

MAP ROOM

THE NEW LIBRARY

The world's libraries hold at least 1.5 billion items, according to the listings of World-Cat, the massive catalog of the Ohio-based Online Computer Library Center. Books are no longer just printed and bound words gathering dust on shelves. The holdings of national libraries (at right) may still be greater than their digital counterparts, but scanned books, available on the Internet, are revolutionizing the role of the library in civil society. In August 2010, Google estimated there are some 130 million books in the world that it hopes to digitize, and they are not the only ones with such a mission.

Libraries today are digital pioneers, scanning and uploading vast amounts of data from their collections. University and library collectives across nations, like the Universal Digital Library and Europeana, scan entire collections or choose certain categories of writing to digitize. The Austrian National Library and the World Digital Library began digitization to ensure historic works were safeguarded beyond their fragile pages, taking their cue from the destruction of the Library of Alexandria a millennium ago—when fire consumed innumerable ancient texts.

Digitization protects and shares humanity's collective knowledge. Though a truly global digital library, encompassing all published work in every medium, may be decades in the future, it's already well underway. —*Nestor K. Bailly*

WORLD DIGITAL LIBRARY 1,298

Envisioned by Librarian of Congress James H. Billington, UNESCO's World Digital Library allows great historic works that "institutions, libraries, and museums have preserved [to] be given back to the world free of charge and in a new form far more universally accessible."

UNITED STATES
33.3 MILLION

CANADA
10.2 MILLION

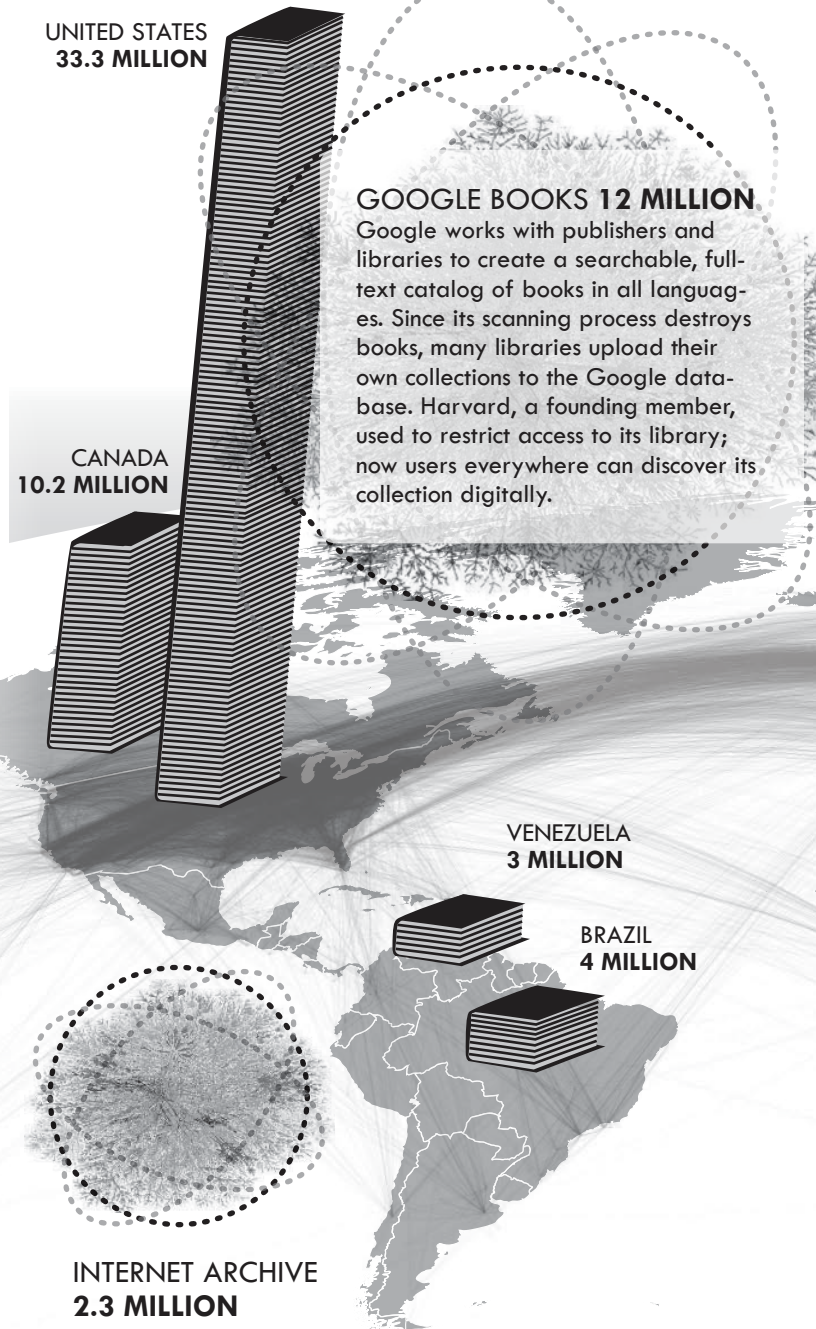
GOOGLE BOOKS 12 MILLION

Google works with publishers and libraries to create a searchable, full-text catalog of books in all languages. Since its scanning process destroys books, many libraries upload their own collections to the Google database. Harvard, a founding member, used to restrict access to its library; now users everywhere can discover its collection digitally.

VENEZUELA
3 MILLION

BRAZIL
4 MILLION

INTERNET ARCHIVE
2.3 MILLION



OCLC WorldCat
1.5 BILLION
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AUSTRIAN NATIONAL LIBRARY **400,000**

The ANL has one of the world's top historical book collections dating from the 16th to 19th centuries. Preservation and accessibility are top priorities. As many of these ancient volumes are fragile and not physically available, the ANL does its own scanning to preserve and make available its historical texts.

EUROPEANA **10 MILLION**

Europeana is an open portal to access Europe's shared cultural and scientific works. On its launch in November 2008, 15 million users—triple the number expected—sought entry to the site in its first hour, swamping its servers.

UDL **1.5 MILLION**

Led by Carnegie-Mellon University, the Universal Digital Library is a collaboration between national and research libraries in China, Egypt and India to provide a full-text library of books on the Web. Its works of agriculture science promote the universal availability of improved farming practices.

UK
14 MILLION

FRANCE
14 MILLION

RUSSIA
17 MILLION

CZECH REP.
915,000

ISRAEL
14 MILLION

CHINA
9.3 MILLION

JAPAN
9.2 MILLION

EGYPT
2 MILLION

PAKISTAN
130,000

INDIA
4.5 MILLION

ETHIOPIA
28,000

AUSTRALIA
7.5 MILLION

SOUTH AFRICA
1.4 MILLION

DIGITAL INNOVATION SOUTH AFRICA **215,000**

DISA has digitized materials relating to the socio-political history of South Africa from 1950 to 1994, especially on liberation and apartheid. Its fully multimedia project has some 215,000 items of archival text and journal pages, oral histories, music, videos and posters.