

SUCHO (Saving Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Online) – Protecting Digital Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis

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Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24th was a wake-up call for cultural heritage professionals worldwide. For several decades, cultural institutions have been digitizing cultural artifacts and publishing them on their websites using digital preservation systems. In light of the invasion, however, it became clear that the digital infrastructure which houses the digital objects is as fragile as the buildings which house their analog twins. "Saving Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Online" (SUCHO) is an international grassroots initiative of more than 1,500 volunteers which formed in response to the invasion to support the digital preservation of Ukraine's tangible and intangible cultural heritage. In this presentation, the co-founder of SUCHO, Sebastian Majstorovic (Austrian Centre for Digital Humanities and Cultural Heritage, ÖAW), recaps the efforts of the initiative to preserve Ukraine's digital cultural heritage. Drawing upon the experiences and challenges encountered by SUCHO, he will also lay out a set of challenges that should be taken up at multiple levels - from individuals up through international consortia – to ensure that digitized and born-digital cultural heritage is pre-emptively protected in the future. Much as WWII laid the groundwork for robust cultural heritage protection organizations that still operate today, the cultural heritage community can learn from the war in Ukraine to plan for a more resilient future for digital cultural heritage protection in Europe and beyond.

Conflict of Interests Disclosure

No Conflict of Interests to disclose.