



## Museum & Heritage Digitization Services

We specialize in providing digitization services to a wide range of markets, from document scanning and indexing of contemporary materials, to the preservation of historical content in digital form.

We provide complete digitization solutions enabling clients to capture their content and documentary materials. Safety of original materials and high quality output are our top priorities. Through digitization, our clients can serve the dual purposes of providing access to materials either to internal or public audiences, with the additional benefit of providing digital preservation surrogates to valuable materials.

### Our Ethos and Experience

Our ethos is to use the most appropriate digitization techniques to unlock the heritage in collections, whilst maintaining the safety of the subject materials throughout. Through scanning/photographing materials (or capturing data from microfilm or legacy digital formats), a lasting digital asset can be created, and access to the content facilitated.



Our Museum & Heritage Digitization Services team has spent over 8 years working in the heritage digitisation arena. We have worked with Universities, Archives, Libraries and Museums and have most recently pioneered the online art database and worked with clients as diverse as the Parliamentary Archives, National Portrait Gallery, Tate and the Royal Society.

Our team members have been responsible for the project design and management of the "Old Bailey Online" project, the Robert Boyle Papers online and the digitization of countless other heritage and museum materials. In addition we have advised on digitization in a consultancy capacity to many organisations such as devising the digital strategy for Birmingham Museums & Art Galleries.

With this experience and general approach, we feel confident that we can provide the most appropriate digitization solution to your needs.

### Our Services

Digitization of materials can occur from virtually any starting point. Either from original objects themselves or from legacy surrogates already created. It really depends on the requirements of the project. An organisation may already have generated internal images of a set of documents for example, but require them in a searchable and accessible format for web publishing. The range of services we provide therefore is very broad. In the following sections we will outline some of the services we offer.

#### Digitization of Original Materials

The key here is the selection of the most appropriate digitisation mechanism for the original objects. Preservation of the originals is always the highest priority and therefore, in close consultation with our clients, an appropriate methodology will be chosen. In many cases digitization must occur on clients' premises to allow for optimal atmospheric storage conditions and security restrictions. Techniques we employ in this area are as follows:





- Planetary book scanning
- High end, colour managed, digital photography
- Flat bed scanning
- Map and plan digitisation
- 35mm slide and photographic print scanning

## **Digitization of Surrogate Materials**

Often organisations have already captured some form of analogue or digital surrogate of original materials. These surrogates were generally created at great expense and digitising them would be a preferable alternative to the re-scanning of the originals. Services here include microfilm scanning from 35mm or 16mm roll film, microfiche or aperture cards. In addition, sometimes modern paper copies of documents have been made and these can be scanned using dedicated document scanners.

## **Data Conversion**

In cases where data has been captured to an old, outdated format or where an organisation needs to migrate data to new systems or databases, we can help. We have extensive experience in formatting and transposing data to more current standards such as XML based metadata Schemas. (A side note to the technically minded here: we have worked with migrating and generating data into Dublin Core, VRA Core 4.0, CDWA and other well known international standards)

## **Data Capture**

Sometimes providing images of material to an audience simply does not provide enough information to users. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Internet user and researchers expect high quality indexed sources, with Boolean search facilities that are free at the point of use. In some ways, we were partly responsible for this in facilitating the Old Bailey online! For whatever reason, it is often the best use of resources to capture text content from digitised originals and represent it in a searchable form. We have worked with many open source based online delivery mechanisms and this accurate digital content also improves compliance with web accessibility guidelines.

## **Data Standards and Digital Preservation**

Across all projects one thing remains true; if we are to carry out a digitization project, with all the effort and expense that it entails, then the results must be of maximum use. In using standards for content digitisation and preservation, we ensure the longevity of our digital assets. We conform to the National Preservation Office Standards for digital preservation. All image data is always delivered in uncompressed TIFF format and data of all kinds is supplied to the latest non proprietary standards such as XML. For colour image capture we are particular about colour accuracy and calibration. All images will include colour charts as standard and are colour matched to the Adobe RGB (1998) standard with the ICC profile embedded. From this base line, all images can be forward processed for device specific output as required.

## **Consultancy Services**

Because of the wealth of digitization experience inherent in our team, it stands to reason that we also offer consultancy services. We are available to advice on all aspects of digitization, originals handling and digital strategy. We can also advise on the setting up of internal digitization facilities, as we have recently done for the Parliamentary Archives.





## In Conclusion

Digitization is a complex and sensitive process which, when carried out correctly, can deliver very worthwhile results. The combination of access and preservation create a synergy which can dramatically enhance the holdings of any organisation, whether a museum, archive or library. With our ethos and experience, we are well placed to be your first port of call for all matters digital. Please do not hesitate to get in touch to discuss your needs or project ideas; we will always be able to help. So whether you have a collection of 17<sup>th</sup> Century documents, lantern slides or more microfilm than you know what to do with, please get in touch with us.

