FAST LTA

Customer Case Study | Silent Bricks | (Semi-)static Heritage Archive

How Collectie Overijssel stores digital heritage immutably after the final correction

During digitisation, a file is not always final immediately. Collectie Overijssel therefore sought storage that allows corrections during the workflow while protecting the final archive against modifications. Two Silent Brick systems combine an intermediate stage, WORM storage and replication to a second location.

A growing archive with two types of files

Collectie Overijssel manages government and private archives from the province and municipalities. In addition to born-digital material, the organisation processes heritage materials that are first digitised from physical media. Both types of files must remain usable in the long term. This requires not only capacity and availability, but also the authenticity and integrity of the collection.

During digitisation, it sometimes only becomes apparent after storage that a scan or file still needs to be checked or corrected. An immutable archive is desirable for the final version, but must not prevent this necessary step. Collectie Overijssel also sought an environment that could grow with the volume of data, provide fast access and be mirrored to a second location.

The experience?

“A system that makes it possible to store files sustainably and energy-efficiently while providing good retrieval speeds.”

Bert Nielsen, Data Manager and Digital Preservation Officer at Collectie Overijssel



Photo’s: Collectie Overijssel, February 2024

COMEX

From working file to final archive

Following an evaluation, the organisation selected Silent Bricks from FAST LTA. The configuration includes storage for static and semi-static archive data. Both locations have a 2 TB net SSD intermediate storage layer. This allows the time between receiving a file and transferring it to WORM storage to be aligned with the verification process during digitisation. In the WORM section, the final version can no longer be modified.

At the primary location, there is also a physically separated copy of the semi-static archive, containing files that can still change. The second location is used for replication and backup. The systems were installed on 18 April 2023. For the initial large data transfer, they were placed together so that the transfer did not have to take place over the slower connection between the locations. They were then connected for replication. The second location does not have a physically separated replica of the semi-static archive.

Protection without additional manual work in daily management

This setup follows the lifecycle of the material: first checking and correcting where necessary, then storing the final version immutably. At the same time, the second location reduces dependence on a single site. The modular storage allows capacity to be added later; according to the original case study, the team does not need to repeatedly work in the management interface after setup, as long as the storage infrastructure remains unchanged.

The value therefore lies in the combination of protection and usability. Collectie Overijssel can preserve its digital heritage without prematurely closing the digitisation process.