Spotlight at Harvard

Exhibits Site

Standard Exhibits

CURIOSity Digital Collections - Harvard currently has 22 exhibits with a 'general' Harvard Library design applied and embedded Mirador viewer. We also made a separate theme for exhibits that do not contain digital objects and/or have a mix of digitized and non-digitized content. *Note: we call 'exhibits' 'collections' here at Harvard and CURIOSity is the name of our collection building service, hence the name CURIOSity Digital Collections.*

Custom Exhibit

Colonial North America (CNA) - CNA is a highly customized exhibit that is built on a separate instance from our standard exhibits listed above. See a description of the collection here. The site includes extensive user interface customization, metadata extensions for sub-collections, and an embedded Mirador viewer for displaying the over 25,000 digitized documents in the collection (including nearly 300,000 digitized pages).

Service Site

CURIOSity Digital Collections Services

Metadata Harvesting

The item metadata for all of our exhibits are imported from our LibraryCloud metadata hub and the digital objects are delivered from our Digital Repository Service (DRS). LibraryCloud ingests record metadata from our source catalogs and DRS, transforming the data into MODS in the process. We use a custom built application, SetBuilder, to create sets of records in LibraryCloud. Once a set is created, we use our OAI-PMH data provider to send that set to Spotlight and/or places like DPLA. For harvesting into Spotlight, we've created an OAI-PMH Spotlight plugin that has been released as open source. The LibraryCloud Infrastructure Diagram shows how the pieces of our architecture work together.

Demo

For the April 2019 Spotlight Service Community Call, Vanessa Venti gave a demo on Harvard's instance of Spotlight, "CURIOUSity Digital Collections". The demo includes a brief overview of the infrastructure described above in the Metadata Harvesting section.

Who's Who Data

- Institution
  - CURIOSity Digital Collections
- Who are the lead contact(s) this community can reach out to for questions?
  - Vanessa Venti, Service Manager and Product Owner (vanessa_venti at harvard dot edu)
- How long have you been using Spotlight?
  - Since 2017
- How many people are on your Spotlight team?
  - The team size varies depending on the workcycle.
- List or number of published Spotlight exhibits
  - 30 - CURIOSity Digital Collections
- Have you used other digital collections platforms at your institution such as Omeka? If so, do you maintain more than one digital collection platform?
  - We had an old, homegrown system that hosted 19 collections, we have migrated all of these over to Spotlight. We also have a couple Omeka collections, one has been migrated to Spotlight and we hope to migrate the other one in the future.
- Have you used Spotlight to migrate older digital collections? If so, what were the lessons learned?
  - Yes, see answer above. It was a lot of work to migrate these collections, certainly not something we want to do very often!
- What Spotlight features do you use?
  - All
- What features would you like the community to develop or plan to develop yourself? (Gathered here so this community can help developers across institutions with coordination)
  - Ability to display repeating fields (such as subjects) on different lines and separate them as distinct facets (Harvard has created this ability and plans to submit the code back to the core)
  - Ability to embed your own image viewer (Harvard has created this ability and plans to submit the code back to the core)
  - An HTML WYSIWYG editor
  - Ability to delete records
  - Full-text searching
  - Ability to display multi-component records (for example, audio and transcript of an interview)
  - Ability to bulk add tags to records
- What are your biggest barriers to using or expanding Spotlight use at your institution?

- We don't have all the tools and documentation we need yet to make to make building a Spotlight exhibit more self-service. Creating a new exhibit can require a lot of data wrangling, QC, and troubleshooting, and remediation as our digital collections infrastructure is fairly new; we are still discovering and fixing bugs as we build new exhibits. Also, the risk assessment process can be complicated and time consuming depending on the collection.

Notable Exhibits

- The South Sea Bubble, 1720
- Contagion
- Colonial North America

Upcoming Events

Notes, Comments, Observations, other information to share