YOU AND YOUR DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

Do you know where you are leaving your digital footprint?
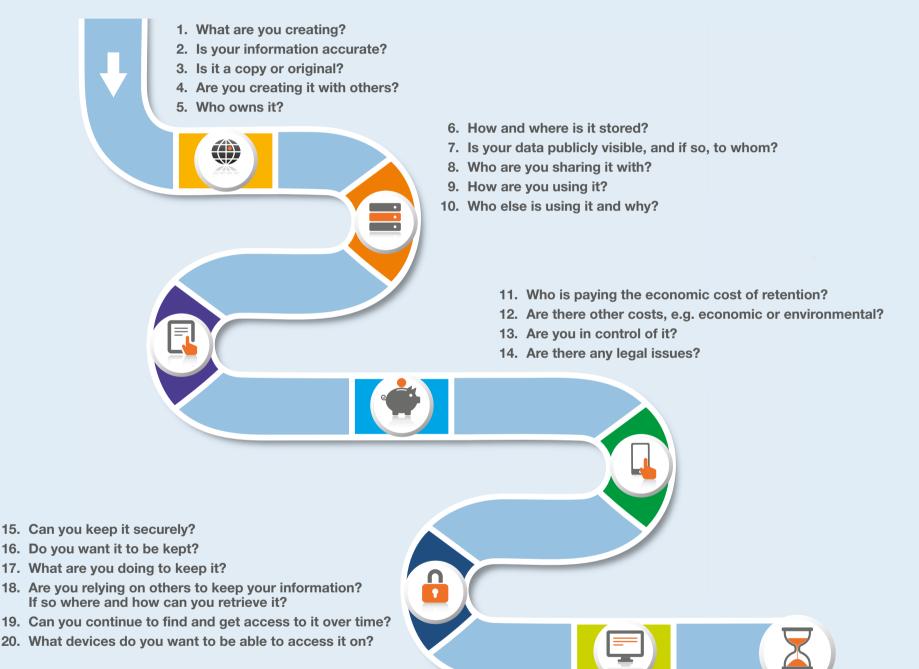
Every device we use captures some digital evidence.

- What digital devices do you have? A mobile phone, a smart phone, a tablet, a laptop, a fitness tracker or other wearable device, a kindle, a home assistant?
- What platforms, systems and services do you use? An Internet Service Provider, social media (Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Pinterest), office software, Apps, search engines, online banking, online retail, cloud services? How much control do you have when using these?
- What are you creating and storing with these devices and services? Data, information, photos, videos?

All of these create your digital footprint – do you know what and where it is and who is using it? Are you managing it?

We all rely on information captured as records in our daily lives. We use it for social activities, as proof of who we are and what we do, to capture events, research our family history or prove we have made payments. In business we use it to inform decision-making, conduct inquiries, hold individuals and organisations to account, to demonstrate transparency, to innovate, to research the past and 'stand on the shoulders of giants'.

In the digital world our information, our records, our digital evidence base is at risk because of the challenges we face in how it is created and captured, how we preserve it as evidence, and how we access and use it in the context of constant change. Can you guarantee you will be able to access your original and authentic records/footprints in the future and be able to use them? Who are you relying on to make this happen? What steps can you take to help? How is your information depleting our natural capital in energy consumption?

Answer the questions below to find out how much you know about your digital footprint and how well you're safeguarding it for the future. Then decide what other steps you need to take to manage it to meet your needs today, tomorrow and further into the future.

1. What are you creating?
2. Is your information accurate?
3. Is it a copy or original?
4. Are you creating it with others?
5. Who owns it?

6. How and where is it stored?
7. Is your data publicly visible, and if so, to whom?
8. Who are you sharing it with?
9. How are you using it?
10. Who else is using it and why?

11. Who is paying the economic cost of retention?
12. Are there other costs, e.g. economic or environmental?
13. Are you in control of it?
14. Are there any legal issues?

15. Can you keep it securely?
16. Do you want it to be kept?
17. What are you doing to keep it?
18. Are you relying on others to keep your information? If so where and how can you retrieve it?
19. Can you continue to find and get access to it over time?
20. What devices do you want to be able to access it on?

21. Will you be able to use it as evidence?
22. Will you be able to understand it?
23. How is it changing?
24. Do you need to know it has been destroyed?
25. Who might need or want to use it in the future?

RecordDNA International Research Network

Professor Julie McLeod
Northumbria University
Email: **julie.mcleod@northumbria.ac.uk**

Dr Elizabeth Lomas
University College London
Email: **e.lomas@ucl.ac.uk**

RecordDNA is a Northumbria University and UCL led international research network bringing together academics, practitioners, users and systems developers to develop a new cross-disciplinary network of stakeholders with wide ranging expertise to explore the question 'In the digital era what is the concept of the record and what implications are there for the usability of the future the evidence base?' Through this work we hope to aid the maintenance of the digital evidence base through time.

https://recorddna.wordpress.com

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