA, NCPE, and ACRA.

[1]A responsible digital repository must exhibit these key characteristics:

1. Deposited data are broadly discoverable using commonly available Internet search engines, as well as through the repository website.
2. Deposited data are easily accessible online, but controlled access for confidential information (e.g., precise *in situ* site locations) also is possible.
3. Deposited files are linked permanently to rich, disciplinary-appropriate administrative, descriptive, and technical metadata, which enable their re-use.
4. The repository operates under a sustainable financial and/or contingency plan that ensures long-term access and preservation of its content.
5. Deposited files are regularly checked and their integrity maintained.
6. The repository has an appropriate plan to provide long-term access and preservation as hardware and software change.
7. The repository maintains robust backups of repository content and software, including full off-site backup.

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