On the Preservation of Digital Information

Vinton G. Cerf

Colloquium d'Informatique de l'UPMC Sorbonne Universités

Amphi 15

4, place Jussieu
75005 Paris
Metro Jussieu

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Saving bits is not enough. The meaning of the bits must also be preserved along with any meta-data needed for that interpretation. Software that created the bits, interprets and renders the bits and perhaps the operating system needed to run the application and a description of the computer needed to run the software may all need to be preserved. There are intellectual property issues also to be dealt with as companies come and go, software ownership changes, and so on.
This is a complex problem especially when the target is preservation for millennia.

Vinton G. Cerf is vice president and Chief Internet Evangelist for Google. He is known to be the co-designer of the TCP/IP protocols and the architecture of the Internet. He has served in executive positions at several institutions (ICANN, the Internet Society, MCI, ...) and is President of the Association for Computing Machinery. Vinton Cerf is a recipient of numerous awards for his work, including the ACM Turing Award in 2004.

contact : colloquium@lip6.fr
http://colloquium.lip6.fr
Vidéo disponible sur le site

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