HAVE YOU EVER FORGOTTEN TO SAVE A DOCUMENT BEFORE SHUTTING OFF YOUR COMPUTER? OR LOST ALL YOUR VACATION PHOTOS BECAUSE YOUR PHONE SUDDENLY CRASHED? THE SAME THING CAN HAPPEN TO IMPORTANT NEWS ARTICLES AND VIDEOS, CAUSING THEM TO BECOME LOST OR INACCESSIBLE.

NOW, A TEAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI IS WORKING TO HELP NEWSROOMS PRESERVE THEIR ARCHIVES. DIGITAL CURATOR OF JOURNALISM AT MU EDWARD MCCAIN SAID THAT IT’S IMPORTANT TO KEEP NEWS STORIES BOTH BIG AND SMALL SAFE FROM TECHNOLOGICAL FAILURE.

“I’ve worked in the journalism industry for many years and I think it’s the proverbial first rough draft of history so it bears witness to our times, to what has happened.”

THE TEAM WILL TRAVEL ACROSS THE U.S. AND EUROPE TO STUDY HOW NEWSROOMS STORE ARCHIVES. THEN, THEY WILL CREATE A REPORT HIGHLIGHTING THEIR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDING THE BEST PRACTICES TO PRESERVE FILES.

ACCORDING TO MCCAIN, INDIVIDUALS HAVE A PART TO PLAY, TOO.

“While news organizations are trying to archive at scale, individuals also need to take responsibility for archiving the stuff that they want to keep. So if you have photos, don’t keep all your photos on a phone. Make sure that you back those up. You want to have them in more than one place.”

MCCAIN RECOMMENDS SAVING CONTENT IN THREE PLACES, LIKE THE CLOUD, AN EXTERNAL HARD DRIVE AND ON A LAPTOP. HE SAYS THAT BY FOLLOWING THE ACRONYM “LOCKSS,” OR ‘LOTS OF COPIES KEEP STUFF SAFE,’ PEOPLE CAN MAKE SURE THEIR IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS WON’T GET LOST. THAT WAY, WE CAN PRESERVE OUR OWN PERSONAL HISTORY, TOO.

I’M BRIAN CONSIGLIO WITH A MIZZOU SPOTLIGHT ON SCIENCE.