

Metis: Italian Technology for the worldwide Cultural Heritage

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METIS SYSTEMS S.r.l. An Italian company is the new leader in manufacture of scanner for high quality reproduction of ancient large originals and antique books.

Metis origin comes from digital imaging for satellite. Its founders started this route in 1975 when they cooperate, at first, with Telespazio (Italian Space Agency) and then with ESA (European Space Agency). Metis started its activity at the beginning of 1990, as manufacturer and distributor of digital technologies for the photography and photo-reproduction industry.

In 1997, after the first few installations of digital backs, carried on by Metis at some State Archives, and in combination with the Imago project of the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage, they started a series of projects that brought to the completion of digital systems able to sort out all the problems related to the reproduction of very large format originals. Since then they have installed, in some of the most prestigious Cultural Institute in Italy, digital systems able to perfectly reproduce large format originals with an extreme high resolution. For the Imago project, just mentioned above, more than 500.000 parchments and 5,000 large size cadastral maps (some of which were over 2x3 m) have been scanned by Metis equipment.

Following the success gained within the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, by their large format digital systems, installed by Metis in some of the most prestigious State Archive and Central Institute of the Ministry, by the end of 2003, they decided to deepen also the matter related to book scanners. After a careful research on the state of the art, they found out that the digital systems available at that time for book scanning application, were not delivering high quality images. So, Metis started a project that brought, by the mid of 2004, to the completion of two new systems. called: DRS A1 Plus Book (max format size 65x110 cm.) and DRS Book 5070 (max format size 50x74 cm.). For these two new systems Metis used the same kind of technologies already successfully tested in their previous digital systems. In less than three years they have installed almost 50 systems in prestigious Museum and Library in Italy and abroad.

Metis success, gained just in a few years of production, comes from the extremely high performances of their digital equipment, which are the result of 30 years of experience, made within the different technology branches assembled in their integrated systems. Me-

tis's engineers absolute control of technologies such as: optics, precision mechanics, lighting, electronics and software development, has allowed Metis in designing and producing systems far superior to any competitor, in term of: quality, productivity, simplicity of use, original care, reliability and duration in time.

Furthermore, thanks to the way they projected the systems and the absolute top quality of each components that has been chosen, either software and hardware of their equipment can be updated. Systems updating (which very often are just empty promises) is a characteristic that keeps a certain value of the investment in time; this is definitely a peculiarity of Metis systems. In fact software and hardware upgrades have been already offered at reasonable price to clients who have made use of them with extreme appreciation.

As mentioned earlier, apart from the Italian clients which are all very important Institute of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, in the last few years they had a very good result in terms of new and prestigious clients also abroad. Just to make some examples, we can mention: the Vatican Library, the Forbidden City Museum and the Capital Museum in Beijing, the National Library of Beijing, the National Library of Madrid and last but not least the Institute Cartographic of Catalunya, just installed few months ago in Barcelona.

For more information about Metis products range, you are invited you to visit the web site: www.metis-group.com where you can also see, in the Image Library, some of the outstanding digital acquisition of large cadastral maps, belonging to the State Archive of Turin, Milan and Rome, made by using Metis digital systems.