# Digital Distribution to Depository Libraries:

# Exploring the Issues

## October 25, 2006

# Overview

In the digital information age, distribution of FDLP publications in intangible, digital form to Federal depository libraries is an evolutionary step in transforming the 20$^{th}$ century model of distributing tangible publications.

Distribution has evolved:

1960's – strictly ink-on-paper

1970's – addition of microforms

1990's – addition of tangible electronic products

1994 – access to online resources

# Overview

The positive effects:

- Improvement in comprehensiveness
- Expansion to public access

The results:

- Increase in information born digital
- Decrease in tangible distribution products

# Overview

Presently files can be downloaded for local use and storage

- GPO Access

- PURLS

GPO is seeking information for FDsys requirements

- Continuous ability to download

- Develop new specific requirements

# General Assumptions

1. Consistent with other formats, GPO will distribute authentic digital publications in formats intended for public access.

# General Assumptions

2. The characteristics of digital publications vary so significantly from tangible products that new, more flexible, guidelines for managing them in depository libraries will need to be developed.

# General Assumptions

3. Preservation of the source files, called Archival Information Packages in FDsys, will be the responsibility of GPO and its preservation partners.

# General Assumptions

4. For a majority of content, digital distribution represents another format choice that can be selected, in addition to print, microfiche, and tangible electronic products.

# General Assumptions

5. Libraries receiving FDLP digital publications would be responsible for providing sufficient infrastructure, including bandwidth and storage, to provide timely and effective public access.

# General Assumptions

6. Libraries would need to ensure that they are providing access to the same version(s) of a digital publication that is/are available from GPO.

# Questions for Discussion:
# 1.    Access

a.  Is the major goal of digital distribution to improve public access to FDLP publications, and if so, how is that goal facilitated by libraries providing local access to a digital copy?

b.  Should libraries receiving digital distribution be expected to offer no-fee, anonymous public access to local copies of FDLP digital publications, and to minimize any restrictions such as user registration, location, etc?

c.  Should depository libraries take active steps, such as including metadata in their catalog or developing appropriate web pages, to enable users to identify and link to FDLP digital publications in their collections?

## **Questions for Discussion:**

2.    Infrastructure

a.  Who determines sufficiency for local infrastructure to provide timely and effective public access?

i.    What are the criteria?

ii.   Should GPO develop guidelines as it did for workstations?

## Questions for Discussion:

3.      Regional responsibilities

   a.   What are the responsibilities of regional depositories for the digital publications GPO distributes?

      i.   Should they be required to accept and maintain all digital publications that GPO distributes?

      ii.   Should regional depositories be allowed to accept digital content as an alternative to the print or microform version?

# Questions for Discussion:

## 4.    Metadata

a.  Should GPO distribute bibliographic and other metadata as well as the digital publication?

b.  What other metadata should be routinely distributed?

# Questions for Discussion:

## 5.    Selectivity

a.   When can a selective library / regional select only the
digital version of a publication?

b.   Are there exceptions?

# Questions for Discussion:

6.      Version issues/synchronization

a.   If a library no longer selects similar publications, will it need to manage its collection to ensure that it is not providing access to a superseded version?

i.    If yes, how could this be accomplished?

# Questions for Discussion:

## 7.    Ownership

a.  Do digital publications distributed under the aegis of the FDLP remain the property of the U.S. Government, including back up and other copies maintained on library systems?

b.  What are the implications of an agency requesting the recall of an FDLP electronic title?

c.  If an agency does not want older issues to remain available on-line, how should this be handled?