



Providing the Marx Memorial Library a Fully Searchable Online Portal for their World Class Collection.

SOUTRON DIGITAL ARCHIVE SOLUTION

CHALLENGE

The Marx Memorial Library & Workers' School is one of those treasure troves that you find in London.

It has a world-class collection of published and unpublished material on Socialism, Marxism, revolutionary struggles and the trade union movement. It is there to support many different aspects of serious researchers.

The extensive archive includes books, periodicals, newspapers, photographs, posters and monographs. The walls are adorned with banners, plates, portraits and plaques celebrating working-class history. It is as enthralling as it is enchanting revealing a rich tableaux for the period when Marx lived in radical Clerkenwell, London.

Visitors can see the office where Lenin worked in exile, complete with copies of socialist newspaper Iskra which were clandestinely ferried across Europe. Groups can view copies of socialist literature printed on-site by Twentieth Century Press.



For many years online access to the content held there was limited solely to a small part of the book catalogue.



A major problem facing the charity was the volume and wealth of materials covering such a wide range of aspects in so many different documents, images and posters.



SOLUTION

When Meirian Jump was appointed to the organisation in autumn 2014, Soutron Library System was already in place but it was only being used for the book collection.

With the introduction of many new features since the original installation of the Soutron system, Meirian was able to include forty collections previously uncatalogued and these are now searchable online through a new Search Portal that is fully responsive in design, for mobile and tablet users to easily access.

The challenge for the charity was that there had been no one in post for some years able to apply the systems to serve the institution and to exploit the facilities of Soutron.

Under the supervision and energy of Meirian Jump, Archivist & Library Manager at the Library, much of the hard work by volunteers over many years is being brought together in a new web site with a new Online Search Portal delivered by Soutron.

“I have volunteers importing records from COPAC with ease” says Merian.



RESULTS

This new Online Search Portal by Soutron, lays the foundation for greater access to those who are unable to visit and use the facility in person. It also makes the facilities for researchers much better with browsing of Collections now possible. Demand for seats at the reading room has grown as a result of the extra facilities and more materials are being catalogued by volunteers.

“Users can finally search across all of our collections and with such a professional portal in place, it will allow us to move forward for future funding. I can also now generate bibliographic records with ease, which took us ages to accomplish before” says Meirian.



The Marx Memorial Library & Workers' School is a lively and exciting place. Its growth demonstrates how archivists armed with the right tools and a supportive supplier are able to respond to needs and provide good advice on how data can be managed and presented to make a transformative impact on their organisation and society as a whole.

Meirian also adds, “the support from Soutron has also been incredibly responsive too, very helpful when it came to getting the user design and integration with our current website just how we wanted it.”

You can access the archive on-line at: www.marxlibrary.org.uk