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Agency Provides \$400,000 for Research on Preserving Electronic Records

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission has awarded a grant of more than \$400,000 for research into better ways of preserving electronic records.

As businesses and governments keep more information about deeds, employment contracts, and other legal documents in electronic data bases, some historians worry that the records could be too easily altered if there is no paper trail to follow later. Data also could be changed by accident when computer systems are upgraded.

"Think about the role of records in society," says Anne Gilliland-Swetland, an assistant professor of information studies at the University of California at Los Angeles, who is working on the project along with researchers from other universities and from institutions including the National Archives. "As you move material from system to system, there are all sorts of chances for error, accidental or deliberate, to crop up."

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