

LATEST INNOVATION ON CAPTURING HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHIC ETHEREOGENOUS MATERIAL: THE ALINARI EXPERIENCE

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Abstract

Digitization requires today high skill and great experience in order to achieve ultimate level of digitization results. Time is money and efficiency to get the best output quality requires a proper fine-tuning set-up and proven workflow. This paper is about the experience developed by the Alinari Archives in Florence, Italy, on creating possibly the ultimate state-of-the-art digitization solution for the cultural heritage sector. Today digitization has evolved quite a lot. Thanks for the latest technical advances, slow scanners and digitization systems available in the mid of the 90's have been replaced by faster, more powerful and with higher technical specifications. It is however important to specify that between 1999 and 2007, the market was offering specific dedicated scanners for 35mm and small films, such as film scanners, drum scanners and flat bed scanners, capable to capture very high details and information in the highlights (ie. sky) and shadow (ie. dark areas like the shade of a building). Those systems had a dynamic range (capacity to capture all level of color/gray scale information) up to 4,8. Today technology has become better in terms of scanning speed, maintenance and software management. However in many cases, prices have increased dramatically, and most important, the market has lost high end dedicated scanners for small film and 35mm slides. With the market monopoly of digital imaging, starting in the mid of 2000, those

scanners have lost market share and since 2010 no vendors offer any high solution for those type of media.

The study analysis various solutions available in recent years and also thanks to the experience developed by Alinari in the last 15 years around best practice on digitization, providing latest reccomandations related to the current solutions available in the market.