Guide for Donors: Transferring Digital Files to the CCA Archives

Canadian Centre for Architecture

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CCA is committing to providing long-term preservation and access to born-digital materials in its Collection. In order to facilitate this goal, it is important that:

- All digital files are accompanied by Submission of Digital Files Information Sheets and other documentation necessary for understanding the contexts of their creation and use
- Digital files and their metadata (creation and modification dates, embedded 'Properties' information, etc.) are not unintentionally altered by the process of transfer to CCA

This guide details CCA's preferred methods of transferring digital files to meet the above goals.

Submission of Digital Files Information Sheet ("the Questionnaire")

All donations of digital material <u>must be accompanied by a Submission of Digital Files Information Sheet</u>. This sheet, also referred to as "the Questionnaire", asks you to document information about the necessary for understanding the contexts of your digital files' creation and use. It asks about the projects or work your digital files relate to, file naming procedures and arrangement schemes, known dependencies, passwords, computer software and hardware environments, intellectual property, and other such concerns.

Please fill out the sheet to the best of your abilities, and feel free to send along any additional documentation that may assist CCA's archivists and curatorial teams in working with your material.

Digital Storage Media

Digital files currently stored on floppy disks, optical discs (such as CDs and DVDs), flash drives, computer hard drives, backup tapes, and other such digital storage media <u>should not</u> be migrated.

Instead, <u>please send the physical media to CCA for disk imaging and data transfer</u>. This will ensure that original file structure and important metadata such as last modified dates remain unaltered.

For legacy computers (laptops and towers), please either safely remove the hard drive(s), package the drive securely in bubble wrap and anti-static protection, and send the physical hard drive to CCA. Alternatively, you may send CCA the entire laptop or desktop tower.

## Files from Servers, Network Shares, and Shared Computer Workstations

All digital files sent to CCA from servers, network shares, and shared computer workstations should be packaged into an archive package format (such as .zip, .7z, or .tar) prior to transfer. This is done to retain the files' original structure and metadata.

Please note that CCA can accept files in many file formats, including obsolete formats. We ask that donors <u>do not</u> convert files to newer formats in advance of their transfer to CCA. Migrating to newer formats can result in unintended data loss and compromise the integrity of your digital archive.
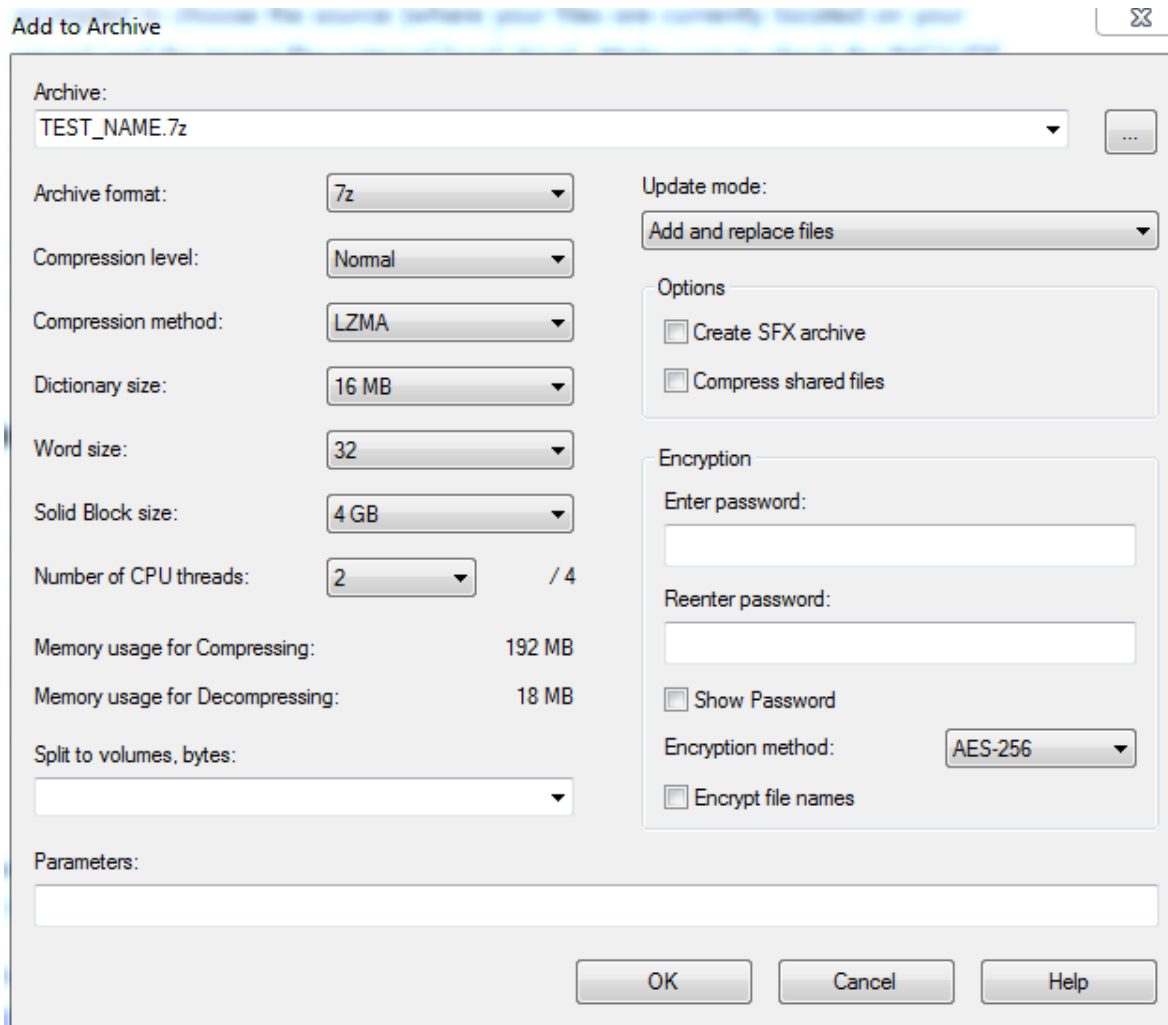
7-zip

CCA's preferred method for the transfer of files is through the use of archive packages in the *.7z format. [7-zip](#) is a free utility that is used for creating such archive packages.

From the 7-zip interface, right-click on the folder (or folders) you would like to package, select '7-Zip', and then select 'Add to archive…'.
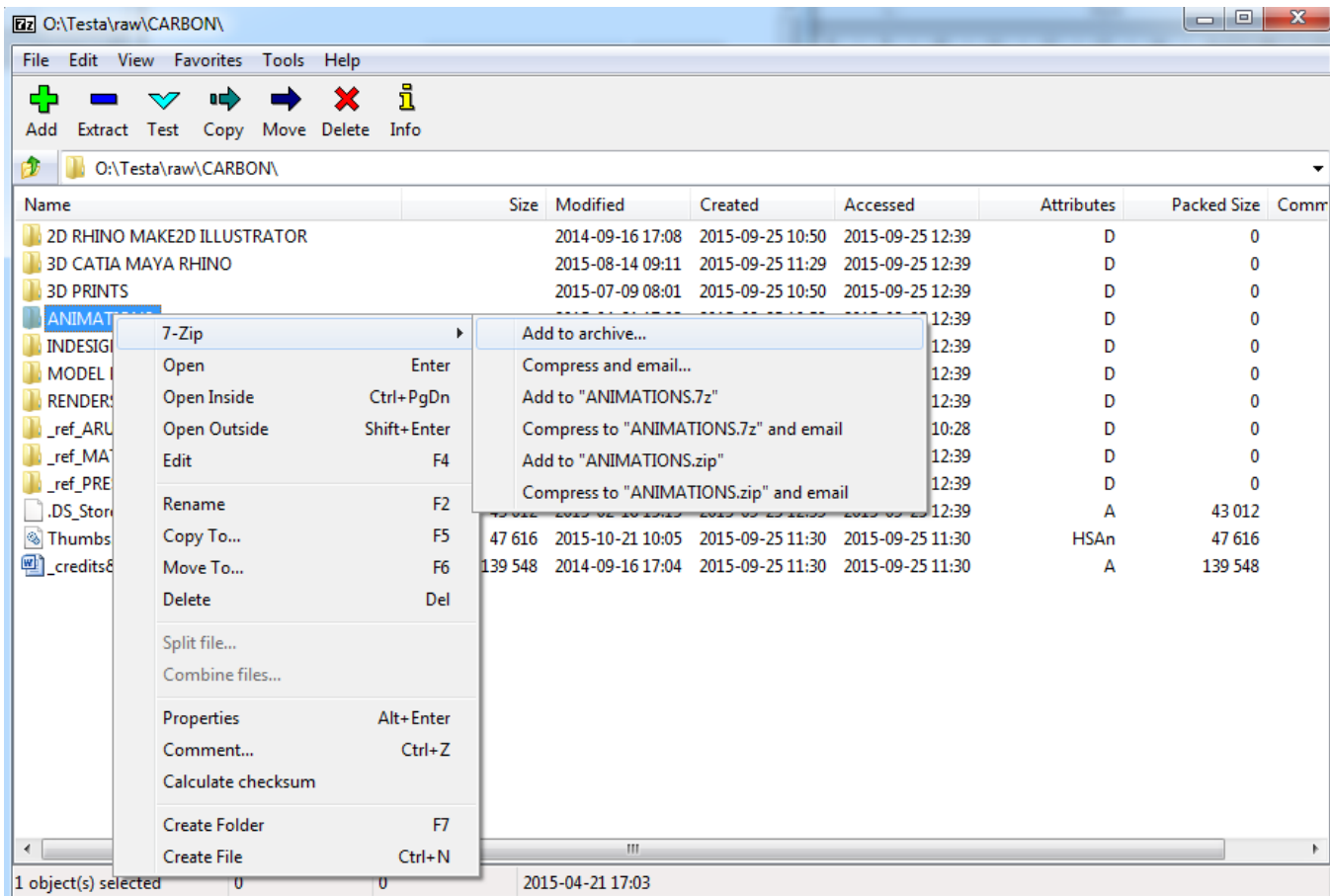
In the 'Add to Archive' screen, save a name for the archive (replacing TEST_NAME in the example below) and the save destination, and select the following settings:

- Archive format: 7z
- Compression level: Normal
- Compression method: LZMA
- Dictionary size: 16 MB
- Word size: 32
- Solid Block size: 4 GB
- Number of CPU threads: 2

Add to Archive

Archive:
TEST_NAME.7z

| Archive format: | 7z | Update mode: |
| Compression level: | Normal | Add and replace files |

Options
☐ Create SFX archive
☐ Compress shared files

Compression method:	LZMA
Dictionary size:	16 MB
Word size:	32

Encryption
Enter password:

| Solid Block size: | 4 GB |
| Number of CPU threads: | 2 | / 4 |

Reenter password:

Memory usage for Compressing: 192 MB

Memory usage for Decompressing: 18 MB

☐ Show Password

Split to volumes, bytes:

Encryption method: AES-256

☐ Encrypt file names

Parameters:

OK   Cancel   Help

Once all of the settings have been verified, select 'OK' to begin the process.

When completed, this will result in one or several losslessly compressed .7z files (split at 4 GB as necessary to facilitate file transfer over network connections and between different file systems) that capture the files and their metadata just as they existed on your server or local machine. These .7z files can then be sent to CCA via a network transfer service such as DropBox or WeTransfer, or on removable media such as a USB external hard drive.

Please note that for large quantities of material and certain file types, compression can be a lengthy procedure. Depending on the quantity and size of files being transferred, you may need to leave this utility running overnight.

*Note: Although 7-Zip is a Windows utilities, a command-line version of 7-zip known as p7zip is available for Linux machines. A list of downloads and packages can be found [here](#).

Other archive packaging utilities and approaches

In addition to 7z files, CCA will also accept files packaged into the .zip and .tar (and .tar.gz) following formats. Please just be aware that creating extremely large files increases the difficulty of copying files between systems and increases the risk of file corruption; when it is possible to split files at a reasonable size (such as 2GB or 4GB), please do so.

If for whatever reason this solution is impractical or undesirable for your digital files, please contact Alexandra Jokinen, CCA Digital Archivist at ajokinen@cca.qc.ca or (514) 939-7001 x 1535 to discuss alternate options for data transfer.