March 31, 2016

Omeka at Kent State University

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Available at: https://works.bepress.com/virginia_dressler/10/
Omeka at Kent State

Or, how we implemented a new system in under 30 (*programmer) days

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Kent State Architecture students building geodesic dome, 1972
Project beginnings and timeline

• Winter 2014- Spring 2015: Began assessment

• Reasons to make the move
  - Homegrown platform had major limitations
    • No cross-collection searching
    • Every collection had custom metadata template and design
    • Could not accept full resolution images
  - Not sustainable for long-term development and growth of digital collections
Selection Process

• Assessed options for open source products (Omeka, Fedora/Hydra, Dspace)
  – Measured pros and cons
  – Considered local staffing implications of decision

• Summer 2015: Began work on Omeka with one part-time programmer availability
Appeal of Omeka

– Flexible- Accommodate all existing features + more!
  • Custom browse features, specific metadata fields, local controlled vocabulary, etc.
  • Accommodate all existing media types (image, text, audio), and provide potential for future media types

– Admin interface
  • Departments can control content more directly and create collections

– Concise- Less code makes happier (and saner) programmers
  • Reduced lines of code by 80% from homegrown PHP
Appeal of Omeka, cont.

– Adaptable
  • Easily integrates additional media formats, media players and browsers
  • Customization to KSU branding and interface design

– Digital exhibits
  • Existing templates or custom design
Local customizations

- Batch uploading and metadata batch editing functionality
- Direct ingest from Omeka into the long-term digital storage
- Exploring Multi-Site architecture
  - Branch libraries, Regional libraries, etc
- Incorporate streaming video (Kaltura)
First steps

- Created “master” metadata template
- Added in custom, local controlled vocabularies
Migrate content

- Database migration of metadata records
- Inclusion of full resolution files
- Connect digital storage with Omeka ingest
- Test!
Test, test, test

• Side by side comparison with old site to ensure seamless transition
• Train staff for admin side
• Make any additional small tweaks and customizations during process
Custom interface example

- Browse by decade
Custom interface example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bed For a Vet Protest</th>
<th>Campus Day Parade Float</th>
<th>Campus Day Parade Float</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Bed For a Vet Protest" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Campus Day Parade Float" /></td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Campus Day Parade Float" /></td>
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- Browse by subject
Oral History example with transcription

Citation

LINDA FIFER, ORAL HISTORY

Recorded: May 4, 1990
Transcribed by Rhonda Rinehart

[Linda Fifer]: My name is Linda Fifer. Today is May 4, 1990. I was a student here, starting in the Fall of 1970. I was not here during the time of the shootings, but the shootings themselves had such an impact upon me that the events after that--every May 4 goes by and I think of this place.

During the five years that I was here--I graduated in August of '75 with my master's in speech pathology--the message that I kept receiving from Chicoans was that students were at fault for the shootings; and that was something I never believed. That was something that I couldn't believe. I never felt that students were at fault for any of the incident there. I was angry that the FBI report was made--was, um, a 99-year ban was put on it by Nixon and that has never been recalled. I was angry with the sense of blame that students were expected to carry.

And I was in Montana--where I live now--two days or so when the Guardsmen were acquitted, and for the next three years or so, I would have recurring dreams about the shootings even though I was not here. It was the same dream, where I was a member of a jury, I guess, and Guardsmen were called in to re-enact the shootings so that we, the jury, would get an idea of what was happening; except that it happened again, and people were being shot again. And I would wake up from this dream not ever knowing why I was having this sensation since I wasn't here at the time of the shootings. And I really do believe it was a lot of the blame that we were told to carry for this.

I happened to go to the library in Great Falls, Montana, where I was living; it couldn't have been more than two after the Guardsmen were acquitted, and I happened to be wearing my Kent State tee-shirt, which I had learned not to wear in Ohio because you would get ridiculed. And finally I could wear my Kent State tee-shirt. And as I was walking to the library, I heard a voice behind me say, "Kent State, huh?" And I just froze because I didn't know--I expected more abuse. And I turned around and looked and here was this kind of grizzled man in his--I don't know--maybe early forties, hadn't shaved, tee-shirt rolled up, cigarettes in the sleeve, jeans, and he was smoking a cigarette and peering at me through the smoke, "Kent State." he said. "You know," and he shook his head, "that never should have happened." And that was the first time as an adult that I had heard another adult say something supportive about the students at Kent State. And I thought, how sad as the years went by, that was such a strong memory, as the years went by, I kept thinking how sad it was for me to have to go 2,000 miles away to hear someone say that they thought the students got a raw deal.
Going live and looking forward

• November 2015

• Accomplishments since kick-off
  – Digital exhibit
    • Highlight new content- Reel to reel audio from May 4 collection (OHRAB grant funded project)
  – Exploring video integration for oral history and May 4 collections
  – Piloting digital display with Omeka kiosk mode
More looking forward

– Analytics
  • Tracking usage over the next year to determine success of new platform

– Image Viewer
  • Larger items (maps, etc.) with zoom

– More digital exhibits!
Looking back

• Flexible, open source product with great developer community and support

• Success with limited programmer hours and staffing
  – Implementation of Omeka at KSU with approximately 30 days of work, tracked in BaseCamp

• Ability of Omeka to adapt to custom needs of our institution
Thank you!

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