

INCREASING AVAILABILITY OF NON-FICTION PUBLICATIONS IN BRAILLE, DAISY AND LARGE PRINT

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ABSTRACT

In this presentation, various projects at DZB will be described, concerning various collaborations with publishing houses and Libreka! – an online platform of the German association of publishers “Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels”, to improve the workflow of transformation of typesetting data into the DAISY 3 format. By developing adaptive content processing facilities, this data can be used to increase the availability of publications in Braille, DAISY and large Print.

1 DZB – from a Special Library Service to a Center of Accessible Media Design

DZB is the oldest public library service for blind persons in Germany.

The organization was founded in 1894. From the beginning, Braille book and music score transcription was in the main focus of the service centre. Today DZB is financed by the German state of Saxony. The library supports blind Braille readers in all the states of Germany and Braille readers who are interested in the German language around the world.

In 1956 talking book and haptic relief production started. Today more than 15,000 titles in Braille and 11,000 DAISY productions are available. Additionally, DZB is producing 20 different journals and magazines in Braille and DAISY format.

The DAISY book service was launched in 2002. In five studios new titles are produced with highly qualified narrators, who usually work at theatres or radio stations.

In 2009 DZB has started to increase the collaboration with different German publishers, to establish new projects and to improve the availability of literature to persons with print disabilities.

2 MEDIBUS

DZB is a member of the organization MEDIBUS (Mediengemeinschaft für blinde und sehbehinderte Menschen e. V., <http://www.medibus.info>). MEDIBUS coordinates the production of accessible books for all German speaking countries. The map shows all MEDIBUS sites.



Figure 1: MEDIBUS libraries in Germany, Austria and Switzerland

Since 2008, a web based catalogue for German Braille and DAISY books is available and can be found on the Web. In recent years a guideline to generalize the DAISY book production has been developed by the MEDIBUS libraries and is adopted in all organizations.

3 DaCapo – transformation of music scores into Braille

In 2001 DZB has started a new service for blind musicians who read Braille. Supported by the German government (“Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales”, the Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs), DZB has launched DaCapo, a very successful project to develop powerful transformation tools to transcribe music scores into Braille. Today, different music publishers (i.e. Breitkopf & Härtel) provide music scores in digital format to DZB Leipzig. Documents are transcribed semiautomatically into Braille music scores by software developed in the project.

Blind musicians can use the DaCapo services on the internet (MEDIBUS 2009). Multimedia tutorials describe first steps for Braille music newcomers and the use of DaCapo services (Heims 2008). The results of the project work were presented in an International Symposium on Braille Music, in November 2008, <http://www.dzb.de/bach>.

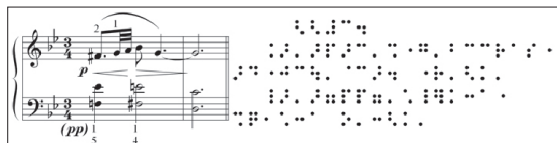


Figure 2: Transcription of music scores into Braille

4 Leibniz – increasing availability of non-fiction publications

The main focus of this project is to increase the availability of accessible material for professional and educational purposes.

Project goals are:

- developing individual transformation services of non-fiction reading materials for blind and partially sighted persons,
- implementing library services for online and media distribution of Braille, DAISY and large print books,
- collaboration with commercial publishers and Libreka! to improve access to information for persons with print disabilities.

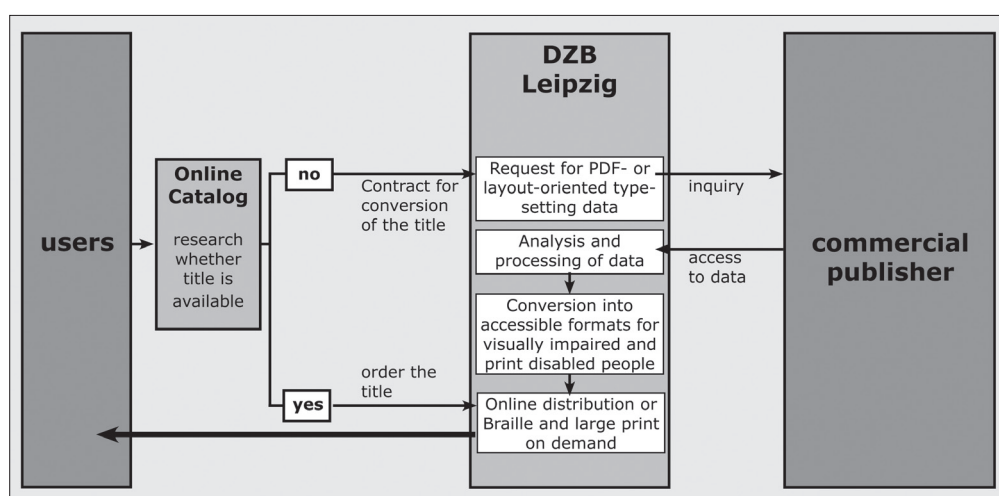


Figure 3: Publication and Distribution Workflow as suggested by the „Leibniz“ project

Project objectives are:

- analysis and processing of typesetting data,
- transformation of content into formats like DAISY, Braille and large print,
- retrieval and distribution facilities.

5 Further projects

5.1 iReadIT

In this project, a software to play DAISY content on the iPhone is developed. Together with the open source project OLEARIA, supported by the DAISY consortium, this program brings digital talking books on the Apple Macintosh platform. The first beta version of iReadIT will be available in spring 2010 (OLEARIA 2009).

5.2 e-books and large print

Currently, at DZB a student is working on a diploma thesis to test the facilities of e-book-readers to visualize large print documents by using the EPUB format and appropriate style sheets. Results of the thesis will become available in 2010.

5.3 DAISY Web Browser

In 2009 a DAISY Web Player was developed (Eberius 2008) as part of a diploma thesis at TU Dresden. This work received the AKEP Junior Award of the German publishers and booksellers Federation electronic publishing working group (AKEP 2009). The further development of the player and the DAISY standard will be done by the DAISY consortium (DAISY Consortium 2009).

According to the DAISY V.4 standard – coming up next year – which also supports the integration and synchronization of video streams, these developments are fortified by experts of MEDIBUS Libraries and follow the trend in the commercial branche (IDPF 2009).

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