



## IFLA International Newspaper Conference

**“Newspaper Digitization and Preservation.  
New prospects.  
Stakeholders, Practices, Users and Business Models”**

**11-13 April 2012  
BnF, Paris**

With the support of:



# **A unique public-private partnership. The case of the British Library and brightsolid**

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## Our 2020 vision

**In 2020, the British Library will be a leading hub in the global information network, advancing knowledge through our collections, expertise and partnerships, for the benefit of the economy and society and the enrichment of cultural life**

- For newspapers we see a world of fully searchable aggregated resources, a mix of free and pay to access content
- The Library's role is to open up resources and point researchers to where they can find them around the world

## The vision has five key themes setting out strategic priorities

**Theme 1** Guarantee access for future generations

**Theme 2** Enable access to everyone who wants to do research

**Theme 3** Support research communities in key areas for social and economic benefit

**Theme 4** Enrich the cultural life of the nation

**Theme 5** Lead and collaborate in growing the world's knowledge base

# The Newspaper Collection Today



# The British Library Newspaper Collection

- Collection dates from 16th Century
- 53,198 separate print titles
- 370,000 reels of microfilm
- 50 km of shelf space
- Legal deposit collects 95% of 1400 titles from UK and Ireland
- 200 overseas titles
- 800 million pages
- 30,000 readers per year

# The British Library Newspaper Collection







## A stark contrast



## The Kings Library



## The British Library reading rooms



# Reasons for change

- British Library Act 1972 requirement to store legal deposit content for the nation
- 1930s building with poor storage conditions
- 15% of the collection is 'unusable'
- 19% of the collection is 'at risk'
- The building is full
- Newspaper Library is not located with other collection items, at St Pancras reading rooms
- Basic catalogue and indexes

# The answer is digital

In February 2007 the British Library Board reconfirmed the following vision:

“ The Library will offer an integrated newspaper service based on digital surrogates at St Pancras with hard copy stored to help preserve it for future generations”

To deliver the vision the Library had to persuade the Government to invest £33m to fund a new newspaper storage building at Boston Spa, Yorkshire to store all hard copy newspapers

Access would then revert to St Pancras through surrogates microfilm and digital with hard copy newspapers only being accessible in very controlled circumstances

Some previous digitisation experience: The Burney collection of 1800 to 1900 content and three million pages of 19<sup>th</sup> century local newspapers

But just a drop in the ocean against a newspaper collection of 800 million pages ...and growing every year by 300 metres

# The answer is digital

Find a partner who would invest many millions of pounds to digitise many millions of pages at no cost to the Library

The Library decided that a public procurement under a new process called Competitive Dialogue would be the best solution.

- This had to be a process which was:
- Transparent
- Unbiased and giving best value
- Enable market and technical knowledge to be gained from the suppliers – calling on as wide a pool of potential providers as possible
- Commercial issues were undefined and the Library was seeking a supplier to take on the project at their own financial risk

## Our desire

- Within the Library's overall Newspaper Programme the digitisation project was required to meet the need for bulk digitisation and:
- Grow the use of surrogates (to meet a KPI for the Library of 80% of reader requests from the newspaper collection to be met from a surrogate by the end of 2017)
- To "improve" the user experience following the completion of the Programme and the move of the physical newspapers to a new Newspaper Storage Building at Boston Spa
- Test the market for solutions where the supplier could be "self-funding" as experience with JISC had shown digitisation of newspapers to be expensive and time-consuming and requiring specialist skills and equipment
- Provide the Library with a clear exit strategy if it didn't work or no supplier could be found to undertake the work

## The marriage with brightsolid

- OJEU notice advertised in September 2008.
- We evaluated the PQQ responses (of which there were 18) to identify a shortlist of potential bidders who were then provided with a full definition of the project and invited to a Supplier's Day where the Library provided an introduction to the project, the requirements, and the Competitive Dialogue process.
- We then moved into the full Competitive Dialogue process rejecting fourteen bids with four serious contenders for the contract:
- After much work the Dialogue process reached the point where two suppliers were able to submit formal (and binding) Best and Final Offers.
- On March 30<sup>th</sup> 2010 nearly two years later a contract was signed with **brightsolid** opening up an extraordinary private sector public sector partnership to digitise 40 million pages over a ten year period with options to extend the contract in future five year tranches
- **brightsolid** is owned by Scottish newspaper publisher DC Thomson and is the publisher of the UK 1911 Census, Find My Past and the recently relaunched Friends Reunited
- The full scanning operation came on stream in mid-December 2010 and [www.thebritishnewspaperarchive](http://www.thebritishnewspaperarchive) was born.
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*The British*  
NEWSPAPER  
Archive

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## Key contractual points

- **brightsolid** will digitise content from the Newspaper Archive to populate a commercial offering: brightsolid is responsible for the selection of material to be digitised based on their business plan
- **brightsolid** is operating entirely at their own commercial risk with no direct costs to the Library
- The Library receives:
- Copies of all scanned materials for ingest (with accompanying OCR text and metadata)
- Free access from the Library premises to [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)
- For the duration of the contract the out of copyright wall was set at 1900
- A royalty on all paid-for accesses to out-of-copyright materials: this revenue is designed to recoup the additional costs to the Library (for example for the provision of materials to the scanning operation)

## Key contractual points

- **brightsolid** is responsible for all negotiations with copyright (or other IPR) owners and for all due diligence on the copyright status of materials: the Library is indemnified for claims for breach of IPR or other damages
- **brightsolid** may acquire materials direct from the publisher or rights holder and is expected to negotiate the right of ingest on behalf of the Library for these Acquired Images. The expectation was that **brightsolid** would acquire in the order of a further 2M images per year for inclusion in their website
- The contract is non-exclusive: that is, the rest of the Library's Newspaper Archive is available to be digitised. However, we have built in certain protections to help ensure commercial viability. This means that:
  - Any request or proposal for digitisation from the Newspaper Archive will be referred to **brightsolid** to enable them to take on that work if they wish and it agrees with their business plan but where they do not wish to be involved then digitisation may go ahead separately provided the content (and type of exploitation) does not directly compete with **brightsolid**'s business model

## The brightsolid studio at Colindale scans 8000 pages a day



## What does success look like?

- Today 4,937,162 pages and counting ranging from the mid 1700's through to 1950...a unique aspect is new content every day
- In the last 15 months the site has progressed to five million pages today with content ranging from the mid 1700's through to 1950
- On target to reach some eight million pages by the end of 2012
- In the first five months more than 30 million pages have been viewed
- **brightsolid** has 35,000 unique subscribers
- The Library is receiving royalties from **brightsolid**
- **brightsolid** is receiving significant revenues
- The project has already opened up a treasure trove of content
- It has transformed search for researchers all round the world

## A peep into a world outside our shores

- Articles on Paris
- 1700-1749-14,285
- 1750-1799-57,658
- 1800-1849-482,057
- 1850-1899-2,646,978
- 1900-1949-380,406