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Title:

Learning from the past and looking to the future: the necessity of re-evaluating digitization practices and procedures

Abstract:

Since 2007, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Library and Archives Service has scanned over 600,000 pages of historical publications and documents produced by ITU. In 2010, the digitized texts as well as a selection of complementary materials were made publicly available, for free, with the launch of the History of ITU Portal web site (www.itu.int/history). The aim of the web site is to tell the story of the Union since its founding in 1865 by giving access to key documents, but also by providing the context for discovering more about ITU's history as one of the oldest international organizations.

The digitization of library and archives materials at ITU began as a simple scanning project, but over time has become a central part of our operations. Our efforts have evolved from simply scanning publications to fill user requests to a more methodical approach. Before scanning, we thoroughly research and assess each collection to ensure that what we present on our web site is more than just scanned pages. By placing the documents in context, we provide our users with a comprehensive view of the Union's work and history.

In 2013, we embarked on a new project: digitizing the *Telecommunication Journal*, one of the earliest publications produced by ITU. First published in 1869 as the *Journal télégraphique*, it is a resource with enormous historical value as it provides a record of ITU's work, as well as gives a unique international perspective on the growth and evolution of telecommunications technology, policy, and industry over time.

After studying the extent and complexity of the *Telecommunication Journal* collection, it was clear that we would need to review our digitization procedures. This paper will discuss why changes in our approach were necessary, as well as explore the challenges faced and lessons learned throughout the process of selecting, preparing, digitizing, and providing access to this collection.

Biography:

Brie Grey-Noble (MLIS) is the Digital Collections Librarian at the International Telecommunication Union. Prior to joining the ITU Library and Archives team, she worked in a variety of libraries in Vancouver, Canada.