

Guidelines for Nebraska Libraries Considering Newspaper Digitization Projects

Considerations before Starting a Project

- **Has it already been digitized?** : Check the Nebraska Newspapers: Digitizing Nebraska's History website <http://nebnewspapers.unl.edu/>
- **Copyright:** If the newspaper is still protected by copyright (published in 1923 and later), permission in writing is required from the legal owner. Permission may depend on how the library plans to make the images accessible (i.e. limited access via a library computer or public access via the web).

Digitization Process

It is strongly recommended that the library outsource the project to a vendor instead of doing it with library equipment, staff or volunteers. The best practice is to digitize from silver halide microfilm.

- If you want your newspaper to be added to the Nebraska Newspapers: Digitizing Nebraska's History website view participation criteria <http://nebnewspapers.unl.edu/info/about/adding>
- If the needed issues have been microfilmed, contact Mary Woltemath (402)-471-4776 mary.woltemath@nebraska.gov at the Nebraska State Historical Society about the process for working with a vendor to borrow silver halide reels from the Society.
- If the needed issues (usually recent years) are not available on microfilm, the project budget should include having the vendor produce microfilm before digitizing.

If possible contact several vendors for quotes and references. It is recommended that vendors provide a written quote indicating that the work will be done according to the following:

- Scanning at 300-400 dpi resolution in 8-bit grayscale
- Production of uncompressed TIFF images and JPEG 2000 derivative images
- De-skewing of pages that are off by more than 3%
- A separate image file for each page (if microfilm has two pages as one image)
- Creation of a logical naming convention for image files so that consecutive pages can be easily retrieved
- OCR (Optical Character Recognition) files and indexing for the images to make them keyword searchable. Ask the vendor what the accuracy percentage will be.
- Back-up services: who is responsible once the images have been delivered if the hard-drive crashes or files become corrupted? If the vendor does not keep a copy for future access, the library should have back-up plan.

Deliverables

It is recommended that libraries require vendors to provide the following products:

- A searchable database of the OCRd images on a hard drive accessible on a library computer.
- Uncompressed TIFF images and JPEG2000 images that the library can use in the future.
- Copies of any microfilm produced by the vendor for the project.