



Agile project management and customized open-source software.

CASE STUDY

Digitizing a 50,000 book library

“OPTI were our partners for digitizing our law library of approximately 50.000 books in all its aspects. I appreciated their involvement and constant creative suggestions, their excellent communication and skills. I commend OPTI for meeting deadlines and specifications and for their professionalism.”

Cici Dafin, Bucharest Bar Association

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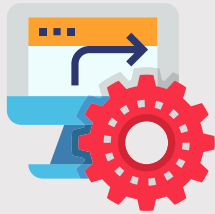
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“Digitizing a law library of such size and history as the one-hundred year old Bucharest Bar Association Library was a happy challenge. We combined open-source software with modules developed from scratch and we offered continuous agile support for our partners. I am now certain that digitization is there to stay.”

Marian Calborean, managing partner, OPTI

challenge



solution



To digitize the library of the Bucharest Bar Association, OPTI collected information from 50,000 books and connected it with 10,000 lawyers and the general public.

The organization of all the documents was very old and poorly managed.

All the administration and cataloguing was paper based. There was valuable information such as book positions which were not noted down anywhere, only remembered by the library staff.

The staff was working on a continuous loan flow and could not be used for data entry.

The 10,000+ lawyers of the Bucharest Bar Association could not remotely search or reserve any book from the library.

To start the project, an open-source solution was chosen and **OPTI had the responsibility to adapt it, supplement it, implement it and explain it** to the staff.

OPTI helped deliver a fully digitized library using a six-step flow.

- Investigation and analysis of the workflow as it was before.
- Installing an open-source library solution: PhpMyBibli by PMB Services France.
- Custom software designed by OPTI to extend the open-source solution as needed. For example the loan module was written from scratch.
- ERP integration for issuing permits, allowing access, sanctioning non-complying lawyers, etc
- Integration with the official website of the Bar Association to allow lawyers to search and reserve the books in advance.
- Assistance for transcribing books and staged deployment of the solution. The steps were: starting with the commonly-borrowed books , upgrading to the complete book repository, implementing the reader permits, launching the full loan module.

As a special note, the project took more than two years, to go through all the phases. OPTI still ensures support and maintenance of the solution for the client.

results



Consultation and smart planning

OPTI and the library staff had meetings in order to understand the process of adding and borrowing books. Final users (lawyers) were also consulted and their input was noted before programming the solution.



User roles and access restriction

Due to the special field of activity of the library there were special access rights and administrative roles. OPTI made provision for administrators, librarians, assistant librarians, coordinators, live readers, remote readers, public loan requests, loan partners.



Periodical publications

Documents such as magazines, law reviews, etc were treated in a special way because of their regularity and constant supply. We ensured the solution is compliant with the Romanian legislation concerning libraries.



Books, authors, topics

The speed in development was essential so we used a well known book management software: PMB (formerly PhpMyLib). It offered the base reports and catalogues needed for a library of such size. Books, authors, topics were all implemented using PMB.



Loan extensions and API integrations

OPTI delivered needed modifications using their own custom software. Modifications included the display of information, a new module for borrowing books, and integration with the ERP and website of the Bar Association. An API was built for such integration.



ERP integration - permits, sanctions

OPTI integrated the software with the official ERP that certifies the status of lawyers as to allow centralized management. The rights can be conferred or withdrawn in a single place, the software being interconnected.



Books and reservations in the website

Every lawyer can perform searches in the book database from their home or smartphone on the official website which was integrated via API. They can also reserve books and see the status of their loans.

Assistance for transcribing books

OPTI offered assistance in the process of transcribing books for the Bucharest Bar Association. The number of books / day was estimated and an API integration with the Central University Library of Bucharest was done so as to allow the import of book data therein.

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Thank you for your time!