

Japanese IT firm to digitize Vatican manuscripts

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In this picture made available by the Vatican newspaper L' Osservatore Romano, Wednesday, March 19, 2014, Pope Francis looks at the screen of a tablet computer to launch a tweet during his meeting at the Vatican with members of the Scholas Occurrentes Argentina, an organization which promotes the formation of a global network of schools and other educational networks, of all levels and religions. (AP Photo/L' Osservatore Romano)

A Japanese information technology company has agreed to digitize 3,000 Vatican manuscripts in a deal to make some of the Catholic

Church's most historic documents available online.

The Vatican Apostolic Library says it hopes Thursday's announced agreement with Tokyo-based NTT DATA Corp. would protect fragile manuscripts for perusal by scholars worldwide.

NTT DATA said it would digitize 3,000 manuscripts totaling 1.5 million pages over the next four years in a contract worth 18 million euros (\$22.6 million).

The company's president, Toshio Iwamoto, told a Vatican press conference he hoped NTT ultimately would make 82,000 manuscripts totaling 41 million pages accessible by computer.

The Vatican Library, founded in 1451, is one of the world's most important research libraries. It has 180,000 [manuscripts](#), 1.6 million books and 150,000 prints, drawings and engravings.

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