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*Digitalization – Today a Challenge, Tomorrow a Necessity*

*Summary*

It may be stated with certainty that the projects of digitalization have surpassed the experimental phase and the special project status and are increasingly becoming a regular feature in the work of many archives.

Development of strategy, methodology and, to that end, of practical applications, relevant for the preservation of a digital document, are still in their early beginnings, and thus the creation of a lasting master copy of a digital document still remains unresolved. In spite of this, however, the advantages of a digital document, in comparison with the copies of originals used until now, reflected in the speed of access and options for multipurpose simultaneous deployment from a number of locations, are having an impact on the growth in number of planned digitalization projects. The wish and plans to start with new projects, fascinating figures speaking of already digitized documents, more and more frequent plans to provide access to digital document also through the Internet, they all imply an ever broader co-operation of archivists and information experts.

Globally speaking, during the work done so far, the basic phases of project digitalization were identified: preparation, scanning, quality control, indexing, formation of reserve copies, and providing permanent accessibility of a digital document. The significance of the phase of preparation was underlined in which, further to the strategic decisions as to what should be digitized, clear determination is made of the digitalization project volume. The need was outlined for creation of three versions of the digital document: master copy, access copy, and fast review copy, as well as the need for continuous control during all the phases of digitalization project implementation.

The growing number of digitalization projects to be found in the work of archives is having an impact on the transformation of the manner of offering information to researches, and thus the archivists are certainly faced with a new task: to be informed and to keep informed of the options and limitations of information technologies.