



## Portugal's Cultural Legacy: Digitising the National Library's Treasures

Imagine having access to centuries of Portuguese history at your fingertips—this is now possible thanks to the National Library of Portugal's (BNP) ambitious digitisation project. The BNP, a guardian of the nation's rich documentary heritage, is committed to collecting, preserving, and disseminating Portuguese cultural treasures in all formats. To make its vast collection accessible to the public in the digital age, the BNP embarked on a transformative digitisation project.

Partnering with RFS, Dyanix and Image Access—leaders in telecommunications, document management and imaging technology—the BNP aimed to digitise millions of manuscripts, books, newspapers, and other invaluable materials while adhering to stringent technical requirements and preserving the integrity of the originals.

### Historical Context and Significance

The BNP's collection includes invaluable items such as rare manuscripts, early printed books, historical newspapers, and unique cartographic materials. Among these treasures are original works by famous Portuguese authors like Luís de Camões, documents from significant historical events such as the Portuguese Age of Exploration, and rare maps that chart the discoveries during this period. The digitisation of these materials not only preserves them but also makes them accessible to researchers, historians, and the general public worldwide, fostering a deeper understanding of Portugal's cultural and historical legacy.

### Client Profile

The [BNP](#), established with the mission to collect, process, and preserve Portuguese documentary heritage, serves as the National Bibliographic Agency, managing legal deposit services, bibliographic databases, and professional development initiatives in the library sector. Its dedication to protecting and promoting Portugal's bibliographic treasures extends to collaborative projects both domestically and internationally, ensuring that this heritage is preserved for future generations.

### Service Providers

Founded in 1993, RFS, specialises in telecommunications, document management, and office equipment sectors, offering a wide range of services from supplying and maintaining equipment to specialised document management solutions. Known for its quality and expertise, RFS plays a critical role in ensuring the project's success.

Dyanix, a trusted partner of RFS, provides cutting-edge scanning technology and technical support, ensuring seamless project execution and adherence to best practices in digital preservation.

[Image Access](#), a global leader in high-performance scanning equipment, offers innovative solutions for digitisation projects worldwide. Their advanced technology ensures superior image quality and efficiency, perfectly aligning with the BNP's vision for the digitisation project, ultimately benefiting users by providing them with access to high-resolution digital images of priceless documents.

### Project Scope and Solution

The project aimed to digitise millions of diverse materials, including manuscripts, old books, newspapers, and cartographic documents. To achieve this, the BNP required the use of planetary scanners or digital cameras operated manually, adherence to specific resolution and format standards, and the implementation of Optical Character Recognition (OCR) for printed texts. Additionally, strict compliance with naming and structure rules set by the National Library was necessary to ensure the consistency and accessibility of the digital files for users.

A major challenge was protecting the fragile and aging documents during the digitisation process. To address this, non-invasive planetary scanners were utilised along with careful handling techniques. Ensuring consistent image quality and accurate OCR for documents with varying legibility required meticulous calibration and quality control. To meet these demands, the project deployed advanced scanning equipment from Image Access, including the Bookeye 5 V2 Archive + Flat Glass and Bookeye 5 V1, supported by Dyanix's technical expertise. These solutions were designed to follow best practices in digital preservation, ensuring that the digitised materials would be accessible worldwide through the National

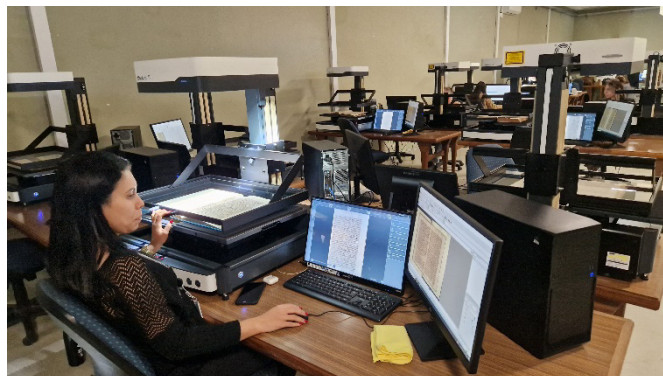


More than 20 Bookeye® Scanners (Bookeye 5 V2 Archive & Bookeye 5 V1A) are used to realize the project at the Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal!

Digital Library, thus safeguarding Portugal's cultural heritage for future generations.

### Project Execution and Impact

The integration of Image Access scanners has progressed smoothly, with operators quickly becoming proficient, leading to a more efficient workflow. The addition of a second screen significantly enhanced digitisation efficiency, enabling better frame adjustments and reducing errors. Users and stakeholders have expressed satisfaction with the high-quality images produced, some have offered helpful suggestions for software optimisation to further elevate the user experience.



Initial challenges included reducing errors that led to rejected image batches, but the implementation of two screens for improved image review resolved these issues and elevated work quality. Overall, the project has successfully digitised millions of documents, preserving their cultural and historical significance. These digitised materials are now accessible to the public through the National Digital Library, promoting knowledge dissemination and cultural enrichment for generations to come.

### Concluding the Collaboration: A Lasting Commitment to Cultural Heritage Preservation

The partnership between the BNP, RFS, Dyanix and Image Access exemplifies the power of collaboration in preserving and promoting cultural heritage. Through meticulous planning, innovative solutions, and unwavering dedication, the project successfully digitised millions of invaluable documents, ensuring their accessibility and preservation for future generations. As technology continues to evolve, the BNP remains committed to its mission of preserving heritage and promoting knowledge dissemination, guided by the principles of excellence and integrity.



Project partners: Rüdiger Klepsch (COO, IA), Jorge Carvalho (Dyanix PT), Rui Miguel (CEO, RFS) and Thorsten Rink (European Sales Manager, IA)

Looking ahead, the BNP continues to explore new technologies and strategies to further enhance its digital offerings, ensuring that Portugal's cultural legacy is preserved and accessible to all.