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Hitting a Milestone, 75,000 Volumes Online

During the August lull after the annual AALL Convention, we hit a quiet milestone at our plant in Kaneohe. We scanned our 75,000th volume. Of course, that's only a number. But it does give occasion for a bit of reflection and a bit of justified pride. When our intrepid band of libraries determined to create a digital library a decade ago, we set the goal of making a significant difference in the financial and intellectual lives of our libraries.

In order to make that difference we had to hit a critical mass, to become a major part of each member library's basic collection. We're now crossing that threshold. At this point it is safe to say that *LLMC-Digital* comprises a quarter of the collection for over 80% of its subscribing law libraries. That percentage will soon enough reach a third, and, at current rates of scanning, should be at 50% at the end of the next decade.

Therefore, we can cumulatively congratulate ourselves that we have made a very sound investment. At a remarkably modest cost for each separate library, we have tackled a major migration-of-format, preservation problem. And we're well on the way to mastering it. We have moved from a world where the majority of law libraries were losing the competition to build comprehensive collections to one where, at least in certain defined but substantial areas, all law libraries can share the fruits of our combined efforts. In the process we have created a successor library with ongoing maintenance costs that are a fraction of what we each were separately paying in the good old hardcopy-book days.

For our law school libraries, the backbone of the enterprise and the highest-paying subscribers, annual maintenance costs are now

below 12 cents per volume. For our other law library subscribers the annual maintenance costs per volume are even more remarkable. No other parts of our library operations are remotely that efficient.

That bargain will persist and become sweeter with age; since, working together, we will keep adding more titles. This operation has proven its economics. The only wise course from here on out is to just keep on realizing its potential.

Launch of a Books-on-Demand Option¹

For some time people have been asking LLMC to establish a books-on-demand opportunity. Directing that request to us makes perfect sense. After all, we are sitting on the essential ingredient for such a program; i.e., the texts of many thousands of law books in digital format. Meanwhile, there is an opportunity for service. The majority of our titles are out-of-print and thus unavailable to libraries seeking to fill gaps in a paper set, or desiring a hardcopy version of a significant text.

In response to this demand we have done some shopping about and have located a partner well equipped to offer our customers a high quality and very economical product. Our partner is a non-profit corporation founded by the city/state of Hamburg, Germany. The firm, Elbe-Werkstätten, provides work opportunities for handicapped individuals; employing some 2,500 persons in a variety of trades. We have already used the firm's services for the scanning of books being loaned by German sources for our Haiti Collection build. Its high quality work on the scanning front has induced us to employ it to implement the manufacturing side of our books-on-demand program.

¹ The Books on Demand program offers yet another mode of distribution of LLMC-Digital content and as such is subject to our [Terms and Conditions](#), including the restriction of resale and redistribution without prior written approval.

Starting October 15 we will be able to offer hardcopy versions of any of our online volumes on the following general terms:

- All books will be printed on acid-free paper at a rough base cost of \$0.03 per b/w page.
- Binding options, which should be added to the base cost, will include: Adhesive binding with printed and laminated book cover (ca. \$9.50); Thread-stitching with printed and laminated book cover (ca. \$15.50); Thread-stitching with webbed cover and imprinted title on spine (ca. \$22.50); and Thread-stitching with leather cover and imprinted title on spine (ca. \$28.00).
- The final cost element will be shipping.²

It is LLMC's intent that eventually these books-on-demand will be obtainable via an online ordering system not unlike that used by Amazon or other online vendors. However, we have been alerted by our technical partner, NBS, that such an online ordering system will require a high level of security and privacy safeguards. Since we have never done anything quite like this before, we will be taking our time to ensure that we do everything right. Therefore, the online ordering system is not expected to be in operation before the end of the year.

In the meantime, however, since the capability has now been created, we feel that we should make the system available to anybody who may need work done sooner. Starting Oct. 15, during the interim before the online ordering mechanisms are operational, orders will be accepted by e-mail. Just direct your e-mail to llmc@llmc.com and be sure to put the legend "books-on-demand program" in the subject line. You don't have to go into great detail in the first communication, because you

² A sample title might be the first published Civil Code of Haiti, 1826, at 416 pages. Assuming a choice of thread-stitching with webbed cover and imprinted title on spine, such a book on acid-free paper would cost roughly \$35.00, plus shipping. For another six bucks the customer could have that title bound in leather.

will receive in return an order form designed to elicit the appropriate information for processing your order.

Major Progress on Haiti Collection

Regular readers will be aware that, for the past two and a half years, LLMC has been putting heightened energy into creating an especially rich Haiti Legal Patrimony Collection. This contribution to the Haiti earthquake recovery effort will always be a work in progress. We anticipate that we will be adding the odd item far into the future. However, we are happy to announce that the initial phase is starting to wind up, and that the results are most heartening.

To briefly review our course to date: When the great earthquake hit Haiti in 2010, many of us gave donations on a personal basis. But, some folks asked if there wasn't something that LLMC could do as an organization? Well, one thing that we know how to do well is to build libraries. So helping to rebuild Haiti's law libraries in a contemporary format was a do-able and useful proposition. It would help free up funds in Haiti for other pressing purposes, while providing the country with something of enduring value.

To get things rolling LLMC approached Kent McKeever at Columbia Law Library and Roberta Shaffer, then Law Librarian of Congress. We asked if they would be willing to have their combined holdings serve as the foundation for an effort to build a "super-collection." Fortunately both libraries were more than willing to help launch the project. The goal we established was to create as rich a collection of Haitian law and governance-related public domain titles as had ever been assembled, and to make that collection freely available both to the citizens of Haiti and to the world generally.

We can now announce that our fundamental goal has been substantially accomplished. Starting with the rich holdings of our two "anchor" libraries, we were able to assemble a "base collection" of 346 titles. We then publicized that "base collection" to the wider library world, asking other libraries to survey their holdings and make available for scanning purposes any of their titles that proved to

be unique. Rather astoundingly, the digital Haiti Legal Patrimony Collection has now grown to 1,030 scanned titles, with another 131 titles identified and still coming in. We expect that the final tally will be just over 1,175 titles. This tells us a lot about the goodness of our colleagues. It also provides an object lesson illustrating the truism that “no library has everything.”

Most of the scanned titles described above have already been cataloged, and are now available on *LLMC-Digital*. In addition, and to ensure that the materials are made freely available to the people of Haiti and their neighbors, all of these titles are being made freely available to the world through the Florida-based Digital Library of the Caribbean.

To be sure, there is one very important title for which the scanning has lagged badly. This is *Le Moniteur*, the Haiti official gazette. LLMC has had great difficulty in assembling a scannable copy of this vital resource. Until recently the best we were able to do was assemble about a third of the 20th century portion of the run by combining scattered pieces loaned by the law libraries of the Library of Congress, Tulane, Michigan and Columbia.

We are now delighted to be able to announce a major breakthrough with regard to the gazette project. We learned only this week that we have been awarded access to an unbroken run of *Le Moniteur* from 1900 through 1999. This set has been housed to date at the United States Embassy in Port-au-Prince. This will completely fill out our 20th Century run of this title. The gap materials needed to complete our run will be arriving from Haiti over the next month or so. This allows us to predict with confidence that our 20th Century run of this title will be complete early in the new year.

Words From a Top User

We have noticed for some time that Creighton University Law Library has consistently been among our top-user libraries. Our Executive Director recently contacted the Library Director, Kay Andrus, asking if he could

provide an on-the-scene account of why they thought their patrons were such heavy users. We received the following reply from Heather Buckwalter, Serials/Acquisitions Librarian.

- “*Creighton University Law Library has a new faculty member who has hit the ground running. While helping him put together material for a coursepack, he mentioned an old North Carolina case that he would like to include, but he didn’t think we would have the case in print. Shortly after returning to my office, I was able to retrieve and print the case from LLMC Digital. When I gave the printout to the faculty member he was impressed with the clean, sharp pdf image that I was able to retrieve from LLMC Digital. With access to LLMC Digital, Creighton University Law Library has been able to fill gaps in its historical materials that we would otherwise have to try and borrow from other libraries. By having the cataloging records in our ILS, we have given our patrons full access to a wealth of information that otherwise they would not discover.*”

Heather’s comment on the worth of loading the *LLMC-Digital* cataloging records echo what we hear from all of our top user libraries – use goes way up as soon as those records become available. We encourage all of our subscribing libraries to take that message to heart.

Preservation, a Cautionary Tale

We were recently shown a photograph from the famous (in library circles) freak flood in the basement of the University of Hawaii’s Main Library in October, 2004. As a reminder, a “freak flood” hit a flotsam-formed dam at a culvert in a creek over a mile from the campus. The surging waters overflowed their banks, wended their way through the streets of a residential area, managed to find the library, and destroyed the library’s maps and government document collections. A copy of the photo in question is attached as an appendix to this issue.

Of course, being on the scene, we here at LLMC-Kaneohe had seen pictures of the flood before. But a light bulb went off when we saw this one. The principal ruined set sitting on the shelves in the middle of this photo is the *U.S. Statutes at Large*. Those water-expanded volumes in the first five levels of shelves show just how high the flood reached. But the thing that struck us was that this is the very set that was scanned by LLMC earlier that year. We certainly didn't imagine when we were doing that scanning that this fine set of materials had less than a year's life left in it.

Of course, this was a "freak flood," a "once-in-a-lifetime accident." But "freak" events happen with some regularity in our world, and "once-in-a-lifetime events" seem to happen at least once in every lifetime. Although most destructive events are less dramatic than this one, the preservation message is clear. Our paper collections are in peril from threats overt and subtle; swift or merely inexorable. Only a program of methodical and persistent preservation will ensure that we will fulfill our duty of passing our heritage on to our children.

