

Axiell partners with CLIR to create the Digital Library of the Middle East

Collaboration based on a mutual vision for preserving cultural heritage, enhancing research and creating teaching and learning environments

Lund, Sweden, 19 December 2016 – Axiell, the leading vendor globally of collections management software to archives, libraries and museums, today announces its partnership with the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR), an independent, non-profit organisation that forges strategies to enhance research, teaching and learning environments in collaboration with libraries, cultural institutions, and communities of higher learning. Together, the two organisations will explore collaborative opportunities to design and sustain the Digital Library of the Middle East (DLME), leveraging Axiell's decade long experience in the Middle East, knowledge around preserving cultural heritage, and innovative technology solutions for collection management and education.

"Axiell is proud and honoured to be invited to collaborate with the Council on Library and Information Resources. Our organisations have a common view of how important it is to preserve and share the world's history for the benefit of research and cross-cultural collaboration. We are glad to be able to contribute with our knowledge of how to manage data, enrich collections and make them more accessible in a digital age. In our collaboration with CLIR, we will help support and guide the development of the Digital Library of the Middle East," says Joel Sommerfeldt, President & CEO of Axiell Group.

As presently conceived, the DLME will combine digital inventories with high-resolution digital replicas of cultural artefacts originating from the Middle East, including artefacts managed by cultural organisations in the region, as well as digitised items relevant to Middle Eastern cultural heritage maintained around the world. In addition, large-scale digitisation and cataloguing of museum, library and archival physical objects, as well as artefacts from archaeological sites, will be supported throughout the Middle East to enrich the scope of cultural materials online. To the extent permitted by copyright, images and brief descriptions from the DLME will be made publicly available to encourage greater understanding of the region's cultural legacy. The project aims to be sustainable and to provide a cultural commonwealth, whilst helping to safeguard a fundamentally important expression of our humanity. Making the inventory available and creating a teaching resource would further open up opportunities for advanced research in the region. Through its high-resolution images and detailed descriptions of ownership and legal status, this multimedia digital library will be designed to trace the provenance and track the movement of historically significant items as a means to inhibit looting and illicit trafficking.

Axiell has on-going contracts with cultural institutions in Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. These would form a solid basis for the inventory, alongside Axiell's other worldwide customers with artefacts from the region.

Commenting on the collaboration, Charles Henry, President of CLIR said, "This partnership marks a new direction for CLIR; we are excited and eager to work together. Axiell's long experience in the Middle East, its knowledge in service to preserving cultural heritage, and innovative technology solutions for collection management and education make it a compelling collaborator. At heart, Axiell's mission is to facilitate a humanistic enrichment of our capacity for understanding our world and our astonishingly rich cultural heritage, consonant with the vision of CLIR and the DLME."



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About Axiell

Axiell serves libraries, schools, archives, museums and authorities with technically advanced and innovative solutions developed in close cooperation with its customers. More than 3000 library organizations with thousands of branches use an Axiell library management system and Axiell Arena, a tool for the virtual library. The systems for archives, libraries and museums, are used by over 3400 cultural institutions over the world. In addition, more than 3000 schools use an Axiell system. The Axiell Group, headquartered in Lund, has more than 300 employees based out of 24 offices in Sweden, Australia, Abu Dhabi, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the UK and the USA. Together, we form one of the world's largest companies in these sectors. To find out more about us and our products, please visit <http://www.axiell.com>.

About CLIR

Based in Washington, D.C., CLIR is an independent, non-profit organisation that forges strategies to enhance research, teaching, and learning environments in collaboration with libraries, cultural institutions, and communities of higher learning. Through its programs, which include the Digital Library Federation and Digitizing Hidden Special Collections and Archives, CLIR aims to promote forward-looking collaborative solutions that transcend disciplinary, institutional, professional and geographic boundaries in support of the public good. To learn more, please visit www.clir.org.