

Holocaust historical data goes digital

January 26 2011, By JOSH LEDERMAN , Associated Press



Yad Vashem chairman Avner Shalev speaks during a press conference announcing the collaboration between Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial and Google search engine, in Tel Aviv, Israel, Wednesday, Jan. 26, 2011. Yad Vashem is teaming up with Google to make its photographs and documents available and searchable on the Internet. The first 130,000 photos hit the web Wednesday. (AP Photo/Ariel Schalit)

(AP) -- The world's largest collection of Holocaust documents is going digital.

Israel's [Holocaust](#) memorial, Yad Vashem, is teaming up with [Google](#) to make its photographs and documents interactive and searchable on the Internet.

The project launched Wednesday with a collection of 130,000 photos that can now be searched directly from Google, using standard keywords and other data that make it far easier than in the past to find the desired

information.

The collection is expected to expand to other parts of the memorial's vast archives in the future.

A social network-like component allows viewers to contribute to the project by adding their own stories, comments and documents about family members who appear in the online archives.

Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev said even though that feature could be misused to post anti-Semitic comments, the risk is outweighed by the benefit provided to future generations seeking information about their ancestors.

"This is part of our vision - to connect Yad Vashem's knowledge and information to modern technology, and bring it to youngsters," he said.

The project started three years ago in the Tel Aviv skyscraper that houses Google's research operations in Israel. It was inspired by a Google initiative encouraging employees to spend 20 percent of work time on projects they feel are important.

Google used experimental [optical character recognition](#) technology to make text within [documents](#) and photos searchable in multiple languages.

The move is just the latest in Yad Vashem's digital outreach. Earlier this week, the memorial launched a version of its YouTube channel in Farsi to educate the country's most bitter enemy - Iran - about the Nazi genocide of 6 million Jews.

Yad Vashem's next priority is to digitize its collection of survivor testimonies.

The launch comes a day before the U.N. marks its annual Holocaust remembrance day.

Online:

<http://collections.yadvashem.org/photosarchive/>

©2010 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Citation: Holocaust historical data goes digital (2011, January 26) retrieved 28 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-01-holocaust-historical-digital.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.