The Oxford Google Digitization Project

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Overview

- Why - reasons
- What - content
- When - timelines
- How - outline process/activities
- Then what….

Why - 1

- This project is primarily about access not conservation
- An opportunity to expose content to a far wider community than is possible at the moment or in the near future
- Builds on the work of the Oxford Digital Library (ODL) and OULS strategic initiatives e.g. ELISO project
- Portfolio of the 'born digital' growing so the project affords us the opportunity to build up collection of digitized copies of locally held material

Why - 2

- The synergy between missions:
  - Bodley's 'Republic of Letters'
  - Google's 'to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful'

- Bring more Oxford content into the digital landscape making it available for scholarly and public benefit

- Also facilitating access to the material for University members

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What - 1

- Direct discussions with Google since 2003
- The extensive collection of out of print (and out of copyright) material identified
- Oxford differs from other partners in this aspect of our agreement
- Decision made to begin with the 19th century material
- Looking at approximately 1 million items
- Win/win situation for both parties

What - 2

- The scanning operation to take place on OULS premises, at Osney Mead
- Virtually all costs met by Google
- Oxford costs: local staff time & expertise
- The deliverable being two digital copies
- English Law if there are issues relating to contract
- Contracts differ for each of the partner institutions

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When

- Timelines:
  - planning work began at the beginning of 2005
  - looking towards the Autumn to commence scanning operations
  - initially a 3 year contract
- There will be a ramping up phase to allow testing of the workflows/output

How - 1

- Selection of material is done by OULS
- Scanning techniques are non-invasive
- Appraisal stage is part of the workflow
- Any book that would be released to reading rooms likely to be in a fit state to be scanned
- 'Slow track' process for fragile material

How - 2

- OULS staff will work closely with Google staff e.g. training on how to handle the material

- Each component of the workflow must be comfortable for both parties

- A large complex logistic operation that will not compromise the service to our users

How - 3

- Current activities:
  - Facilities – refurbishment/fitting out of space
  - Business perspective:
    - Devising & testing workflows for each of the components
    - Collection profiling work
    - Completed a paper exercise of an envisaged workflow
    - This workflow put to the test over a 3 day trial in May
    - Involved activity & cooperation from many different OULS teams

How - 4

- Evaluating the outcomes of the trial - proved a very useful exercise
- Compiling a matrix of libraries/collections to inform the business decisions e.g. distribution of material, access issues etc
- Steering Group overseeing the project with various working parties looking at the specific issues e.g. facilities, legal etc
- Oxford specific challenges – uncut material, access, disparate collections

How - 5

- Large raw images from scan stations
- Derivatives are delivered in standardised formats
- What is returned per volume:
    - JPEG2000 (probably)
    - OCR
- Audit of production process
- There are quality control processes at Google & Oxford
- Linked to OLIS catalogue record
- Ongoing software/hardware developments to improve the process

Then what…

- Future challenges include building the infrastructure of the ODL

- Develop access routes to the content to customise the Oxford experience

- Cognisant of the changes in the information landscape

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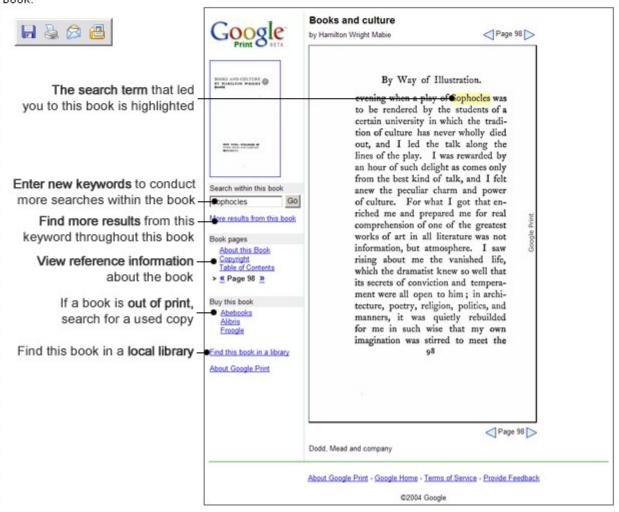- Library books still in copyright

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Books and culture
by Hamilton Wright Mabie

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By Way of Illustration.

evening when a play of Sophocles was to be rendered by the students of a certain university in which the tradition of culture has never wholly died out, and I led the talk along the lines of the play. I was rewarded by an hour of such delight as comes only from the best kind of talk, and I felt anew the peculiar charm and power of culture. For what I got that enriched me and prepared me for real comprehension of one of the greatest works of art in all literature was not information, but atmosphere. I saw rising about me the vanished life, which the dramatist knew so well that its secrets of conviction and temperament were all open to him; in architecture, poetry, religion, politics, and manners, it was quietly rebuilt for me in such wise that my own imagination was stirred to meet the

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