EOD Network
- eBooks on Demand

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European libraries are hosting millions of books published from 1500 to 1900. Due to their age and value, they are often only accessible to users actually present at these libraries. This is exactly where the eBooks-on-Demand (EOD) network starts from, providing a trans-European digital document delivery service for end-users from all over the world giving access to historical books "here and now" with a digitisation on demand service. Currently the EOD network comprises over 30 libraries from 12 European countries. Since 2007 several thousand PDF eBooks have been generated, delivered to users from over 30 countries worldwide, and subsequently made available to the public through the repositories of the participating libraries. User reactions have been very encouraging so far, and more and more libraries are now thinking of offering the service.

The starting point is the online library catalogue of any participating library or the EOD search interface. There, the EOD button is placed with all items available for digitisation. At the moment, these are books fulfilling the following criteria: 1) items not yet digitised, and 2) public domain books. Any user interested in a certain book tagged with the EOD button simply needs to click on this button. Then the library holding this book digitises the requested item and delivers it to the user via the EOD service network.

The digitised books and all related output files such as OCR XML, RTF of course belong to the delivering library. So, in addition to the eBook service the library may continually increase its digital assets. It is highly welcomed by the network that the library finally integrates the digital files into its digital library or repository and makes them accessible to the public.

Of course, such an additional library service can't be maintained within the context of usual (mass) digitisation only, but needs extra resources for management and administration, e.g. order management, customer communication, payment procedures and so on. Therefore, an IT infrastructure allowing for efficient processing of orders has been designed. In the end a centralised - decentralised service network has been implemented, where some processes such as Optical Character Recognition (OCR) of scanned images or online payment of completed orders are hosted centrally by the University Library of Innsbruck (Austria). Other services - such as scanning itself - are carried out in a decentralised fashion at the participating libraries. The EOD network provides its partners with a web based software which allows for order management, automated customer communication, eBook production, delivery and electronic accounting.

Additional service: print on demand

Since 2009, in addition to the digital version, a book can also be ordered as a reprint in the form of a "real" trade paper book. This option can be selected during the ordering process, in addition to requesting the PDF. From the perspective of the participating library, the service is straightforward. Each library carries out the scanning of the images "as normal" and provides some additional metadata. All other processes, such as image enhancement and the creation of pre-press PDFs and related files as well as the handling of the print-on-demand service providers are carried out by the central co-ordinator at the University of Innsbruck (Library).

EOD search interface

During the past years the EOD network has increasingly been confronted with the wish for a common starting point for browsing as many books as possible offered for digitisation on demand via EOD. In the medium term, this tool should also allow for searching those books already digitised by the participating libraries. By the end of 2009, the EOD network had decided on the software to use for setting up such a common discovery interface. The choice was made in favour of VuFind a widely used open source software package. Finally, by the end of 2010, the current implementation of VuFind was made publicly available under the URL www.search.books2ebooks.eu/ . This now comprises some 1.6 million records imported from about 11 libraries.

EOD and Europeana

Finally, there is also a linkage between EOD and Europeana, since from 2011 onward those books digitised via EOD will also be ingested to Europeana.
Links:

      EOD network: www.books2ebooks.eu/

      Participating Libraries: www.books2ebooks.eu/partner.php5

      EOD search engine: www.search.books2ebooks.eu/

      Examples of resold POD books: www.amazon.co.uk/gp/search/&search-alias=stripbooks&field-publisher=EOD+Network