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University of Pennsylvania Libraries

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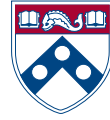
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Penn Libraries Partners with Kirtas Technologies

The University of Pennsylvania (Penn) Libraries announce a partnership with Kirtas Technologies to make more than 200,000 public domain titles from Penn's collections available to the public through on-demand digitization and printing.

The project represents Penn Libraries' increasing commitment to the development of digital collections. "Kirtas has technology and distribution assets that will help us explore new forms of content delivery," said Carton Rogers, Vice Provost and Director of Libraries at Penn. "And the partnership offers us a cost-effective strategy for building Penn's digital library." Kirtas, a leader in digitization technologies, can offer the general public a variety of value-added digitization and print-on-demand services using content provided by Penn Libraries. This partnership advances the Libraries' interest in improving scholarly access to its collections, and it may provide a new stream of revenue that will support information services at Penn.



Using information drawn from Penn Libraries' catalog records, Kirtas will make available out-of-copyright books for sale through its retail site, www.kirtasbooks.com. Customers will be able to search for a desired title, and when found, place a "digitize for me" request. The book will be pulled from the Libraries' shelves, digitized, then processed by Kirtas for optimal reading and printing, and a newly-printed copy will be shipped to the requestor. Or, the requestor can purchase access to an online-only version of the book. Once the book has been reproduced, it is returned undamaged to the Libraries' shelves.

Kirtas will also return a digital copy of each scanned title and associated searchable text files to Penn Libraries, which will then make digital editions available to the public via the web or other open access channels.

The scan- and print-on-demand service will allow Penn Libraries to experiment with user-driven digitization, and evaluate small-scale economic models as options for building digital assets from existing print resources. "This partnership allows us to use reader interest to develop a digital collection," said Kirtas Founder and CEO Lotfi Belkhir. "It's a radical approach in that it eliminates the guesswork from selection and marketing."

The Penn Libraries/Kirtas project is the latest in a range of digital initiatives undertaken by the Libraries, which also include the Schoenberg Center for Electronic Text and Image, a leader in digital development of subject specific resources in support of curricula and research, and Penn Libraries' participation in the Pennsylvania Digital Library Project, funded by the Sloan Foundation. For further information about Kirtas and its services, see www.kirtas.com.

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