

Auckland City Libraries. *Imaging projects*

Inmagic software manages photographs, maps and artworks

Heritage Images

Auckland City Libraries (ACL) was the first public library in New Zealand to make its photograph collections available on the Internet. ACL owns a number of historically significant collections, including the Winklemann, Firth and Schmidt collections that provide images of Auckland, portraits from the 1930's to 1970's and photographs of World War One soldiers. Since the photographs comprise a heritage collection, there is a requirement for ACL to capture archival images of the highest quality possible. TIFF files are created for each photograph and stored on CD. These images are used to fulfil orders for reproductions of the photographs.

Because the library also wants to maximise access to the collection and enable online searching via the Internet, low resolution image files in JPG format are also created and stored on the Web server so that the images can be downloaded to a browser. The scanning process is undertaken by an imaging bureau, and the JPG files are edited by Library staff to produce the three required sizes for the online image viewing. Then the image file names are simply added to the appropriate database records.

However, as Mandy Clark the Photograph Librarian at ACL explains, "there is a lot more involved in the imaging project than just the scanning of the photographs". The real effort is put into cataloguing the photographs; - assigning the appropriate metadata (dates, names, subjects etc) and providing detailed descriptive information about each photograph so that researchers can quickly and easily find what they want.

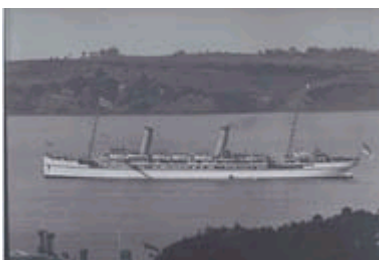
The Challenges

- There was a need to replace the legacy photograph management system with a more flexible retrieval system that also enabled browser access.
- The new system needed to be able to manage a large number of photographs - the ACL collection currently numbers approximately 250,000.
- The database records needed to be able to reference a number of different images in the reports - thumbnails, medium and full size images.
- The database records needed to be able to capture a variety of content, including metadata and "free text" so that a variety of information is available for searching.
- The database also had to be able to capture management information about the photographs such as format and condition.
- There was a requirement for XML output from the database so that records with Dublin Core metadata could be sent to the National Library's **Matapihi** project that facilitates centralised search access to NZ photographs.



Images on the Web . . .

- Heritage Images
- Auckland City Public Artworks
- Maps Online
- Ephemera



The Solution

Staff at ACL worked with Information Specialists Ltd, Inmagic Inc's NZ partner, to determine the business requirements for a new photograph management database using Inmagic software. The project involved:

- data conversion of records exported from the legacy photograph management system, and development to ACL's specifications of a DB/TextWorks database to manage the Heritage Images.
- ongoing cataloguing of the 250,000 photographs in the collection to provide metadata and descriptive text to facilitate online searching.
- design of a Web query screen and reports for use with DB/Text *WebPublisher* to enable browser access to the database.
- design of a DB/TextWorks form used to format XML records with Dublin Core metadata for the Matapihi project.

Outcomes

- **Heritage Images** is one of the most heavily used resources on the Auckland City Libraries web site. Researchers worldwide have commented on its wealth of content and ease of use. The increased profile of the collection has attracted more people into the library.
- Thumbnail images of each photograph are included in the search report together with the cataloguing information. Browsers simply click on hypertext links to see medium and full size images. Less physical handling of the original photographs is required.
- ACL has been able to leverage from its investment in resources and technology for the Heritage Images project and develop other image databases - including Maps Online, Ephemera and Auckland City Public Artworks - that are also available for searching on the Web.

“DB/TextWorks is great for managing metadata and free text. When we moved the database out of the system we had previously used and into DB/TextWorks, staff were really impressed at how easy it is to use. We can put as much text as we want into any field and use any number of field entries. But we can also control the content of the fields. Its really important for both searching and presentation of the search results that we control our subject terminology, for example, and use standardised descriptions” (Mandy Clark, Photograph Librarian).



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Inmagic software solutions

- robust and scalable database environment
- high speed search and categorisation
- adaptive field technology - database conforms to content
- open standards
- rapid implementation
- design services



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Photographer: Winkelmann, Henry

Date: 1905

Description: Looking north over the harbour to Devonport, showing the Devonport Steam Ferry Company's jetty and Quay Street Jetties taken from the Gladstone Coffee Palace, corner of Queen Street and Quay Street West

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