

March 2023

#insideCasaliniLibri

Casalini Libri · Erasmus Boekhandel · Houtschild · @Cult

Cultivating community | Nurturing innovation

A snapshot of 2022:

Four companies, over 150 professionals (from more than 15 nations) and a common goal! 2022 has seen us strengthen ties with our colleagues in Amsterdam, Paris, Rijswijk and Rome, with more opportunities for us to meet and work together towards joint goals, not just at each other's offices but also on the road.

Participation is one of the words that best sums up our year, as many events were held in-person once more. Collectively, we were delighted to be present at over 50 book fairs, conferences and other industry events across Europe and the United States - and especially thrilled to celebrate 25 years as exhibitors at the Frankfurt Buchmesse. Our directors have been particularly busy,

with Michele Casalini joining conversations on publishing and collections in London and Matera, as well as attending numerous meetings on the future of scholarly information.

Community is another key concept as we look back over the last twelve months, not just in terms of our own, internal community - more on that later! - but also our collaboration with the wider library community and specialist focus groups within it. We have been extremely active in our work on cataloguing and linked data, attending events such as the PCC Policy Committee meeting and once again taking part in the organising committee for the [BIBFRAME Workshop in Europe](#), which took place in Budapest in October, as well as liaising closely and collaborating with the Working Groups of the Share Family to support and further the progress of the [Share Virtual Discovery Environments](#).



Keep up to date with upcoming events on our online [calendar](#).

In April, the [Fiesole Collection Development Retreat](https://www.fiesoleretreat.org) went ahead in Athens after a two year wait, travelling to Greece for the first time and generously hosted by the National Library of Greece. The impressive Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center was the perfect setting for the fascinating presentations that spanned the past, present and - of course - innovation for the future of libraries and their collections. We are looking forward to the next edition, to be held in Basel, Switzerland on 2-4 May, and look forward to an equally lively debate among libraries, publishers and service providers. The preliminary programme and all practical details regarding registration and accommodation can be found at the conference website: www.fiesoleretreat.org.



Welcome back *inside* Casalini Libri!



*If we were to sum up the last twelve months, it would be an exciting mix of **travel** (finally catching up face-to-face), **dialogue** on very diverse aspects of our work, and **developments** in many areas.*

It is some time since we announced our partnerships with Erasmus Boekhandel, Houtschild and @Cult, and in 2022 we have had more opportunities to collaborate with our sister companies. You may well have seen us participating together at conferences during the year!

By combining our efforts and expertise, we have substantially increased the catalogue of the Torrossa digital library, shared knowledge and tools, and made further progress in the development of linked data technologies and authority services for libraries.

We are very proud of our continued achievements and look forward to building upon them as we move forward into another year of hard work, cooperation and challenges!

As always, it is a pleasure to open our doors and share with you the news, the projects we're working on and our plans for the future.

Most of all, we would like to thank you for your ongoing support, participation and confidence in our work. We value and rely on your input and collaboration to keep growing and evolving.

Barbara and Michele Casalini

Six decades of evolution

Almost 65 years have passed since Mario Casalini first saw the need for a supply of reliable bibliographic information on Italian publishing and a lot has happened since then!

Times - and fashions - have changed, communications have improved, and information is much more easily accessible, but authoritative bibliographic information remains absolutely essential for academic librarians.

Earlier this year, we decided to take you on a light-hearted journey down memory lane to celebrate the innovations that have shaped our work over the years and share our own personal story of evolution, which has always gone hand-in-hand with that of the libraries we serve.

Our early years in the 1960s saw us surrounded by tables groaning under the weight of paper catalogue cards, meticulously copied out, at first by hand, and later typed. Then the 1970s arrived, bringing us disco, flared trousers... and MACHine Readable Cataloguing, the first significant advance that

was to have a lasting impact on the way we worked.

During the 1980s computers took the place of typewriters on our desks as we got to grips with MARC and embraced the new technologies that were available to us. Our *ilibri* bibliographic database was born, helping us to manage and store the records we created. The dawn of the World Wide Web in the 1990s revolutionised our work again; the *ilibri* bibliographic database went online and our bibliographic data could be found and accessed by colleagues and customers all over the world.

The new century has been buzzing with innovation, technological developments and yet more new ways of working. We were quick to accept the challenge of adopting RDA and BIBFRAME and have been working ever since on tools that will be part of the future for libraries and their catalogues, from linked data to authority services.

Watch the [full journey](#) for some nostalgia and to find out more about where we're going.

Back to our roots

Where better to tell our story, but the place where it all began?

If you had happened to pass by our historic headquarters in the Spring, you'd have been forgiven for thinking that you had fallen back in time! Our Communications team moved in for a week, recreating scenes and settings spanning across the last six decades of Casalini Libri. A collection of wigs, some vintage objects uncovered in the depths of our storerooms, and Mario Casalini's own collection of ceramic cats all played their part in helping us to narrate a little of ourselves!



A few photographs of the team behind the scenes!



A thriving ecosystem

Following the release of the Share-VDE 2.0 entity-based discovery platform in 2021, we've had another busy year! The collaborative linked data and entity management environment now contains bibliographic and authority records and linked data entities from over 40 member libraries.

As in all our activity, we place great importance in the exchange of ideas and experiences. Together with our sister company and the technological motor behind the Share Family, @Cult, and the librarians and information professionals whose involvement is so fundamental to the success of the Share Family, we have participated in an even greater number of specialist conferences than in any previous year.

The Share-VDE semi-annual workshops proved excellent occasions to present and evaluate our work and to plan forthcoming steps forward.

We are grateful to the colleagues who agreed to share their experiences of the different tenants and parallel projects of the Share Family during the LD4 conference in July, ALA annual, DCMI 2022 (Dublin Core Metadata Initiative) and at the Charleston Conference in November, to mention just a few of the many events.

Yet participation in conferences is only a part of our overall involvement in the wider community of institutions that are moving towards the adoption of the linked data paradigm. Our commitment with the PCC is proceeding to feed the open pool of PCC-quality BIBFRAME data available as a trusted data source for cataloguers, while work on enabling and improving interoperability with LD4P3, Sinopia and the IFLA LRM model continues in collaboration with colleagues across the international library community.

We are also excited about the initial release of the authority control features for MARC-based environments, the first in a new era of services that combine tradition and innovation, and tested in collaboration with the international library community. We look forward to beginning work on designing the BIBFRAME-based authority workflows that will complete our package of customisable authority control services.

Additional information on the benefits of linked data for libraries and how to get involved in the Share-VDE global family of libraries can be found [here](#).



Linked
Data
Environment

National Bibliographies project bears fruit

In 2020, the British Library announced that the British National Bibliography is set to become the first national bibliography tenant for the Share Virtual Discovery Environment. We are now structuring the use cases for a tenant hosting a collective global catalogue of national bibliographies in linked open data, thanks to the input of the participating libraries.

Guided by the National Bibliographies Working Group and inspired by the watchword "open borders for wider data sharing", the SVDE group provides support for national bibliographic agencies, making the intellectual output of each community more widely accessible, in a new and broader environment.



Tiziana Possemato and Anna Lionetti speaking at the 2022 BIBFRAME Workshop in Europe



Some of the development and support team behind the Share Family

Championing digital bibliodiversity

Those of you at the Charleston Conference in November may have caught the trio of our own Andrea Ferro, together with Zina Somova of East View Information Services and Fernando Genovart of Librería García Cambeiro, speaking on the subject of foreign language print and e-books.

Supporting original language digital content and its publishers has always been important to us and one of the main objectives behind the Torrossa digital library and bookstore.

Thanks to our work with Erasmus, we have welcomed another 35 important European academic publishers onboard this year, building a

catalogue that now boasts more than 350,000 monographs in the romance languages, English, German and other languages, as well as over 1000 scholarly e-journals from more than 450 European publishers.

And at Charleston we were delighted to announce that we were taking our commitment even further - teaming up with Librería García Cambeiro to add to the Torrossa catalogue research publications from across Latin America.

An initial 320 titles from 7 publishers are already available on Torrossa, with more to come!

Browse the [Torrossa catalogue](#) online.



Achieving accessibility

The collaboration with the LIA Foundation for Accessible Italian Books that we began in 2021 continues, on schedule, and celebrated its first milestones during 2022, when the Torrossa platform was made accessible, in conformity with internationally recognized requirements for rendering Web content and reading solutions as accessible as possible for people with disabilities.

Our next objectives include the implementation of a new content reader to further facilitate accessible reading for e-content and promoting synergies with publishers, with the aim of achieving the native publication of new digital contents in an accessible way.

Read our [accessibility statement](#) for further details.

Reflecting on the sustainability of digital

In April we welcomed representatives from 40 of our Italian publishing partners to the Villa Torrossa for a day's retreat, reflection and conversation on the present and future of digital research publishing.

With speakers from prestigious publishing houses, university presses and the Italian Publishers' Association, and topics ranging from current trends in the academic publishing market, to the challenges facing independent academic publishers, the growing expectations of the university and research public, and the role of the intermediary, the day proved a valuable opportunity to compare notes and discuss key issues and opportunities for the years ahead.

The programme and contributions from Torrossa Retreat 2022 are available on the [conference website](#).

Putting our energy into efficiency

During 2022 a large part of our efforts went into improvements and advancements in the instruments we use in order to ensure that our activities and services remain as streamlined as possible.

The introduction of a new cloud-based office system and an advanced intranet provide wider and simplified access to instruments, programs and documentation for our collaborators, while the development of solutions and implementation of systems to support and effectively provide electronic invoicing services to our customers across Europe and beyond have enabled us to cut down on the use of paper and further facilitate the exchange of information.

Adapting to new habit(at)s

Working in the office, working from home, working from... anywhere! Over the last two years we have experimented all of these and are very proud of the way we've adapted to new places and new practices.

If it is true that every cloud has a silver lining, then the pandemic has allowed us to discover how to make the most of circumstances and turn obstacles into opportunities.

And with greater freedom of movement, combined with a set of newly acquired technologies and tools that support distance communications, we have been able to make working off site work to our advantage, spending longer periods away from the office and even from Florence! This has allowed us to spend more time in the territory on book finding missions - particularly in Spain and Portugal - and visiting more publishers, suppliers and library customers in a single trip overseas, while still maintaining close contact and collaborating seamlessly with our colleagues. Not only have we reduced in part our carbon footprint, but we have increased communication and productivity, as well as widening our horizons and perspectives!





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