

# Collaboration is key



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Geneva August 2014

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## About National Library of Luxembourg

- Origins in 1798
- Multiple missions: patrimonial, public and scientific
- Responsible for national library network and national consortium
- 66 FTE staff

# Collaboration – General thoughts

- « No matter who you are, most of the smartest people work for someone else » - Bill Joy
- Collaboration to :
  - Find solutions to complex problems
  - Take advantage of specialized teams in other institutions and companies
- Prerequisites:
  - Trust
  - Willingness to recognize partner's expertise
  - Share knowledge

## Examples of collaborations of BnL

- Electronic catalogue together with RERO, then IDS
- Europeana
  - Cross-border licensing
- Digitization format : METS/ALTO (LOC / CCS)
- Newspaper viewer
  - Open-source bnlviewer for METS / ALTO
  - ( <https://sourceforge.net/projects/bnlviewer/> )
- Research projects (Asymenc, SDiv)

# Outsourced digitization – Collaboration needed

- 1 FTE in « Digitization department »
  - From paper selection to rights clearance
- Library core missions:
  - Collect, safeguard and give access to information
  - NOT scanner operation
- European tender procedure
  - Highly formalized requirements (~ 400 pages)
  - Dialogue to clarify and improve
  - Iterative improvement

## Collaboration with CCS

2005 : METAe leads to prototype with CCS

2006 : first METS/ALTO tender

2009 : launch of eluxemburgensia.lu

2010, 2012 : tenders of 150 K pages

Discussions about:

- Markup (scientific serials, statistical material, books)
- METS / ALTO viewer
- Digitization QA Tool
- Continuing refinement of specifications

# About CCS

- CCS - Content Conversion Specialists is a privately owned company with headquarters in Hamburg, Germany
- Technology company developing market-leading software and hardware for the creation and display of digital collections
- Participation in European research projects:
  - METAe – The Metadata Engine (2000 - 2003)
  - ENP – Europeana Newspapers Project (2012 - 2015)
- Selected references for software solutions:
  - Brightsolid (UK), Library of Congress and various National Libraries in Europe, Australia and Asia
  - service providers like Contentra, Digital Divide Data, ...
- Selected references for services:
  - The British Library, Dutch National Library, National Libraries of Norway, Luxembourg, ...
  - publishers like Springer, F.A.Z., ...
- Today CCS is one of the world leaders in the provision of information through digitization and conversion



# Collaboration – Basics and Experiences

- **METAe – An example of successful collaboration**
  - commercial and library partners
  - one common goal: comprehensive digitization/conversion tool covering library requirements
  - sharing know-how and experiences for learnings on both sides
- **After METAe, experiences from many software and service projects gave valuable input for improving product and project management**
- **Expectations from cultural heritage community and industry**
  - “Don’t presume you know my business and your solution fits. Get to know me first”
  - “Show integrity, honesty and transparency. Build a relationship and take the ownership”
  - Industry: “Institutions tend to be reserved when approached by commercial suppliers”
- **Basic rules for collaboration**
  - Listen and learn about others
  - Show respect for others and their opinions
  - Be open and transparent, share knowledge and experience
  - Be honest and communicate clearly, concretely and correctly
  - Build and earn trust

# Collaboration – Lessons learnt

- Trust is not a given – it must be developed and earned
- Both sides must be open to share knowledge and experience
- Learn from previous projects and put improvements on the agenda
- Project management on both sides with clear responsibilities
- Web-based collaboration platform for fast and transparent communication
- Deal with problems and issues in an open, respectful and professional manner
- Pay tribute to objectives and milestones achieved!  
Celebrate the end of a successful project!

# Collaboration with BnL

- Former newspaper digitization projects
  - 2007: As subcontractor, CCS covered the conversion part of the project while main-contractor performed scanning
  - 2010: As principal contractor, CCS covered conversion while scanning was provided by a subcontractor
  
- Current project (2012 – 2014)
  - As principal contractor, CCS covers scanning and conversion of 120.000 newspaper pages (19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century)
  - On-site kick-off meeting to review former projects and clarify higher requirements of current project
  - Dedicated contact persons on both sides for clear and effective communication
  - Both sides are committed to the project goal and handle problems in an open, appreciative and frank manner
  - BnL provided a very detailed and precise specification -> saves time and limits the consulting effort
  - MS Sharepoint as collaboration platform:
    - Delivery list
    - Re-deliveries
    - Clarification of open issues
    - BnL quality reports on CCS deliveries (batches)
    - HDD tracking list for traceability
    - Shared documents: specification, project time schedule (Gantt chart), meeting notes, samples, change requests, etc.
  - Final face2face meeting planned for project review and honoring the work carried out by both partners

- CCS listened, shared and learnt a lot from cultural heritage institutions
- Successful projects need fruitful partnerships with powerful collaboration
- Collaboration with BnL reached a high level of quality and trust
- BnL expects companies to be domain experts
- Collaboration allows BnL to take advantage of knowledge at partners
- Collaboration is key to success

**Thank you**

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