

## From Paper to Data

### Bringing old archives up to date

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The Monuments Authority has been collecting data since its founding in the 1850ies as K. K. Central-Commission. Naturally, there is a lot of paper in our archives, not only written reports or administrative deeds, but also pictures, slides, maps and plans in various formats, also quite artfully done sketches and drawings, some of which are the sole survivor of a site or an object. Over the last 30 years, quite a lot of digital data emerged out of that paper and even more data entered our server space, since the Bundesdenkmalamt is required to collect all data created by archaeological interventions in Austria and to care for long-term archiving. The authority has been doing this at first with the so-called "Fundstellendatenbank" that consisted of all the information on all known sites in Austria and all historical information to the individual site. For some, like the more prominent sites as for example Hallstatt salt mines and cemeteries or the Roman town of Carnuntum a huge amount of rather diverse and at some times inconsistent data existed, that had to be filtered, contextualized and updated. Another database housed the Austrian monuments that included all protected monuments from archaeological to buildings of all kind. In addition, the Monuments Authority also has a database for movable objects, for its pictures and much more. A new database was developed, since the demands on a database had significantly changed. This Heritage Information System houses both the contents of the old "Fundstellendatenbank" and of the "Denkmaldatenbank" via two connecting branches. Evaluation and new interpretation of the already integrated data was necessary and additional information such as georeferenced mapping is added. The database is adaptable according to needs.

The archiving process of externally created data is a second important task under specific requirements that result out of being a part of the Austrian State Archive. The authority as an administration unit is not free in its decision concerning storage, neither where nor what. There are legal and statutory requirements to fulfil and the growing amount of data presents its own challenge. Technology develops and evolves constantly and the storage often does not follow. So the authority has to decide in implementing restrictions on the one hand and making choices on the other hand.