

Dematerialisation of books printed before 1700 at the Wellcome Library in London



A European leader in heritage digitisation, Numen brings a unique set of solutions for dematerialising rare and precious works, extracting their contents and ensuring their multi-channel distribution

SOLUTION

OUR SERVICE

The complete service includes:

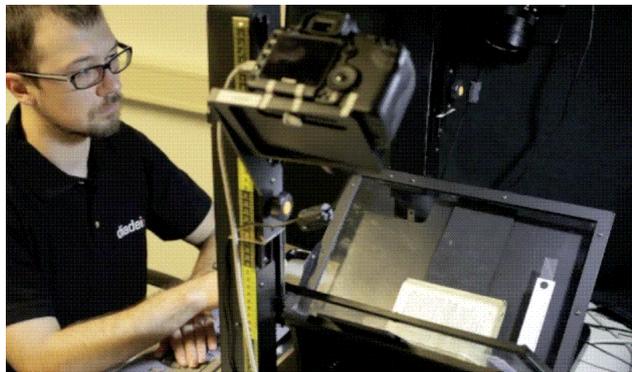
- Reception of the books and their storage in a dedicated zone within the workshop,
- Digitisation on media not damaging the object (including the covers and edges of books in a photo studio),
- The management of returning the books once scanned to the library reserves,
- The quality control of each captured image (off-site),
- Indexing based on the customer's precise specifications,
- The recognition of characters by OCR (optical character recognition),
- The generation of delivery formats (images and metadata),
- The tracking of anomalies with the library and the client ProQuest (inconsistency between the object and its cataloging, potential rejects,...),
- Storage and backup of the data in a data center adapted to the size of the files.

THE CLIENT

The Wellcome Library was founded on the collection of Sir Henry Wellcome (1853-1936), whose personal fortune allowed him to create one of the most ambitious collections of the 20th century. Since the death of Henry Wellcome in 1936, the Wellcome Trust, a charitable medical foundation, is in charge of the management of the Wellcome Library and its prestigious collections. The library is free and open to the public.

THE REQUIREMENTS

The highly fragile collections of the library have a heritage value and require that ProQuest join forces with a service provider that is expert in scanning ancient and precious funds. Moreover, the nature of the processed documents requires the digitization to be carried out on the premises of the library in order to avoid any risks related to moving the collections.



FACTS & FIGURES

5 million pages scanned over 5 years



THE ISSUES

The handling of valuable works involves digitisation on the premises of the library.

The IT logistics are important for the transfer of images and for saving them to the central site (Luxembourg).

In addition, the complex management of a remote team, from Luxembourg, requires a rigorous project management.

THE CONTEXT

The Project EEB (Early European Books) has been carried out by ProQuest for several libraries and cultural institutions in Europe over a period of 10 years.

The work is performed in parallel for several libraries.

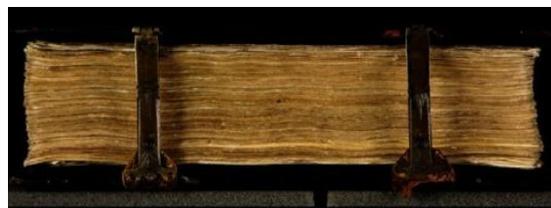
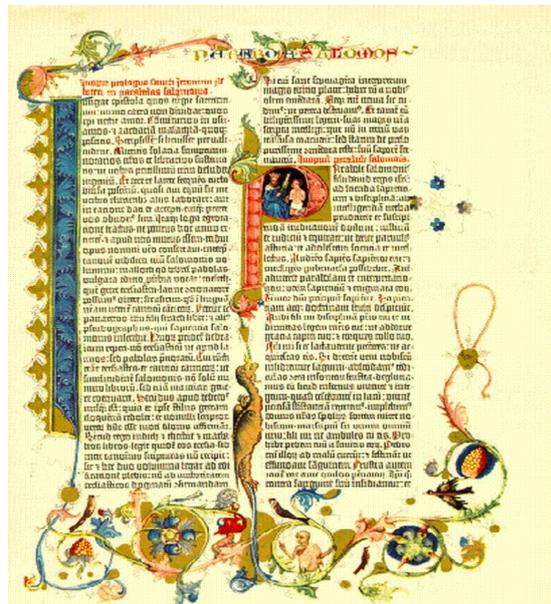
This new stage, in London, began in June 2011 and involves the capture of an average of 1 million pages per year for 5 years.

Numen acts as a service provider for the company ProQuest, editor of digital content and more particularly of Early European Books Online for this specific project.

CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT

The EEB (Early European Book) project led by ProQuest involves the scanning and the production of associated metadata (index) of 6 million pages per year from these precious funds in libraries throughout Europe. As part of this large-scale project, Numen was given the mission of digitisation of ancient books printed before 1700 and kept at the Wellcome Library in London.

In order to preserve the integrity of the works and at the request of the department of conservation, Numen has installed a digitisation studio as well as a photo studio in the premises of the library, located on Euston Road.



BENEFITS

Since the books are not transported to a digitisation studio, the works remain available to visitors wishing to consult them.

The proximity of the curators allows great reactivity in case of difficulty during the digitisation of an object.

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