

Google Books Library Project

The World Wide Web is one step closer to accessing free online digital books.

Google and Libraries at the University of Texas have announced a partnership to put books in digital form and make them available online.

Other national libraries involved in the Google Books Library Project include:

- University of Michigan
- Harvard University
- Stanford University
- Oxford University
- and the New York Public Library

The multi-year project was started in December 2004. With the help of the University of Texas Libraries, Google will digitize at least one million volumes from collections.

“Creating digital access to our library collections will enable a great many more scholars and members of the public to locate and use these tremendously valuable materials” says William Powers Jr., president of The University of Texas at Austin.

The digitized books will all be fully searchable through Google Book Search. Google pays particular attention to copyright law and has specifically designed Book Search to comply with it. Anyone will be able to freely view, browse and read the university’s public domain books, including a number of unique treasures in the Libraries’ historic collections.

For books protected by copyright, users will only be provided the basic background information (such as the book’s title and the author’s name), at most a few lines of text related to their search and information about where they can borrow or buy the book. Publishers or authors who wish not to have their books digitized can be omitted from inclusion in the project.

According to Dennis Dillon, associate director for research services for the Libraries, the digitization project will increase the effectiveness of the Libraries’ collections.

“Intellectual discovery is at the heart of the scholarly research process,” he said. “The best collections of information are only as useful as the quality of the tools available for discovering and accessing that information. Joining with Google’s Book Search program will mean that the intellectual content of our collections are discoverable by a much wider range of scholars and students.”

Certainly digitizing books and putting them on the internet will help all students, teachers and researchers will be able to access literary information faster. The internet is already a fast and easy source for multitudes of information, and the Google Books Library Project only makes it even better.