

Crossref Member Practices feedback: without digital preservation, there is no digital persistence

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9 September 2026

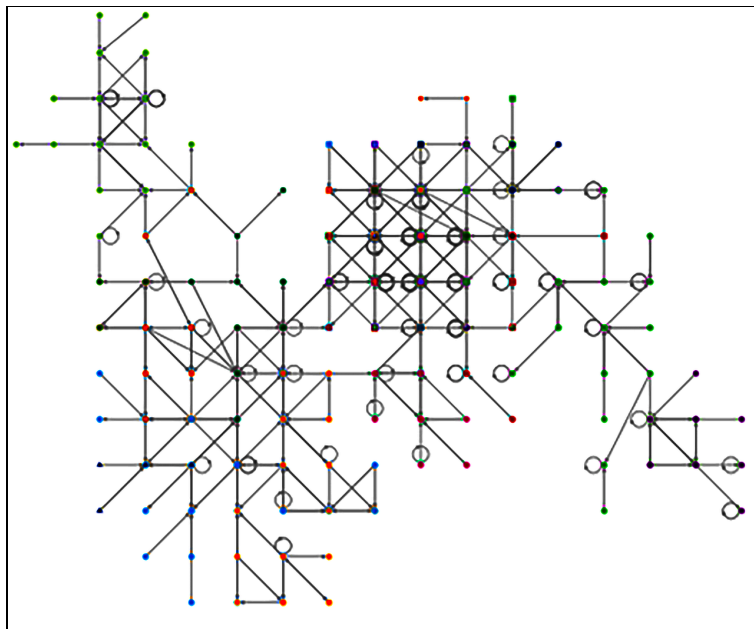


Image: This visual is a node-link diagram created using NodeXL and the in-tool data visualization capabilities. (Image by Wavegenerics from Pixabay)

Cite as: Martin Paul Eve, "Crossref Member Practices feedback: without digital preservation, there is no digital persistence", *eve.gd*:

Martin Paul Eve, September 09, 2026, <https://doi.org/10.59348/hhf2c-5sf12>.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59348/hhf2c-5sf12>

Available at: <https://eve.gd/2026/09/09/crossref-member-practices-feedback-without-digital-preservation-there-is-no-digital-persistence/>

Crossref [have been asking for feedback on their new member practices](#). Here is what I have sent them:

Dear Crossref member team,

I write, as invited, to give feedback on the new Crossref Member Practices document. I only have one item of feedback to give, and so can be relatively concise.

The new list of Crossref member practices includes nothing requiring members to ensure the longevity and digital preservation of their content. This is catastrophic.

Previously, Crossref's contractual terms required the member to "use best efforts to contract with a third-party archive or other content host (an "Archive") [...] for such Archive to preserve the Member's Content and, in the event that the Member ceases to host the Member's Content, to make such Content available for persistent linking".

Perhaps this terminology remains in the contract. However, I feel it is a severe oversight that it does not appear in the list of member practices. This is, after all, a practice that members are, or should be, required to undertake.

Without this practice, Crossref will be the custodian of a ghostly archive, a metadata store that has no way of resolving to the content that it describes. There is absolutely no point in reference linking if the content to which you are linking has been completely obliterated.

Without digital preservation, Crossref cannot make any claim to persistence. I would urge you to insert this practice into your forthcoming list.

Yours, Martin Eve

I [wrote about this just a couple of years ago](#) (disclosure: I was working for Crossref at the time). The digital scholarly record is far worse preserved than we like to imagine. Crossref could be a much better enforcer on this. And it has incentive to be so, given that persistent linking is one of its core

functions. But if stuff isn't preserved and just disappears, that persistence claim is not worth much. I do not feel that Crossref treats digital preservation as a priority.

References

This reference list has been generated, in many cases, through an automated process and may therefore contain errors or incomplete metadata. It is provided purely as assistance for finding the items mentioned within this post.

Bartell, Amanda, and Madhura S Amdekar, *Share your feedback on the new Crossref Member Practices*, Crossref, 10 August 2026 <<https://doi.org/10.64000/1y3ve-3pw05>>

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