

AHFAP Photographic Survey

Thanks

We would like to thank all the members who participated in this survey and the AHFAP survey committee for all their hard work in formulating this study. As with any survey the results can be interpreted in different ways and we would like members to let the committee know their thoughts so that a combination of your thoughts and our interpretation can help us co-ordinate the needs of our members in the future.

The Digital Survey Group comprises: Ken Hickey, Colin White, James Stevenson, Paul Gardner, Dave Clarke, Steve Wallace and Anne Martin, Pat Hart, Steve Chapman

The survey is available here in its entirety¹ for the membership to review and to make its own observations and conclusions on the information that has been given. There were about 20 completed surveys which represents a statistically expected and respectable 15% of the membership. A brief summary of our interpretation of the responses follow.

The committee decided that there were 4 broad sections to investigate in the survey which would be of interest in how the association shapes future programmes for our members. The 4 sections are:

1. General Information Information about departments, individuals, staff structures and levels, budgets and financing.
2. Photographic Capture and Output Information about ratio of film to digital, how many images are made, what is work produced for and changes in working practices.
3. Photographic Asset Management Information about the size of collections, cataloguing and distribution.
4. Preservation Information about the storage and preservation of photographic collections.

- 1. General Information Breakdown** The broad view expressed on departments, individuals, departmental structures, budgets, financing and staff levels was that the majority are satisfied with their setups. The majority of those replying were from either a museum or gallery and photograph a diverse range of subject matter.

Just under 80% of responders felt in control of their budgets and the same percentage were also happy with the structure of their departments. Those not happy with the control of their budget included the comments:

"IT demand input into choice of digital cameras"
And *"all a closely guarded secret run by accountants"*

This appears to indicate that although we as a profession have progressed there are still some institutions unable to bring themselves to listen to their own experts.

The responders who were unhappy with the structure of their department are unhappy with cost-cutting exercises and flat departmental structures, resulting in understaffing and problems in day-to-day management.

Nearly 80% have seen a change in the work requested over the last 5 years. The majority of replies stated the biggest change was the reduction of film use for digital capture but a few replies went further stating:

"Technical photography has become more defined whilst expectation on creative work has to be economical and competitive"

"Project related"

"Lower end web standard images plus top end 100+Mb imagery for digital picture library"

¹ One survey has not been included due to responses not matching questions.

- 2. Photography: Capture/Output** Nearly 90% of respondents felt that the ratio of film to digital work was right for them with those not happy indicating that they expect to reach where they feel they should be in the not so distant future. All respondents stated that they had either seen an increase in post-production or it had remained the same and all now do work for electronic media systems as a matter of course.

88% of respondents said they employed colour management in their photographic systems. However, from the comments it is obvious that what is understood by colour management differs from contributor to contributor.

"Complete system wide"

"For all devices and screens"

"I have been very lucky in that my camera, monitor and printer all speak to each other with no problem at all"

"Profile/calibration/Gretag MacBeth systems"

"Normal correction/enhancement"

"Capture through to print"

This diversity in views of colour management is no great surprise considering that it is an attempt to quantify objectively a subjective judgement in a, usually, changing viewing environment.

- 3. Photography: Asset Management** Nearly 90% of respondents now catalogue at least some of their photography electronically and, although 62% have their work catalogued by another department, nearly 70% of them are satisfied with the work done.

There seems to be an underlying feeling that the time now needed for cataloguing and asset management is impinging on photography time which appears to indicate that, in the ratio of time set aside for photography and cataloguing, it is growing for the latter. A couple of the comments regarding satisfaction with the standard to which photographic assets are catalogued were:

"No. More people dedicated to this"

"No. Spend all time cataloguing, take no more photos"

This indicates that lone photographers are going to need spend more time cataloguing and less time photographing and departments are going to need to look at the balance of their departments in the future.

It is also clear that digital watermarking is not being implemented by most people, with 94% of responders not using it, although a few indicated they are still interested in using the technology. The lack of implementation can probably be summed up with the following comment:

"The museum felt that watermarking was not a financially justifiable security feature"

- 4. Preservation** With the previous 3 sections there appeared to be a broad agreement in the management, capture, output and cataloguing of our photography. The preservation section indicates that the work being done to preserve our collections is at different stages. Over 43% of responses indicated that their organisations either did not have or they were not aware of their organisations having a formal preservation policy whilst 62% stated that their department did not have a formal preservation policy.

Digital images are stored on a range of devices with many of us using more than one device. However, 35% of responders said they do not keep multiple backup copies of their files and, of those who do, only 63% have two copies.

On the question of digital migration 88% of responders have no plan to migrate their files from current storage devices and of the 2 responders who do intend to migrate between every 4-6 years.

The file formats of choice for the preservation image file is mainly TIFF or RAW with the answers appearing to indicate that RAW is now taking over from previously saved TIFF files as the format of choice and 77% of responders do not compress the preservation image file.

Summary

The survey indicates that the majority of photographers in the sector we represent have now made the transition from conventional to digital photography with only a few feeling they haven't yet arrived where they would ideally like to be. There also appear to be effective departmental structures and good budgetary control of funds for the most part and an acknowledgement that photographic work has changed significantly in the last 5 years, although very few have used consultants to manage this change.

The majority of us now produce for electronic media, the web and other database systems, but we seem to produce the images to a range of different technical specifications with a range of ideas of exactly what we understand by colour management and a large proportion of us have no documented specifications or procedures.

The majority of people were satisfied with the asset management, cataloguing and distribution of their photographic collections with the cataloguing being done electronically or a combination of manually and electronically in the majority of cases. A large proportion of cataloguing is undertaken outside of the photographers and departments that responded but the majority seemed happy with this arrangement. The distribution of images with electronic watermarking appears not to be being utilised, with practically all responders not using watermarks, although a few appear to favour doing it if they could.

The degree of preservation of photographs appears to be at different levels. This could be attributed to the relatively recent transition to digital imaging and uncertainty about the longevity of digital media compared with the trusted robustness of film.

One point that should be made in this summary, each respondent had 'photographer' or 'photographic' in their job title which indicates although the tools of our trade may have changed the skills by which we work are as least as important as they always were.

Appendix: Organisations canvassed and their funding

Type of organisation

42% Museum
18% Gallery
11% Archive
29% Commercial

Categories as % of membership

19% Museum
6% Gallery
13% Archive
16% Commercial

Funding

72% Gov
6% Local Gov
22% Other *78% public sector*

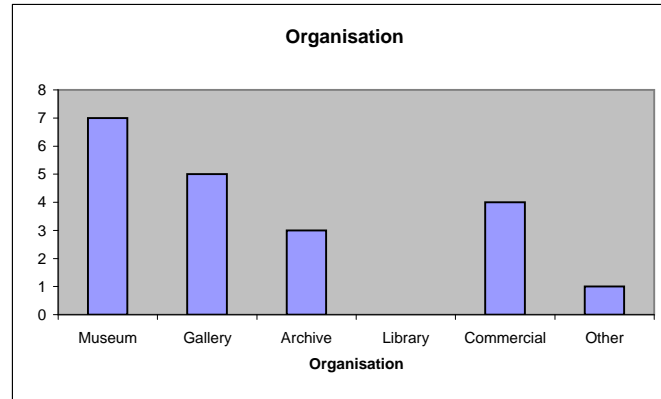
Funding by membership

25% Gov
14% Local Gov
61% Other *29% public sector*

1. General Information

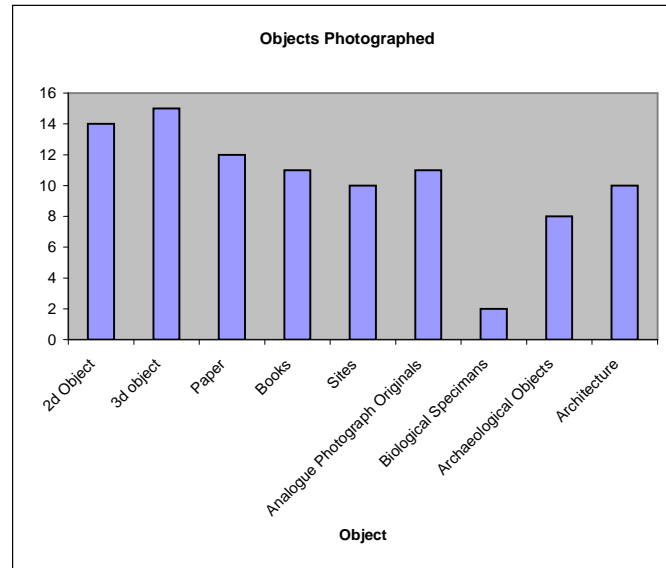
1.2 What type of Organisation do you work for?

Museum	7
Gallery	5
Archive	3
Library	0
Commercial	4
Other	1



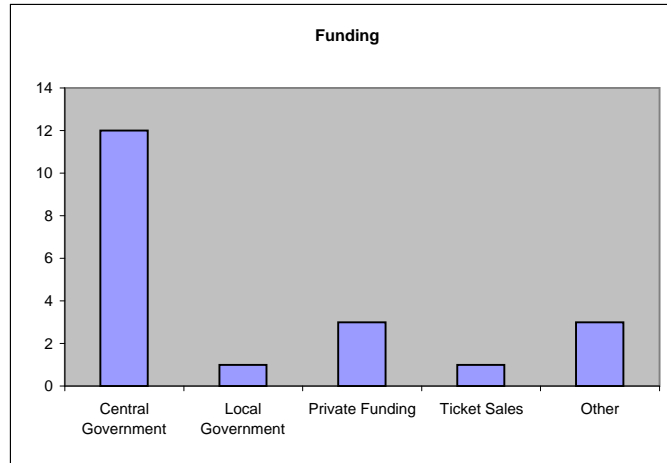
1.3 What type of Cultural Object do you make images from?

2d Object	14
3d object	15
Paper	12
Books	11
Sites	10
Analogue Photograph Originals	11
Biological Specimens	2
Archaeological Objects	8
Architecture	10



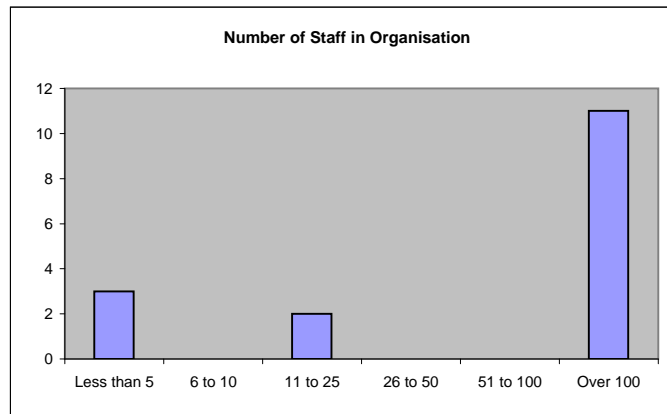
1.4 How is your Organisation Funded?

Central Government	12
Local Government	1
Private Funding	3
Ticket Sales	1
Other	3



1.5 How many staff in your organisation?

Less than 5	3
6 to 10	0
11 to 25	2
26 to 50	0
51 to 100	0
Over 100	11



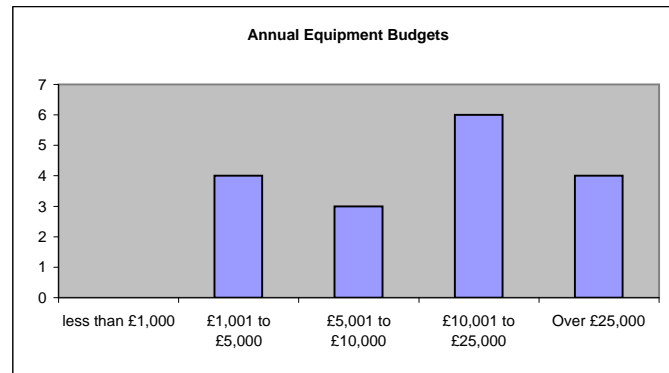
1.6 How Many Staff in your Department?

Yourself	3
2 to 4	6
5 to 10	4
Over 10	4



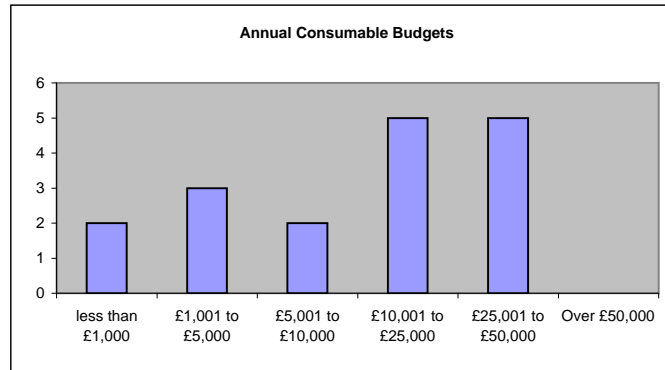
1.7 What is your depts annual Equipment Budget?

less than £1,000	0
£1,001 to £5,000	4
£5,001 to £10,000	3
£10,001 to £25,000	6
Over £25,000	4



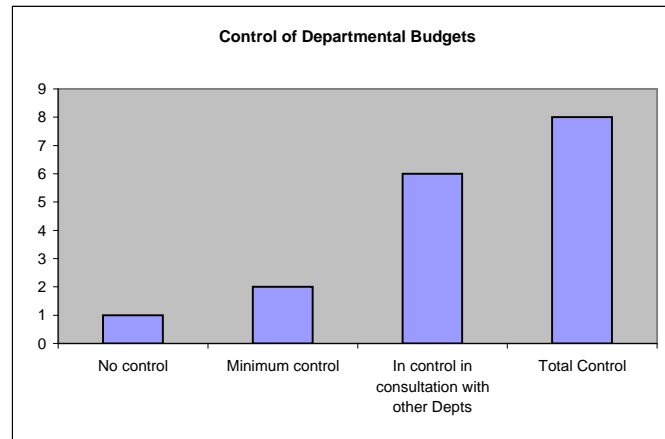
1.8 What is your Depts annual consumable budget?

less than £1,000	2
£1,001 to £5,000	3
£5,001 to £10,000	2
£10,001 to £25,000	5
£25,001 to £50,000	5
Over £50,000	0



1.9 How Much Control Do you feel you have in the planning and spending of your budgets?

No control	1
Minimum control	2
In control in consultation with other Depts	6
Total Control	8



1.10 Are you happy with the level of control you have of your budget?

Yes	13
No	4

Comments IT demand input into choice of digital cameras which is not their remit.
all a closely guarded secret run by accountants

1.11. Have you seen changes in the types of photographic work requested in the last 5 years?

Yes	14
No	4

Comments Project Related
Technical photography has become more defined whilst expectation on creative work has to be economical and competitive.
We are now fully digital.
More large projects to provide images for web based databases.
The vast majority of requests are now for digital images as opposed to conventional photographs
more project based
Film no longer required
Digital copies now exceed analogue copies
lower end web standard images plus top end 100+mb imagery for digital picture library
move towards digital, BW very much reduced
more digital imaging
switch to digital
digital has taken over

1.12. Does your organisation have an agreed structured training program for your department?

Yes	7
No	10

Comments interns from college
Software and digital capture
short term training positions for young photographers
Although we don't have a structured training programme, we do receive training when required
Mainly IT programs
photoshpe cs3 , archive standards
in depth technical

1.13. Do you consider your department structured effectively for the work you are expected to carry out?

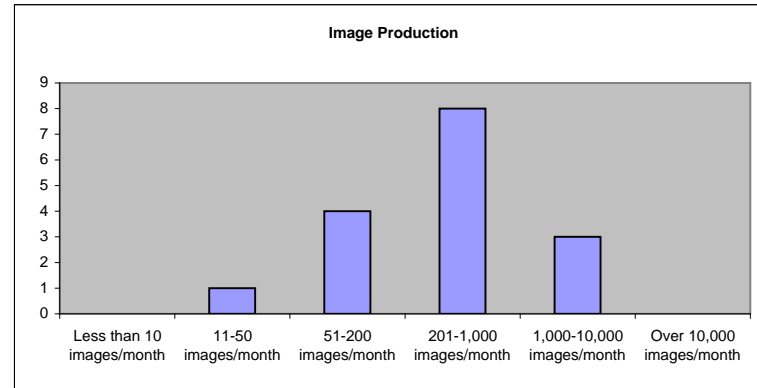
Yes	13
No	4

Comments flat structure, more teams
Recent pay & grading excercise destroyed managerial structure.
Additional staff are required

2. Photography: Capture/Output

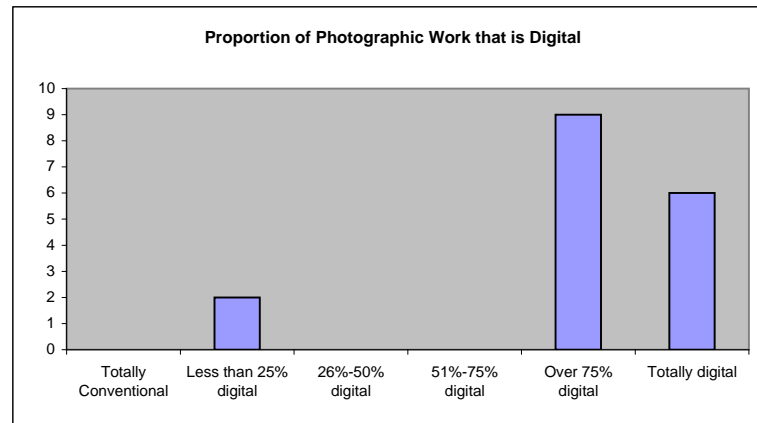
2.1. How many images is your section creating?

Less than 10 images/month	0
11-50 images/month	1
51-200 images/month	4
201-1,000 images/month	8
1,000-10,000 images/month	3
Over 10,000 images/month	0



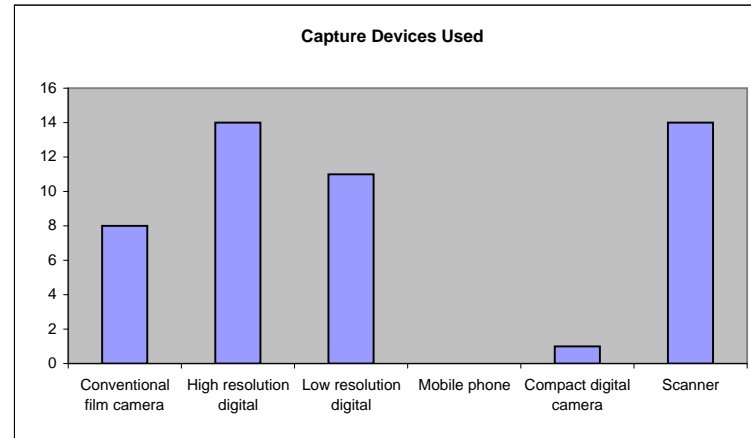
2.2. What ratio of digital to conventional photography does your department undertake?

Totally Conventional	0
Less than 25% digital	2
26%-50% digital	0
51%-75% digital	0
Over 75% digital	9
Totally digital	6



2.3.What capture device do you use in your section?

Conventional film camera	8
High resolution digital	14
Low resolution digital	11
Mobile phone	0
Compact digital camera	1
Scanner	14



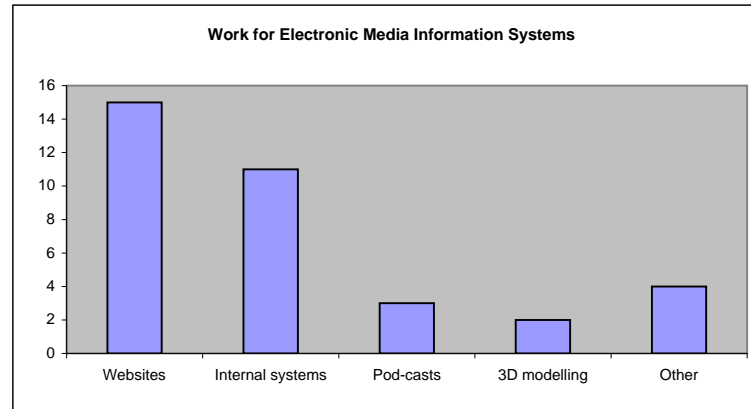
2.4.Do you think that your ratio of conventional to digital work correct?

Yes	16
No	2

Comments No 100% digital within 1-2 years
 No 95% digital, 5% scanned film
 Yes but changing towards digital as processing dies
 99% digital.

2.5.Does your department produce work specifically for electronic media information systems?

Websites	15
Internal systems	11
Pod-casts	3
3D modelling	2
Other	4



Other

video gallery interactives production of reports and pr images sales

2.6.Do you have documented departmental photographic procedures or manuals?

Yes	9
No	9

Comments

Yes online procedure documents for databases, style, ethics Yes a dynamic electronic manual of current photographic practice/requirements Yes The Photo section has a set of procedures laid down for photography of accessioned items within the collection. Yes Guidelines produced for the use of specific items of equipment Yes Fully documented Standards and Procedures manual Yes partially for example x-ray techniques Yes site manual , and follow archiving guidelines laid down by museums

2.7. Do you employ colour management in your photographic processes?

Yes	15
No	2

Comments	Yes on all monitors and cameras Yes All image captured through a colour managed system Yes for all devices and sceens Yes I have been very lucky in that my camera, monitor and printer all speak to each other with no problems at all. Yes calibration of scanners, monitors and printers Yes Captue through to print Yes Normal correction/enharnsment Yes profile/calibration/ Gretag Macbeth systems Yes complete systemwide Yes calibrated & profiled monitirs & printers + raw files colour balanced etc Yes Calibrated screens and standard colour space Yes spider pro 2
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2.8. Do you make use of consultants for your photographic work?

Yes	4
No	14

Comments	Yes Ashridge no I would not recomend them Yes TMAS, Fife, Scotland. Yes Yes Yes Yes colour management
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2.9. Do you adopt recognised or established Image standards for different uses?

Yes	15
No	2

2.10. Do you have internal standardised guidelines?

Yes	13
No	4

2.11. Do you have control over post production image processing?

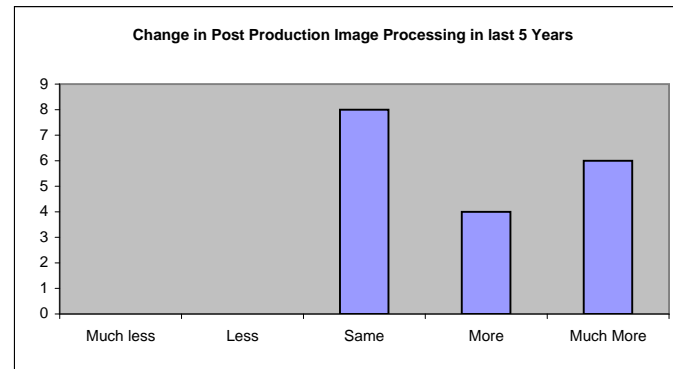
Yes	17
No	1

2.12. Is post production image processing carried out entirely within your section?

Yes	15
No	3

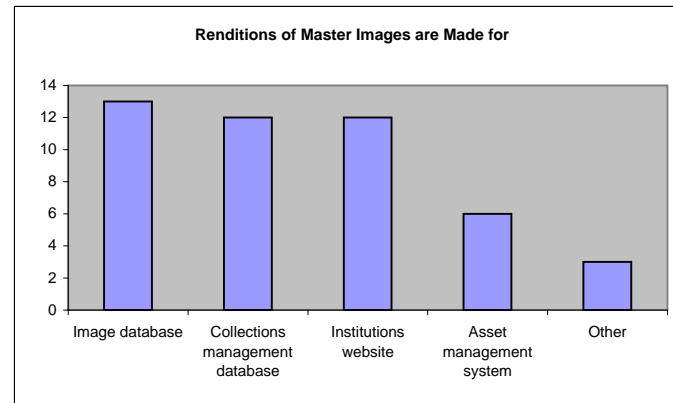
2.13. How does this compare to 5 years ago?

Much less	0
Less	0
Same	8
More	4
Much More	6



2.14. Do you make renditions of your master images for?

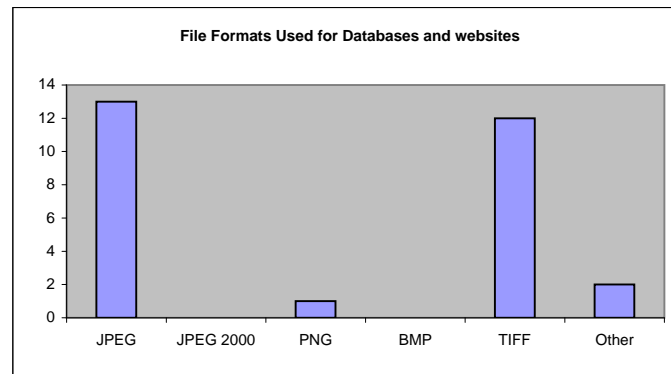
Image database	13
Collections management database	12
Institutions website	12
Asset management system	6
Other	3



Comments Other external clients
Other publication
Other part of archive to send of to museums

2.15.What is the format of these other versions?

JPEG	13
JPEG 2000	0
PNG	1
BMP	0
TIFF	12
Other	2



Comments Other DNG,FFF RAW formats.
gif

2.16.Do you have a method of preparing files for external use?

Yes	7
No	11

Comments Yes Full documentation is available on request.
Yes Using a droplet in Photoshop to create high quality j pegs for courtesy copies
Yes We have several methods but mostly based on Tiff in Adobe RGB 8 bit unsharpened
Yes Sent as RGB files
Yes tailored to the order
Yes Try to meet clients requests & needs

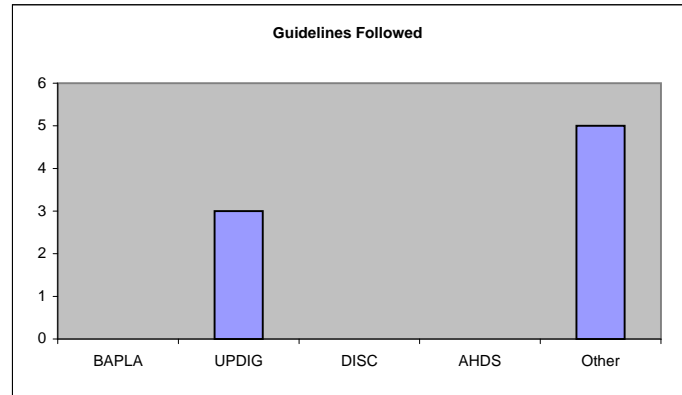
2.17. Do you routinely produce guide proof prints for external printers?

Yes	5
No	12

Comments Yes Proofs are provided by our graphic designers
 Yes 5x7 prints supplied by 44" Epson printer with profile attached
 No but we will.
 Yes colour print
 Yes I produce the most accurate A4 image that I can.

2.18. Do you follow any existing guidelines?

BAPLA	0
UPDIG	3
DISC	0
AHDS	0
Other	5



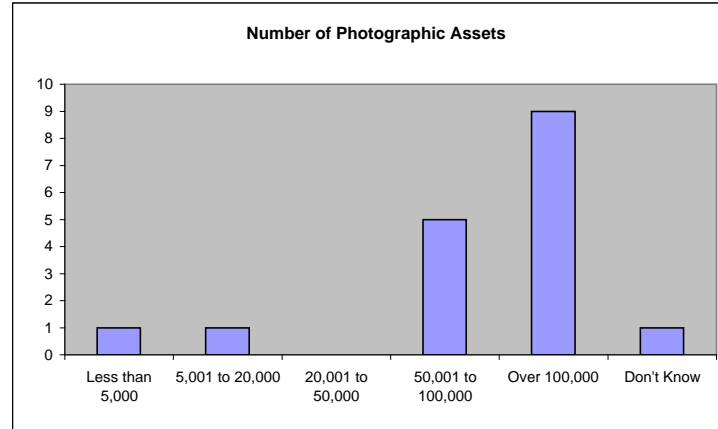
Other

JPG	5
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3. Photography: Asset management

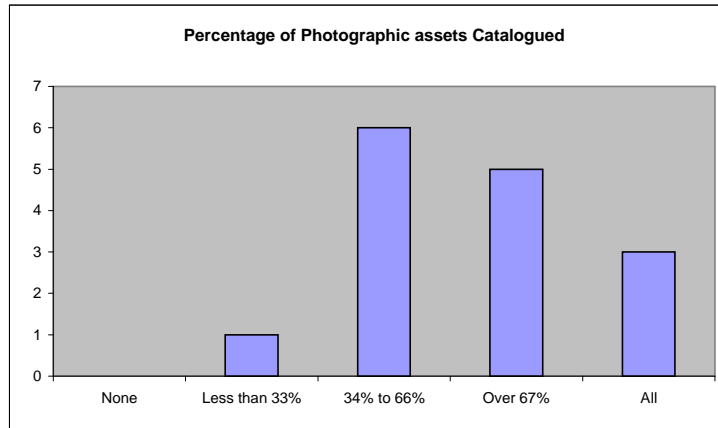
3.1. How many photographic assets do you have?

Less than 5,000	1
5,001 to 20,000	1
20,001 to 50,000	0
50,001 to 100,000	5
Over 100,000	9
Don't Know	1



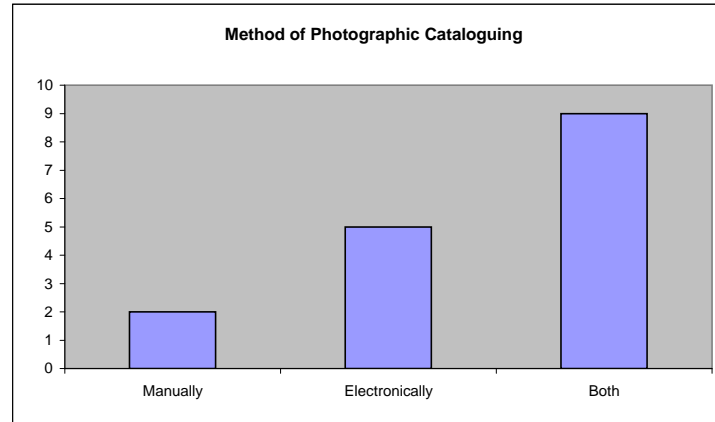
3.2. How many photographic assets are catalogued?

None	0
Less than 33%	1
34% to 66%	6
Over 67%	5
All	3



3.3.How are the photogric assets catalogued?

Manually	2
Electronically	5
Both	9



3.4.Are photographic assets catalogued entirely by your department?

Yes	6
No	10

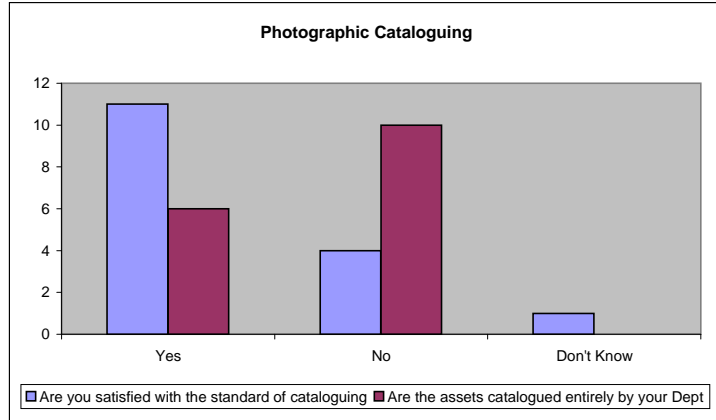
Comments

No anyone else who make images for their own work
 No Curatorial dpartments
 No In house picture library
 No Members of our archive
 No On line access team
 No Archives Department
 Yes Our assets are there are other depts with their own photogric assets such as Conservation and Archive
 No Curations and cataloguing teams
 No archaeological site staff
 No curators/documentation officers
 No library, archives, oral history, Heritage Collections,Arts Conservation, arts Collections.....it really does need a sort out!

3.5. Are you satisfied with the standard to which your photographic assets are catalogued?

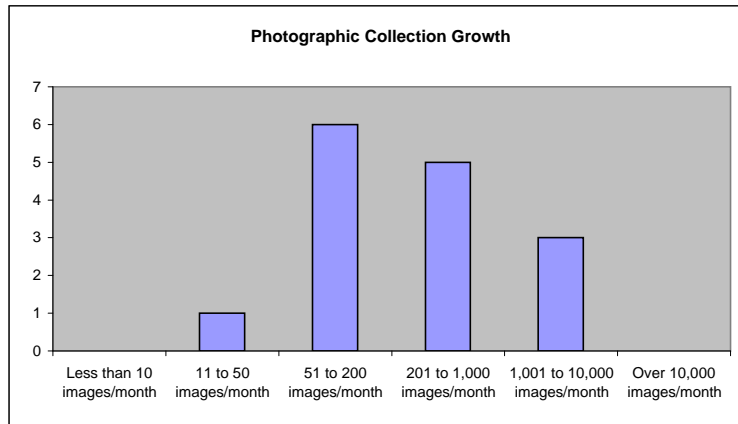
Yes	11
No	4
Don't Know	1

Comments No more people to be dedicated to this
 Don't know will be satisfied when the system is fully implemented
 No Image data base and metadata
 No spend all time catalogueing take no more photos
 largely yes
 No Create a central archive.



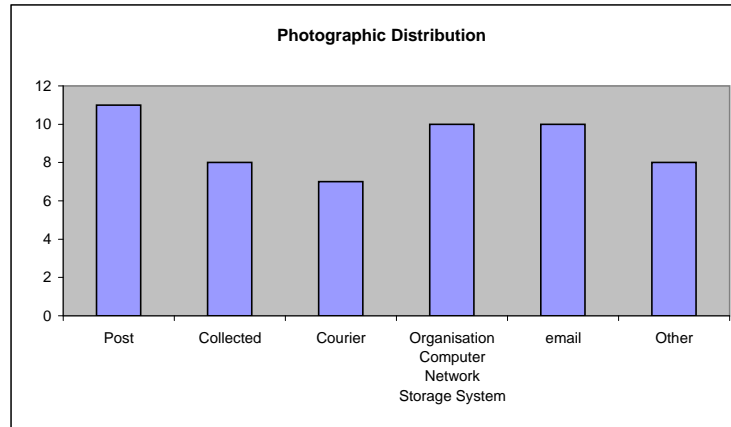
3.6. How quickly is your photographic collection growing?

Less than 10 images/month	0
11 to 50 images/month	1
51 to 200 images/month	6
201 to 1,000 images/month	5
1,001 to 10,000 images/month	3
Over 10,000 images/month	0



3.7.How are your photographic images distributed?

Post	11
Collected	8
Courier	7
Organisation Computer Network Storage System	10
email	10
Other	8



Other
 download from museum website
 Downloaded from web site
 FTP
 CD
 CD/DVD sometimes
 ftp upload

3.8.Do you watermark your digital images?

Yes	1
No	16

Comments
 Yes signum on the fly when requested from the website
 No We do not watermark but we tell customers that a number of our images are watermarked.
 No The Museum felt that watermarking was not a financially justifiable security feature.
 No Organisational decision to have images available without watermark
 No Images are only accessible at very low resolution so not seen as any more a risk than postcards for example
 No hope to in the future
 No My employer doesn't want me to.

4. Preservation

4.1.Does your organisation have a formal Preservation Policy?

Yes	9
No	5
Don't Know	2

4.2.Does your department or section have a formal Preservation Policy?

Yes	6
No	10

4.3.Does your formal Preservation Policy refer to the preservation of digital content?

Yes	7
No	6

4.4.Does your organisation have an environmentally controlled archive?

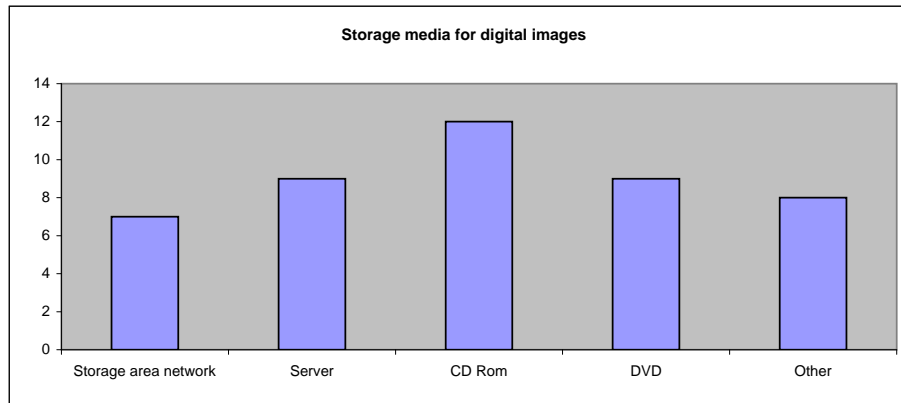
Yes	6
No	10

Comments

Yes Specs available on request.
Yes Temperature
Yes Temperature and humidity control
Yes air conditioned to 18 degrees
Yes Heat, light, humidity etc.
No as best we can

4.5. On what media do you store your digital images?

Storage area network	7
Server	9
CD Rom	12
DVD	9
Other	8



Other

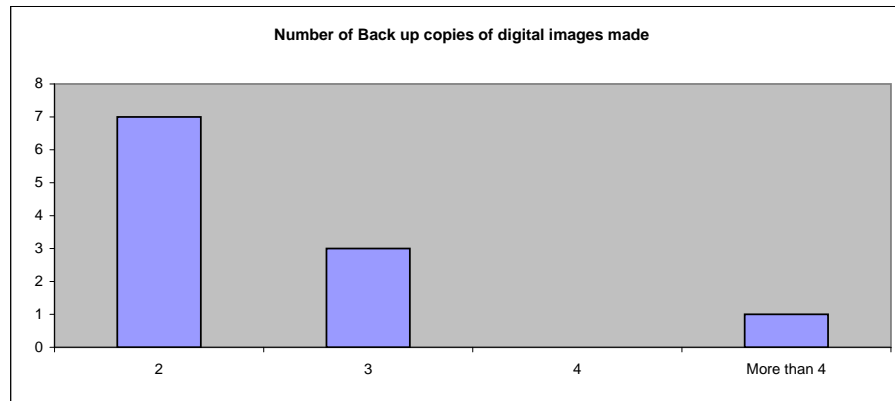
External HD	7
Off line Electronic Storage	1
Tape	1

4.6. Do you keep multiple backup copies of your digital images?

Yes	11
No	6

4.7. If yes how many copies do you make?

2	7
3	3
4	0
More than 4	1

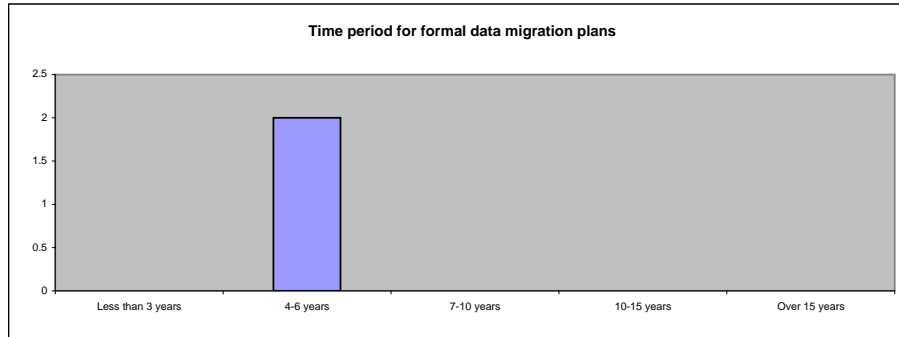


4.8. Do you have a formal data migration plan for your digital images?

Yes	2
No	15

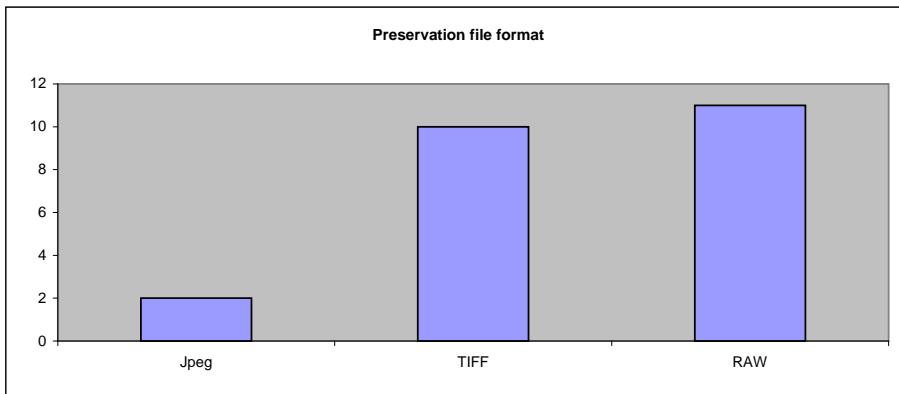
4.9. If yes over what time period are you going to migrate?

Less than 3 years	0
4-6 years	2
7-10 years	0
10-15 years	0
Over 15 years	0



4.10. What digital file format do you use to store your digital images?

Jpeg	2
TIFF	10
RAW	11



4.12. Do you use any form of compression technique for your preservation file?

Yes	4
No	14