Leveraging Library Techknowledgie

Library expertise front and center in the digital humanities: an Omeka.net case study
An Emerging Service Model

Bridging the gap between our users’ needs and the technology that supports those needs

photo by Anirudh Koul
The Digital Scholarship Crisis

The World is Flat
The Digital Scholarship Crisis

The World is Flat

Information is a Mountain
The Digital Scholarship Crisis

The World is Flat

Information is a Mountain

The victims
- Researchers
- Alumni
- Faculty
- Students
- Enthusiasts
The IT Help Model

IT-focused solution:

- Black-box servers
- IT-dependent
- No CMS
- No WYSIWYG
- No preservation plan
- No metadata plan

photo by Elliott Cable
Librarians: Not Your Mother’s IT Help

Access…
Democracy…
Diversity…
Education and lifelong learning…
Intellectual freedom…
Preservation…
The public good…
Social responsibility…

http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/statemtspols/corevalues#service

Photo by Patrick Hoesly
Case Study

- Letters from the Vatican archives
- Defunded government server

http://earlymoderndocs.omeka.net/about
Services Rendered

- Project Planning
- Requirements Gathering
- Web CMS Expertise
- Digital Collection Expertise
- Metadata Expertise
- Data Management
- Being Nice
Project Requirements

- Stable server
- Low-cost
- Non-technical CMS
- Preservation
- Interoperability
- Standardized metadata
- Findability & SEO

Photo by Starstreak007
Choosing a Platform

“Omeka is designed with non-IT specialists in mind, allowing users to focus on content and interpretation rather than programming.”

- Hosted
- Free and Paid tiers
- Non-technical CMS
- Preservation (exportable, interoperable data)
- Dublin Core
- Integrated with other collections
- User-friendly documentation
Restructuring

\[
\text{title} = \text{document type} + \text{“from”} + \text{creator} + \text{“to”} + \text{recipient} + \text{date}
\]

Example: Letter from Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi to Bernardino Spada [1627]
Encoding

HTML character encoding (commas)
UTF-8 Unicode
CSV

Photo by Woowoowoo
Metadata

Mapping

researchers’ unique fields ➔ Dublin Core fields
OAI-PMH compliant

Dublin Core Mapping in Omeka.net ➔ OAI-PMH ready

Photo by Woowoowoo
Best practices for working with non-technical people

Communication
Librarian relevance
Anticipate challenges
Understand client expectations up front
Deal with technological baggage

Photo by Damian Gadai
DePaul University Library

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