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**BUILDING OF THE
LATIN AMERICAN DIGITAL LIBRARY**

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The **Spanish National Library** (BNE), has launched a project for the redesign, reconfiguration, installation and loading of a web portal for the new **Latin American Digital Library**.

Objectives:

- To provide access from anywhere in the world to the digital collections of the National Latin American Libraries.
- To provide fluid access via a single interface.
- To promote the attraction of a wider range of users from the world community.

Planning of the project:

Early in 2009, the National Library of New Zealand (NLNZ) and the BNE met to establish whether they could “restructure” the National Libraries Global (NLG) prototype –developed by the NLNZ and the National Library of Singapore – to include a portal in Spanish and Portuguese.

In August, several meetings were held in Madrid and Milan to outline the project and establish its lines of work.

The first version of the prototype was ready in early October, and in November the BNE’s Head of Development of the IT Coordination Unit visited the NLNZ to examine, evaluate and review the technology aspects of the prototype.

The BNE submitted the prototype to the 21st General Assembly of ABINIA (the Association of National Libraries of Latin America to which it is affiliated), which was held in Cartagena de Indias (Colombia) in October 2009.

Features:

The “Latin American Digital Library” web portal is essentially composed of an advanced search engine of documentary assets. These will be whichever assets each one of the participating libraries may have decided to digitalise and place at the disposal of internet users.

The BNE has reached an agreement with the management team of the DigitalNZ portal (<http://www.digitalnz.org>) in order to use its search and presentation software, which is based on the OAI-PMH protocol (Open Archives Initiative-Protocol Metadata Harvesting).

How it works:

- It gathers information from different repositories and, by calling the servers which contain the necessary data (generally OAI servers), it updates the information on the portal.
- The information is indexed so that searches can be carried out as quickly as possible.
- It allows searching according to different criteria.

- It presents the search results as navigable lists and in pages.
- It provides access to documents at source (each element of the list provides a hyperlink to the document on its original server).
- This manner of operating has a few exceptions, given that some libraries do not have the necessary infrastructure in place. Thus:
 - The origin is not an OAI server: It may have an http link to the updated information in standard or non-standard formats.
 - The OAI server does not exist: Despite this, the data is regularly transmitted in standard or non-standard formats.
 - The original server does not exist, nor is there a server to provide access to the digitised documents: Thus, a site to store these documents must be created.

Requirements of the BNE:

- To create a portal that compiles and provides access to documents of the different libraries participating in the project.
- This portal must be based on the www.digitalnz.org software.
- To provide a new graphic design for the portal, including brand image and logo.
- To configure the portal so that it is updated with information from the libraries that have already submitted their documents.
- If necessary, to analyse and develop new functionalities for the portal.
- Such new functionalities, like the rest of the application, should be developed in J2EE.

Configuration:

- Initial configuration. The website will be configured so that the system can access the OAI servers at libraries from different countries in a dynamic way, and with the objective of periodically updating its contents.

Installation at the BNE:

- The redesigned portal shall be installed on BNE's servers configured with the agreed functionalities.

Content uploads:

- An initial upload shall be made of all contents from libraries which do not have an OAI server and that have sent in folders with their contents.
- Maintenance: Once the website is published, contents from those libraries which have not initially provided contents (and do not have an OAI server) will be uploaded.