

March 2021

#insideCasaliniLibri

Casalini Libri • Erasmus Boekhandel • Houtschild • @Cult



Adapting | Connecting | Evolving

2020: a year in Fiesole

10

months of remote working for many of our team

40

staff members working in shifts on site to maintain service and respect social distancing

180

video calls and virtual conferences

15

sales and customer services contacts ensured no interruption in correspondence and assistance

20,000

new digital texts added to our catalogue

32

new publishers welcomed on board the Torrossa digital library

 Houtschild

ERASMUS


casalinilibri

 cult

New connections

Announcements...

2020 was a year of exceptional growth and activity as we forged important alliances to emerge as a strengthened and wide-reaching unit.

In early April 2020 we were delighted to be able to share with you the news that we have joined forces with Mr. Dirk Raes to acquire Erasmus and Houtschild.

We're very excited about this new chapter and confident that our collaboration will not only increase our capacity, efficiency and dynamism, but allow us to offer a truly pan-European coverage. Together we will strengthen our trademark excellence

in providing library services, while guaranteeing a truly seamless transition. The Dutch and Paris offices continue to be coordinated by Mr. Dirk Raes, managing director of Erasmus and Houtschild, with each of the three companies bringing our own experience, network and skills in our specific areas of expertise, across Europe, the UK and US.

The Autumn also brought exciting news, with us forming a new and stronger union with our long-standing technological partner, @Cult, directed by co-founder and partner Tiziana Possemato.

A Rome-based software house specializing in the design and development of solutions for information management and knowledge sharing, @Cult is an international leader in the field of Cultural Heritage. Its awareness of the changes required by digital transformation and commitment to providing solutions make @Cult the ideal centre for research and development for the operational needs of the new Casalini - Erasmus - Houtschild group.

... and Advancements

Following a series of improvements to our technological infrastructure and online tools, in June 2020 we released a new, enhanced version of the Torrossa Digital Library.

We've been working hard over the past 18 months to update and improve all of our online resources and services.

The latest addition to our new suite of improved websites, the digital library includes enhancements such as state-of-the-art discovery and navigation, as we aim both to support libraries in the creation and maintenance of their digital collections and to provide a smooth and outstanding user experience to researchers, students and library

patrons. Work has also begun on creating a new, advanced structure for our bibliographic database and online order management interface and we'll keep you up to date on developments as the project progresses.

Widening our digital horizons

During last year we were also busy adding new content and new collaborators to the digital library, which now hosts content from over 300 leading academic and highly specialised publishers of research in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Traditionally specialized in offering digital academic content from Italy and Spain; now, thanks to our collaboration with Erasmus, we are extremely excited to welcome also a number of important international publishers and publishing groups to Torrossa, with l'Harmatton, Taylor & Francis, Archaeopress and Amsterdam University Press among the first to offer their content through the digital library.

2020

keeping calm and carrying on

A room with a view

As Italy entered lockdown last March, we were quick to re-organise, with many of us moving from company premises to home offices. Working from home swiftly became the new normal for the majority of our team and we have to say that, despite the circumstances, we have savoured the new perspectives, different approaches and unexpected opportunities that have resulted, making us an even closer team than before. A tremendous effort is also been made by the colleagues working on site, with a number of new procedures being strictly observed in order to protect themselves, the team and all of our contacts and collaborators.



Lending a hand

The Italian government quickly added books to its category of essential sectors, meaning we were able to “carry on”, albeit with some changes. The reality for our customers wasn’t always so straightforward and we immediately began to draw up new procedures and plans to be able to help libraries and institutions deal with the complications of the pandemic.

Creative solutions were necessary in order to manage and store huge volumes of material, keeping it on hold until libraries could reopen and receive shipments, with constantly changing and diverse situations across the many different countries with which we work.

We also recognise the continuing need of institutions to provide increasing access to digital resources and have been working tirelessly with publishers to be able to offer digital texts to support online teaching and formulate new, flexible usage options.

Zooming around

Although we’ve had to leave our suitcases lying idle, we’ve been no less active! With video calls replacing on-site visits and many conferences taking place virtually, we’ve made the most of all the technological means available to stay in touch with you and make sure we can support you, not only in the changes and challenges of the period but in all aspects of our work. We’ve enjoyed seeing you in your temporary surroundings and have been pleased to contribute to the online meetings of SALALM, ALA, ARLIS NA and LD4P, to name just a few.

We’ll almost certainly be seeing you on-screen again this year as we continue to participate in a busy calendar of virtual conferences - and we also hope it won’t be too long before we can see you in person!

2021

what's in store

Things to look forward to

There were two events scheduled for the first part of 2020 that we were particularly looking forward to: discovering the impressive new Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center of the National Library of Greece, which was due to host our 2020 meeting of the Fiesole Collection Retreat Series, and welcoming to Fiesole the working forum on current issues in European

librarianship, New Shape of Sharing: Networks, Expertise, Information.

We would like to thank the National Library of Greece for their hospitality and flexibility in agreeing to reschedule the next Fiesole Retreat to 6-8th October 2021. We're sure it will prove to be worth the wait!

The in-person meeting of librarians specialising in European collections,

was also postponed to a later date (to be determined). In the meantime, we've been enjoying the frequent online discussions on new models for collaborative collection development and services, the challenges of the growing range of content and format types, and the evolving role of libraries and librarians in the research process.

New and forthcoming



Although we undoubtedly missed seeing you in person last year, we've used the distance as inspiration to take more things online!

You may have already become familiar with the new, online versions of our regular bibliographies and themed selections of interesting and essential titles, including our recommendations for titles of particular relevance in a range of subject areas. We're looking forward to bringing you more carefully selected bibliographies this year.

2021 is the Year of Dante! As Italy prepares a myriad of celebrations to mark the 700th anniversary of the death of poet, writer and philosopher, Dante Alighieri, we'll keep you up to date on the pick of events, news and publications. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for more.

If you haven't already done so, take a look at our renewed company web pages at www.casalini.it, where you can find comprehensive information on all of our services and products... and remember to get in touch if you'd like to arrange a virtual meeting with us.



Mission: Accessibility

Providing and facilitating access to culture and scholarship has always been at the very heart of what we do, from very the first US-bound books, shipped by Mario Casalini in 1958, to ever greater and more detailed information on publications, to, more recently, the dawn of the e-book and the Torrossa Digital Library.

We know that it's now more important than ever to ensure that everybody has the opportunity to access and use

Torrossa for study and research and for this reason we're making it one of our highest priorities to provide a Digital Library that is accessible for blind, visually impaired and dyslexic users.

Together with the LIA Foundation for Accessible Italian Books, we've set out a three-year plan of action that will see us achieve full compliance with new European guidelines before they come into effect in 2025.

Work has already begun with company-wide training to improve knowledge and awareness of accessibility in all areas of our work and analysis of what's needed to reach our goal. We aim for the Torrossa platform to be adapted to accessibility standards for web content and reading solutions by the end of this year, with a second phase, starting next year, of collaboration with publishers for the publication of digital contents that are natively accessible.

The LIA Foundation for Accessible Italian books was established in 2014 from the shared desire of the Italian Publishers Association and the Italian Blind and Visually Impaired Union to make digital content accessible to all potential readers. Today it plays a leading role in accessibility at an international level as a member of W3C (World Wide Web Consortium), EDRLab (European Digital Reading Laboratory) and DAISY Consortium and participant in the definition of metadata accessibility standards, with EDItEUR, and accessible reading solutions.

A worldwide community

As virtual communication boomed in 2020, we continued to interconnect libraries, archives and museums and their data through the Share Linked Data Environments. Developed in collaboration with the library community, and using the LOD platform technology of @Cult, Share explores and embraces the future of library catalogues, harnessing the potential of linked data to connect and present library information in dynamic formats based on BIBFRAME and linked data.

Not only did the community itself widen as we were officially joined by the the British Library and the Library of Congress, but the SVDE IT team was also enlarged and restructured in order to manage and take forward the main areas of development, which include infrastructure and architecture, database and indexing, APIs, the Virtual Discovery Environment interface and other portals, and the search and editing functions of the Sapiaientia Cluster Knowledge Base and linked data entity editor J.Cricket.

The ongoing cooperation between the SVDE IT team and the working groups of participating libraries have brought several important results, from preparing the ground for authority services and integration with Wikidata, to important work on the structure of entity identification

ensuring interoperability with other environments using LRM-based models or pure BIBFRAME models.

Continued collaboration with the Linked Data for Production 3 project and the Program for Cooperative Cataloging (PCC), already underway, promises a year of yet more interesting developments, not least the enhancement of automated interaction between SVDE and the Sinopia BIBFRAME cataloguing module and the conversion and housing of PCC data by SVDE. We also look forward to further enrichment and functionalities within Sapiaientia and J.Cricket.

More information about the Share initiative is available at <https://wiki.svde.org>



Linked
Data
Environment





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