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First interactive electronic Koran launched in Muscat

The first interactive electronic Koran has been unveiled in the Omani capital of Muscat. The device marks a global breakthrough for Muslims and non-Muslims alike, writes Pat Lancaster. Known as Muscat Electronic Mushaf, this e-book presents unique features coupled with an unusual typography; it was proposed, designed and executed by DecoType of Amsterdam. A multi-disciplinary team, worked for three years to meet the needs of Muslims around the world so that they can use an error-free document.

Muscat Electronic Mushaf is a mixture of aesthetics and functionalities that, by exploiting the power of web standards, allows access to the rich typographic traditions of the Arabic script.

Using Unicode and Web technologies provides the user with functionality, allowing access to the rich typographic traditions of the Arabic script.



This is an initiative that is likely to prove an invaluable asset for Arabic speakers, religious scholars, teachers, researchers and students, and one that will open a door for reflection on the Koran

The Amsterdam have managed to reconcile two different aspects of world culture: the icon of Islamic civilization and advanced technology, without compromising the text in any way. The Koran is now beautifully represented in digital form, using Unicode characters.

Unicode aims to provide an open access to the world's languages on computers that allow people around the world to communicate, whatever language they speak. "With this technology, anyone can view and search for text anywhere in the world and without any particular device. Users no longer need to download or install new fonts to have text at hand. Text can be copied, searched for, and dynamically reformatted, enabling people to explore the variety and flexibility of Arab typography," explained Dr. Mark Davis, President and Co-Founder of Unicode.

"With this launch, the Oman has helped promote the internet publication of Arabic texts at a high level. Although its appeal will concentrate initially on Muslims and academics, its interactivity invites the whole world to appreciate the beauty of the Arabic script," Dr Davis added.



The layout and graphic design of Mushaf Muscat is also a tribute to the Sultanate of Oman as a cultural reflection of Arab civilisation. Generously supported by the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman, Sheikh Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Abdullah as-Salmi, the electronic publication of the Koran highlights the role of the Sultanate in the development of electronic Koranic production while reconciling traditional calligraphic of the Islamic civilisation with the current technologies.

www.mushafmuscat.om



Thanks to the support of Oman and the work of an innovative team from Amsterdam, the age old beauty of the words of the Koran will now be available electronically and interactively throughout the world

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