# Research Library teams shares 2010 Digital Preservation Award

December 15, 2010

## *LANL and Old Dominion University create a 'world wide web with memory'*

LOS ALAMOS, New Mexico, December 15, 2010—A team of researchers responsible for enabling "time travel" for the world wide web has received the 2010 Digital Preservation Award from the Institute for Conservation and Digital Preservation (DPC) at a ceremony held at the Royal Institute in London.

Los Alamos National Laboratory computer scientist Herbert Van de Sompel and colleagues Robert Sanderson, Lyudmila Balakireva, and Harihar Shankar of LANL's Research Library joined Old Dominion University researchers Michael Nelson and Scott Ainsworth in winning the top honor for their development of Memento—a unique computer architecture that uses a basic feature embedded in the standard HTTP protocol to allow web browsers direct access to archived copies of web pages.

While the dynamic nature of the web is one of its greatest advantages, changes and updates result in disappearance of digital content. The team's creation of a "web with memory" allows computer users to connect with current web pages, as usual, but dramatically extends their action radius with the "Web of the Past": the user selects a date for the given page and is automatically brought to an appropriate previous version, when available. The proposed Memento architecture is currently being standardized via the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), and several tools that comply with the architecture are emerging.

"Memento offers an elegant and easily deployed method that reunites web archives with their home on the live web," said Richard Ovenden, chair of the DPC. "It opens web archives to tens of millions of new users and signals a dramatic change in the way we use and perceive digital archives."

LANL and Old Dominion University recently received a $1 million grant from the Library of Congress for further research, tool development, and outreach for Memento.

The Digital Preservation Award is an international recognition that celebrates the excellence and innovation that will help ensure that digital memory is available in the future. The Digital Preservation Coalition sponsors the Digital Preservation Award, one of a set of five awards that are collectively called the Conservation Awards. The Conservation Awards began in 1993, coordinated by the Institute for Conservation (ICON). The Digital Preservation Award has been given three times previously, most recently in 2007. The Pilgrim Trust, the Digital Preservation Coalition, the Anna Plowden Trust, and Paul McCartney support the awards, which are managed in partnership by key organizations in conservation, restoration, and preservation management. The goal of the award is to preserve the digital legacy and to prevent a "digital dark age," which could occur as current formats and technology became obsolete.

More information about Memento can be found at: http://mementoweb.org