

Google FAQ

Cornell University Library-Google Library Partnership

August 2007

Cornell University Library has partnered with Google Inc. to digitize selected materials from its superb collections and make them available online using Google Book Search. The digitization project will provide scholars and the general public with the ability to search for and locate books from Cornell's collections.

Why did Cornell University Library enter into partnership with Google?

The partnership supports Cornell University Library's long-standing commitment to make its collections broadly available and the university's goal to increase the impact of Cornell beyond campus boundaries. It is vitally important that Cornell's remarkable print collections be digitally maintained and widely available for education, research and the needs of future generations. As a leader in digitization and preservation efforts, Cornell University Library has been scanning material for many years. Our partnership with Google will permit us to continue with this task on a much larger scope and scale.

Are other libraries involved in the Google Book Search Library Project?

Yes. Google is currently working with 26 libraries: University of Michigan; Harvard University; Oxford University; the New York Public Library; Stanford University; University of California; University of Texas at Austin; University of Virginia; University of Wisconsin-Madison; Princeton Library; the Complutense University of Madrid; the Bavarian State Library; the Library of Catalonia; the University Library of Lausanne, Ghent University Library; Keio University Library; and the Committee on Institutional Collaboration (CIC) schools, including University of Chicago, University of Illinois, Indiana University, University of Iowa, Michigan State University, University of Minnesota, Northwestern University, Ohio State University, Pennsylvania State University, Purdue University. Google has also conducted a pilot project with the Library of Congress.

Information about the Google Book Search partners is available at books.google.com/googlebooks/partners.html.

What material will Google be scanning?

Cornell University Library has a collection of close to 8 million volumes. In cooperation with Google, the Library will choose materials that complement the contributions of other libraries participating in the Google Book Search Library Project. Materials from Mann Library, one of 20 member libraries that comprise Cornell University Library, will be digitized as part of the agreement. Mann's collections cover the following subject areas: biological sciences, natural resources, plant, animal and environmental sciences, applied economics, management and public policy, human development, textiles and apparel, nutrition and food science.

How many works will Google digitize from Cornell and how long will it take?

We anticipate that at least 500,000 volumes from Cornell University Library will be included in Google Book Search. The scanning is expected to take six years.

What is an example of Cornell University Library's current digitization initiatives?

Cornell University Library is a leader in digitization and preservation. Some of its current digitization initiatives include partnerships with Microsoft, the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Library Alliance, Amazon.com and the United States Agriculture Information Network (USAIN).

As a partner in the Microsoft Live Book initiative, the Library is collaborating with Microsoft and Kirtas Technologies, Inc. in digitizing public domain materials. More information about the partnership can be found at wiki.library.cornell.edu/wiki/x/dXg.

In addition, the Library is sharing its expertise in digital imaging, preservation and management with librarians and archivists from the HBCU Library Alliance in an initiative that is laying the foundation for an HBCU digital library. As a result of this partnership, important materials from the founding collections of 20 HBCU institutions will soon be available online in a digital collection entitled "Celebrating the Founding of the Historically Black College and University."

Cornell University Library has also partnered with BookSurge, a subsidiary of Amazon.com that provides inventory-free book publishing, printing, fulfillment, and distribution, to make digitized materials from its world-class collections available as paperback editions. Customers who order a Cornell title from Amazon.com receive a high-resolution facsimile copy of the original contents. Google Book Search leads users to Cornell titles on Amazon or they can be purchased through Cornell Library's customized Amazon storefront at bookstore.library.cornell.edu.

For more than a decade, Mann Library has collaborated with other land-grant libraries in a unique program to identify and preserve the history of agriculture and rural life. USAIN developed a national preservation plan to guide this initiative and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) has given significant support. As part of the program, Mann digitized two of its important collections including the Core Historical Literature of Agriculture chla.library.cornell.edu and HEARTH, the Human Ecology Archive: Research, Tradition and History hearth.library.cornell.edu.

At Cornell, the Library is also involved in several initiatives aimed at converting the university's special and core collections. A list of its digital collections is available at rdc.library.cornell.edu.

Will the books to be digitized from Cornell's collection include both public domain and in-copyright works?

Yes. The digitization initiative will include both public domain and in-copyright materials in a manner consistent with copyright law.

For books in the public domain, readers will be able to read, download and print the full texts from the Google site.

For books protected by copyright, users will just get basic background (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 buy or borrow a book. If publishers or authors do not want to have their books digitized, Google will exclude them.

What materials are in the "public domain?"

For users in the United States, the Google Books Library project treats all books published after 1923 as protected by copyright, except for books to which no copyright was attached in the first instance, such as certain government documents

If a publisher wants to be excluded from Google Book Search, can they be?

Yes. Publishers can very easily exclude themselves from Google Book Search by letting Google know that they don't want one, some, or all of their books included in its index.

Where will scanning take place?

The books will be shipped from Cornell to a Google scanning center to be digitized.

Who's funding this?

Google assumes the cost of digitization.

Are books going to be unavailable while they're being scanned?

A book will be unavailable for the short period of time in which it's being scanned; however, Google does everything it can to minimize the time out of circulation.

Where can I go to see a book scanned from a library?

For examples and screenshots, go to books.google.com/googlebooks/library.html.