The role of the NLSA in the national digitisation initiatives

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LEGISLATIVE MANDATE

OBJECTS OF THE NLSA

“The objects of the National Library are to contribute to socio-economic, cultural, educational, scientific and innovative development by: collecting, recording, preserving and making available the national documentary heritage and promoting an awareness and appreciation thereof, fostering information literacy, and facilitating access to the world's information resources”.

National Library of South Africa
Size of NLSA collections

- 3.3 million book titles
- 63 000 periodical titles
- 80 000 newspaper bound volumes
- 55 000 maps
- 230 000 photographs
- Special collections
Heritage Collections

• Primary source of SA published documentary heritage

• Wealth of information

• Books, periodicals, newspapers, maps, special collections, government publications, foreign official publications
Sechaba: 1 (1) 1967
Reprographic and Digital Services
Preservation

• Microfilming (master copy)
• Photographic negatives / positives
• Photographic paper prints
• Limited number of fragile documents / newspapers as needed
• Maps
• Paintings
On demand

- Microfilming for clients
- Microfilm / duplication
- Film / negative scanning
- Photographic prints
- Maps
- Rare books (UCT music Dept)
- Paintings
Current ongoing projects

• Selected Black press newspapers (these are previously banned publications)
  (low volume = less than 10 000 pages each)
• Indian Opinion (1930 – 1949) (17 000 pages)
• Currently digitise an average of 15,000 pages per year
• Allocated two terabytes of digital content to date
Equipment

- Film / negative scanner
- Flatbed scanner (A3)
- Large format scanner (A0)
- Digital camera
- Digital video camera
Deposit of e-publications

- Model developed
- Accept original digital works
- Web-based protocol
e-deposit model
Future plans

- SA newspapers
- Approx 7.5 million pages
- Black Press
- 200 000 pages
- Estimated space requirement of two petabytes
Challenges and Opportunities

• Keeping up with the ever changing digital climate including but not limited to:
  • Physical space
  • Requisite skills and competencies
  • Technological requirements
Policy development

- NLSA digitising policy in draft stage
- SA National digitisation policy yet to be finalised by DAC
CASE STUDY
(Western Cape Provincial Government)

- Substantial funding for the next three years for digitising archive holdings
- Proper infrastructure to be implemented
Thank you!

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