

**CASE STUDY: Institut Cartogràfic de Catalunya**

## Impressive Spanish map collection visible worldwide

*The Institut Cartogràfic de Catalunya (ICC) uses CONTENTdm to increase the visibility of its impressive map collection, while at the same time the often delicate and precious maps are preserved from damage by continual handling.*

### Situation

The map library of the Institut Cartogràfic de Catalunya (ICC) holds as many as 300,000 maps and 250,000 aerial images. The library is open to the public. Its mission is, on the one hand, to preserve these often precious and delicate maps, and on the other hand to increase the visibility of the institute's public cartographic heritage. In order to solve this dilemma, ICC decided to find a solution to publish their antique maps and aerial photographs online.

A preservation project was soon well underway, producing approximately 120 digitized maps per week. ICC needed a tool to create an online catalogue of these maps and images plus all of those to be digitized in the future. One of its requirements for such a cataloguing tool was the ability to search and retrieve multilevel, geo-referenced documents, for example loose-leaf maps. In addition, ICC wanted to incorporate metadata it had created in other systems. It was also a requirement that the addition of metadata would not be a complicated process and that the work could be done by non-cataloguing specialists.



### Solution

"After an assessment of a number of digital collection management solutions on the market, both 'off-the-peg' and proprietary," says Rafael Roset, head of the ICC digital map library, "we chose and implemented CONTENTdm as the most comprehensive solution enabling libraries to store, manage and deliver their digital collections to the Web. CONTENTdm needs less tinkering to install than other solutions. It comes with a desktop cataloguing interface and was already being tested by another Catalan institution. And, last but not least," adds Roset, "CONTENTdm proved to be by far



**ICC**  
Institut Cartogràfic  
de Catalunya

#### AT A GLANCE

- ICC is responsible for cartographic production and research in Catalonia
- Founded 1982, 235 employees
- Holds 300,000 maps of which many antique, and 250,000 aerial images
- Maps can be browsed worldwide at <http://cartotecadigital.icc.cat>

the easiest to use for the library's audience of civil servants, students, researchers, corporate staff and private citizens."

The project to scan and digitize the old maps and photographs – started in 2002 – really took off in 2007 when a scanner that can handle originals up to double A0 size was acquired. Therefore the need to publish the scanned materials online grew. With the support of the Consortium of University Libraries of Catalunya (CBUC), who were already evaluating CONTENTdm, the first two ICC collections were created and published on the CBUC site. "When these two online collections proved to be a success," continues Roset, "we decided to install CONTENTdm at our own site, particularly because of the large disk capacity needed to store images and maps scanned at 300 dpi."

During 2007, CONTENTdm was installed and customised for ICC. A procedure was established which included the acquisition of the materials, cataloguing, digitisation, metadata export and uploading to the server.

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Rafael Roset, head of the Digital Map Library

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### Result

The new catalogue went live in October 2007 at <http://cartotecadigital.icc.cat>. Just a year later, 15 different collections containing more than 10,000 images have been published and can be freely browsed and downloaded at high resolution. Roset explains: “The key to the success of this project has been the interdisciplinary team in the map library, where cataloguers, librarians, IT experts, image experts, scan operators and programmers all cooperated and contributed.”

The gains ICC hoped for – increasing the visibility of their unique paper collections and providing easy access to the public along with reducing the risk brought about by touching the old, delicate materials – have been achieved. At the moment visits to the digital collections outnumber visits to the map library 40:1. Approximately 1,800 different digital maps are downloaded monthly from the ICC website, whereas only 150 reproductions are requested of the map library in the same period of time. The queries by telephone and e-mail have increased by a factor of ten. And all these figures are growing on a monthly basis.

“On top of that,” concludes Roset, “we discovered that by going online with our collections, we were able to unearth and fix cataloguing and digitising errors that otherwise would have remained hidden.”

**“1,800 digital maps are downloaded monthly, compared to 150 reproduction requests.”**

