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For More

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UC Libraries Partner with Technology Companies and Non-Profits to Provide Free Public Access to Digitized Books

Books from the UC libraries will be scanned and made freely available online through a new consortium

OAKLAND, Calif. — October 3, 2005 — The University of California libraries today (Monday) announced their participation in a partnership to build a freely accessible digital library with materials drawn from across the world. The UC libraries will contribute books and resources in order to build a collection of out-of-copyright American literature that will include works by many great American authors.

With the support of Yahoo! Inc., UC library books will be digitized by the Internet Archive using a new technology that scans books at the cost of 10 cents per page. In comparison, the costs to scan archival photographs and documents typically begin at \$20.00 per page. The materials will be available from <http://www.opencontentalliance.org>, the website of the Open Content Alliance (OCA), a global consortium announced today that will build and openly distribute a comprehensive set of digitized print and multimedia content.

“Readers will rejoice to have public domain literary texts available online for anyone who wants to read or work on them,” said Richard Terdiman, professor of literature at UC Santa Cruz. “This will be a wonderful boon to students and scholars, and a great service to the public.”

The OCA’s founding contributors also include the University of Toronto, the European Archive, the National Archives (UK), O’Reilly Media, Inc., Adobe, and Hewlett Packard Labs.

“We’re pleased to join the OCA and begin making this important part of our national cultural heritage freely available online,” said Daniel Greenstein, Associate Vice Provost and University Librarian for the California Digital Library at the University of California. “But perhaps more significant is the opportunity that

the OCA provides for UC and other cultural and educational institutions to actively engage with commercial partners in an open and consultative process to design a world-class digital library and educational resource.”

The OCA is actively looking for participation from technology companies, educational and cultural institutions, and governmental organizations. Library contributions will be particularly important as a means of building collections and defining services that meet users’ needs.

"This is an exciting step in the ongoing development of open access solutions for citizens, students, scholars, and researchers worldwide," said Ann Wolpert, president of the Association of Research Libraries. "Working with the OCA, academic and research libraries can provide greater access to an untold wealth of high quality, high value materials, contribute expertise in developing reliable and authoritative collections, and help shape the structure of online services. Libraries, publishers, educational institutions, and others must collaborate around initiatives like the OCA to effectively serve their communities in the 21st century."

About the University of California libraries

More than 100 libraries on the 10 University of California campuses support the University's teaching and research. Collectively, the UC libraries <<http://libraries.universityofcalifornia.edu/>> make up the largest research/academic library in the world. They include the California Digital Library <<http://www.cdlib.org/>>, which was established in 1997 to support the assembly and creative use of scholarship and knowledge for the UC libraries and the communities they serve.

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