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Northwestern University Library Purchases Book Digitizing System

October 29, 2004, Victor, NY – Kirtas Technologies today announced that Northwestern University Library has purchased an APT BookScan 1200™ system, making it the first major research library to purchase this revolutionary book digitizing technology. The system, which sells for \$120,000, will be delivered in the fourth quarter of 2004.

“The innovation and leadership of Northwestern University Library will serve as a wonderful model for other libraries that are ‘waiting in the wings’ to demonstrate the cost, quality and productivity benefits of our technology for library-specific applications,” says Lotfi Belkhir, CEO and founder of Kirtas Technologies.

Until now, Northwestern has outsourced brittle book reformatting to a vendor at a cost of more than \$100 per average-size book. By bringing high-speed book digitizing capabilities in-house, Northwestern expects to dramatically reduce costs and increase production as it continues to reformat brittle collections to print.

“This current process has served us well,” says Tyra Grant, Head of the Preservation Department at Northwestern, “but the cost of commercial scanning limits the number of brittle books we can preserve each year. The Kirtas system promises to reduce our costs dramatically, perhaps by as much as 50% to 75%. Reduced unit costs will enable us to preserve more.”

“In addition,” adds Grant, “Kirtas’ post-processing software should give us more direct and immediate control over our end products. We expect, for example, to import bibliographic data directly into a digital file and then export metadata to automatically update our catalog records and register our efforts with the Registry of Digital Masters.”

Northwestern is already planning to coordinate its reformatting efforts with ICIBinding Corporation of Chesterland, Ohio, where they will send digital files for on-demand printing and binding. The library staff initially plans to use the Kirtas BookScan 1200 to create hard-copy replacements of deteriorating collections. Eventually the Library will mount collections online. This effort could eventually grow to include hundreds of thousands of books including rare and unique collections, and books too brittle or damaged to circulate. Grant says the high-speed scanner will influence other preservation efforts as well.

“Because the Kirtas system will lower the cost of reprinting books using long-lasting alkaline paper, and the costs compare favorably with those for mass deacidification, we should now be able to better target deacidification toward preserving collections that have to be retained in their original format,” says Grant.

Northwestern recently digitized Edward S. Curtis’s *The North American Indian*, a 20-volume collection of text and over 2,000 photographs, making it available for the first time at www.digital.library.northwestern.edu/curtis.

Grant expects the Kirtas system will enable the Library to more effectively integrate and streamline digital workflow and production for many of its bound collections. The Library will have more direct control over the entire process including: preparing collections, digital conversion, metadata creation, updating records and posting collections online.

“I predict Kirtas will *revolutionize* much about the way we manage, preserve and provide access to our book collections,” explains Grant. “Even before delivery, the bookscanner is quickly becoming the preferred low-cost option for replacing brittle books, witnessed by the frequency with which our bibliographers now say ‘*Kirtas* it’. We are truly excited for the opportunity to pioneer the Kirtas book scanner within a research library environment.”

About Northwestern University Library

Northwestern University Library, located in Evanston, Illinois, is a major research library with collections that number more than 4.2 million volumes, 4.2 million microforms, and 39,000 current periodicals and serials—holdings that rank it tenth among the nation’s private universities. The library system includes the University library and four branch libraries, the Galter Health Sciences Library and Pritzker Legal Research Center in Chicago.

Unique Benefits of the Kirtas Technology

Kirtas Technologies APT BookScan 1200™ is a full turn-key solution that enables an integrated book digitization workflow from automatic book scanning and post-processing at 1200 pages per hour to finished file creation. This revolutionary technology redefines digitization of all bound documents, delivering gentler handling and higher quality digital images faster, with fewer errors and at a lower cost than any other solution in the marketplace. The speed and efficiency of this new scanning platform is identical for black & white, grayscale and even color book images. The Kirtas system offers customers a high level of flexibility in the output format—TIFF, JPEG and a special compressed PDF file option.