

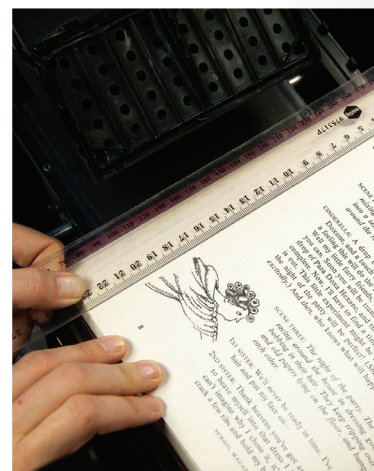
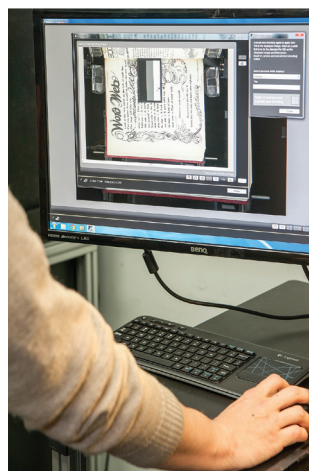
## CASE STUDY

# SCHOOL MAGAZINE, NSW DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, DIGITISATION OF YEARLY ANTHOLOGIES 1916-2013

In 1916 the NSW Department of Education launched the publication *'The School Magazine'*. Since then it has become Australia's longest-running literary magazine for children, introducing young students to the world of reading for almost a century. The magazine features various forms of writing; stories, poems, articles, comics, plays and illustrations created by leading local and international talent. The magazine has long proven itself as a valuable component of the department's literacy program. In its current form the magazine publishes 40 issues annually, compiled by a small in-house team. The majority of the archived catalogue are batched into large leather bound volumes and have a great deal of cultural significance.

The Department recently made the decision to digitise its large catalogue of nearly a century's worth of yearly anthologies. Of this decision, *The School Magazine* editor, Alan Edwards, says, "The Department was keen to explore ways in which the wealth of literary content from almost a century of magazines could be utilised by teachers and students today.' As well as furthering the magazine's accessibility in the digital age, 'the other consideration,' Edwards continues 'was the desire to safeguard the continued existence of the material, given the fragile nature of many of the older bound volumes.'

DatacomIT, the Australian-owned business commissioned for the digitisation of the magazine, was a likely candidate for the job, with a reputation for accomplishing similar large-scale projects in the past. DatacomIT has successfully performed many similar high preservation, culturally significant, projects notably including the digitisation of the first 50 years of issues of *The Australian Women's Weekly (AWW)* magazine in 2011, under the commission of the National Library of Australia. As with *The School Magazine* project, much of the primary material digitised for the AWW was in a fragile state, requiring a delicate scanning process.



DatacomIT made use of specialised robotic book scanning technology (Kabis III with 2 x Canon 21MegaPixels DSLR Cameras) designed to process primary materials with extreme care. The scanners are automated to turn the pages of the input material by way of a gentle vacuum mechanism, ensuring that fragile books and other similar documents are impacted upon as little as possible during the scanning process. While operating carefully, the machines are also highly efficient, capable of producing substantial quantities of high quality digital output in relatively short time frames.

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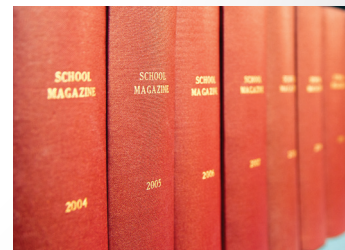
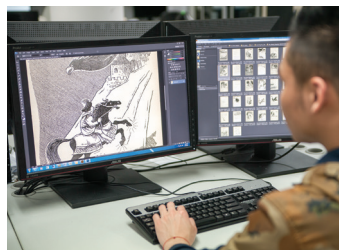
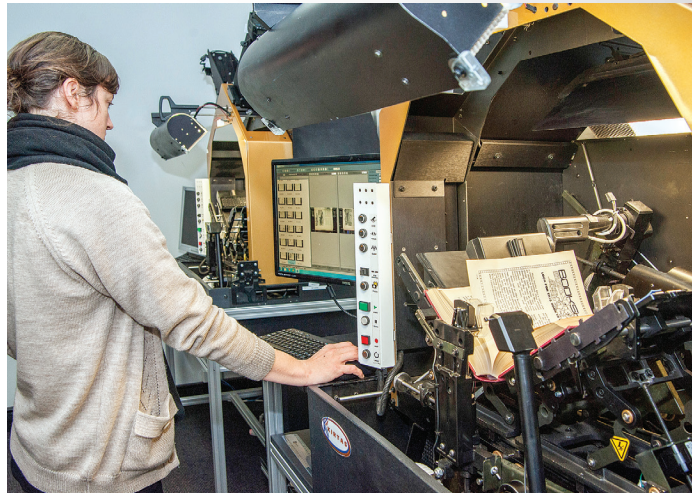
### SCHOOL MAGAZINE, NSW DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, DIGITISATION OF YEARLY ANTHOLOGIES 1916-2013

With an average of 1,000 pages per hour, our production throughput could reach up to 6,500 captures per day. The whole capture process of 3,920 editions with over 140,000 pages was completed in less than 4 weeks.

The digitisation of the magazine took place at a specialised DatacomIT Digitisation Facility. The process involved the scanning of the hard copy magazines, making necessary cropping adjustments, before producing the scans as indexed, searchable PDF files. Understanding the future use of the digitised material, all books were captured with a very accurate colour replication process reproducing the same “look and feel” as the period produced original Content. In addition to the accurately represented images, OCR technology was utilised to facilitate text search ability across all publications. This technology also assisted DatacomIT with creating and validating metadata application.

On *The School Magazine's* experience with DatacomIT, Edwards states, ‘The School Magazine’s experience with DatacomIT was very positive. Eamonn Donohoe, Business Development Manager, was very helpful, both in his visit to our offices and afterwards. Lam Truong, Operations Manager, could not have been more accommodating. He was extremely professional and developed solutions to all issues.’

Eamonn commented that DatacomIT considers it an honour and privilege to be involved in Projects such as this. We have a very high regard for the need to preserve culturally significant historical material throughout the entire digitisation process, *the future of history*. As the magazine is approaching it’s centenary of production, we appreciate the opportunity to assist *The School Magazine* in opening wider digital access to the content. For many like myself, this magazine was a fun and interesting part of our schooling in the NSW School System.



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