Preservica
Active digital preservation

Case Study
University of Manchester

# Bringing the past into the present at the University of Manchester Library

**UoM Library's partnership with Preservica ensures that 4,500-year old objects remain secure and accessible for the future.**

## A wealth of content:

The University of Manchester Library is one of only five National Research Libraries in the UK and holds a collection of rare books, medieval manuscripts, maps, and historic archives. The library's varied collections encompass a wide range of formats, covering virtually every medium that has ever been used for writing, even including papyrus fragments – the most famous of which being a piece of St John's Gospel, believed to be the earliest existing example of New Testament writing.

With more than 3 million printed books and manuscripts, 41,000 electronic journals, and 500,000 electronic books, as well as several hundred databases, the library is one of the best-resourced academic libraries in the UK. The Library's primary aim is to support students and staff of The University of Manchester in all areas of their study, but it is also committed to widening participation, and access to many of its services provided for individual researchers, schools and the local community.

## Ensuring reliable access:

The Library's collection contains a large number of delicate items. In their original form, some were not easily accessible to the researchers and academics that rely on the University Library as a vital resource for their work. Through digitizing much of the archives, UoM hoped to open up the opportunity to work with the University's collection to a wider group of people than ever before.

The Library's team of archivists, photographers and IT specialists took on the challenge of working to digitize and ingest the broad range of files in to Preservica. Using the Preservica Bulk Upload Service, which works in conjunction with AWS Import/Export Snowball, the UoM was able to accelerate moving large amounts of data into the AWS Cloud.

## Into the cloud:

"We're moving 30TB of digitized and born digital material to the cloud, as part of a University-wide initiative to capitalize on the cost and accessibility efficiencies offered by the cloud", said Andy Land, Digital Programmes Manager at The University of Manchester Library. "We're pleased to be consolidating our Special Collections in one system that will ensure our digital materials are both digitally preserved and more widely accessible."

"Additionally, our work with the University Library pioneered the way forward in preserving emails and attachments, a practice not often considered in other large-scale digital preservation programmes. A unique part of its Special Collections are over 250,000 emails to the Carcanet Press, an internationally important publisher of poetry and works in translation. Email applications, and formats have changed over the years,

so ensuring emails and their attachments are entrusted to a digital preservation system, so that they can be readable in the future, is extremely important to us."

The Library selected Preservica's Enterprise platform hosted in the Cloud in order to use the platform's APIs to integrate the system to serve as the backend to its many search-based applications, such as its 'Discovery' application.

"For a long time people have had to use various systems to get access to different objects that were stored in different places. Now they can just use the application they prefer to access everything in the collections, which, when we are finished, will all live in Preservica", Land added.

## Driving the future of study:

The University Library plans to use the Preservica system to help make its Middle Eastern studies collection more widely available.

Middle Eastern Studies have been offered at the University since 1851 and Iranian studies has been a key part of this since the late 19th century. Its insightful collection of Iranian newspapers and periodicals offer unique insight on the minute details of historical developments of major consequences, such as the Coup of 1953, the Revolution of 1979, or the "Tehran Spring" of 1999-2002.

The Library's team of archivists, photographers and IT specialists will continue to work to digitize and ingest files in to the Preservica platform, ensuring long term, reliable access to academic documents for a range of users.