

The engineers' cultural heritage becomes digital

All of the engineering journals published in Denmark since 1892 are now made available free over the internet

The Danish Society of Engineers' joint forum for Historical Technology (IDA Historical Technology (HITEK)) is jointly implementing the project *Digitalization of the engineers' cultural heritage* with the media group Ingeniøren (the news magazine of which goes by the same name), which will expense all operating costs as incurred, including hosting and maintenance.

The purpose of the project is to raise funds for the digitalization of all engineering journals published in Denmark in the period 1892 to 2000 (all journals published after 2000 have already become digital), i.e. some 300,000 journal pages in total. The project comprises transport of the bound back volumes of the journals to a company in Switzerland, which will be scanning all pages manually. A Norwegian company will then perform the character recognition and convert the pages to readable text files. Finally, the main contractor Visiolink in Aarhus will perform the loading and indexing of the complete archives and install cross-archive search engines enabling free-text search and search for a multiple selection of words put in inverted commas.

The expected project result is to make all 300,000 pages available online in the course of 2015, to make them searchable at word level and to make them freely accessible to all users no matter their choice of platform. The project will give everyone access to seek information about most of the large infrastructure projects carried out in Denmark after 1892, such as harbours, railways, roads, sewerage systems and drains as well as electricity plants, power plants, industrial plants, bridges and ships – often including reproductions of the original constructional drawings. Furthermore, it will be possible to follow the technology debate and the social development in this interesting period of Denmark's history. Likewise, it will be possible to search for personal and company names – also in advertising copies – and thus follow the business and product development.

Moreover, it is about time that the yellowing journals are taken care of, as otherwise, they will perish - and then the gold mine of knowledge of Denmark's technological and social development hidden in the old engineering journals will not become known.