

TITLE:

Your digital library is my digital library: providing access to free digital collections online

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ABSTRACT

Today, more and more libraries are offering, via their websites, access to digital collections that include many fully digitized old books, in ever increasing number. These add to - or, in many cases - profit from, more widely known projects like Google Books. A digitization project which aims to offer readers instant online access to rare items should not repeat work that has already been done or is in the process of being done. While we cannot know in advance or in detail what Google and others are planning, we should offer our readers the possibility of accessing the full text to a great number of works that exist in our catalogs; even though the item is not the same, the text should be, and it becomes readily available - whereas in most cases these items are not readily available. Digitized collections continue to grow, with libraries in some cases providing full text digitized copies of items in their own collections, while providing the link to a given source in others. We focus on our own experience in the Library of the Lisbon Faculty of Medicine and its possible implications for our readers.