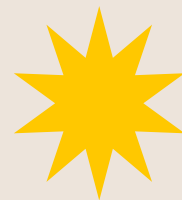# University of Rochester:
Developing Online Exhibits and Omeka Service

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https://shorturl.at/hoqxQ

link to slides

Introductions

1. Role at University of Rochester Library
2. Interest in Online Exhibits
3. non-library topic that you could give a Ted Talk on with no notice

Agenda

01

a tour of Omeka S

02

value statement

03

service facets

04

service development

01

omeka S tour

getting comfortable with the platform

Omeka S

web publishing platform and content management system for digital collections and online exhibits

the "S" stands for semantic. Omeka S allows for linked data and integration with the semantic web

Omeka S can support multi-site exhibits

Omeka S Definitions

some definitions to make sure we are all working with the same information

Item

items are records in Omeka. they are building blocks of exhibits

Properties

metadata fields used to describe items

Resource Templates

predefined properties that aid in item creation

Item Sets

curated groups of items set around a theme, attribute, or context, similar to collections

Values

the metadata for items. the values can come in several different forms that allow for linked (open) data

Class

types of items, such as image, audio, moving image

Live Tour

Let's do a live walk-through of Omeka S and then each person will upload an item and add it to a site

Deep Dive Into Omeka S Elements

- Resource Template
  - how can resource templates help make sure that online exhibits maintain uniformity
  - are there are any types of exhibits where these resources are not useful
- Item Sets
  - how can item sets help with the management of the online exhibits?
  - how can item sets help or hinder exhibit creation
- Themes
  - having a singular theme can help with branding and discovery
  - how many themes are needed? one, several?
  - if there are several different units using Omeka S, should they have their own individual branding, or be united under the institutions branding.

02

develop program values statement

thinking about purpose and intent

Developing a value statement

- why a value/mission? it will help to scope the program and provide justifications for potential difficult decisions
- think about the adjectives and verbs that you associate with the why? of online exhibits
- align the values and mission of an online exhibits to the University of Rochester Library Priorities
- **Next step: working in a collaborative space using the 1-2-4-all method to develop a values statement**

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1LLu-fyetiXLQCIElwlDzkSDH7RD03Wa1-9CkjmzsZ2Y/edit?usp=sharing

03

service facets

the platform is just one facet

Proposal Forms

- Why proposal forms?
  - information gathering and keeping
  - institutional memory
  - allow for scope if one person is responsible for support
- Are proposal forms assessed?
  - If so, what are the criteria?
    - copyright
    - timelines
    - content
- Who assesses/ who receives the the proposal forms?
  - Service Lead?
  - Supervisors?
  - Exhibit creators?

Accessibility Standards

- Themes
  - all themes should meet WCAG 2.2
- Images
  - alt-text
  - image description text, should be redundant text
  - interpretative text
- Video and Audio
  - transcripts or captions
  - summary text of the video/audio
    - example: " In this video, students recite the poem, *Beowulf*, in its original Old English language on October 23, 2023 in the University of Rochester Library Special Collections Reading Room.
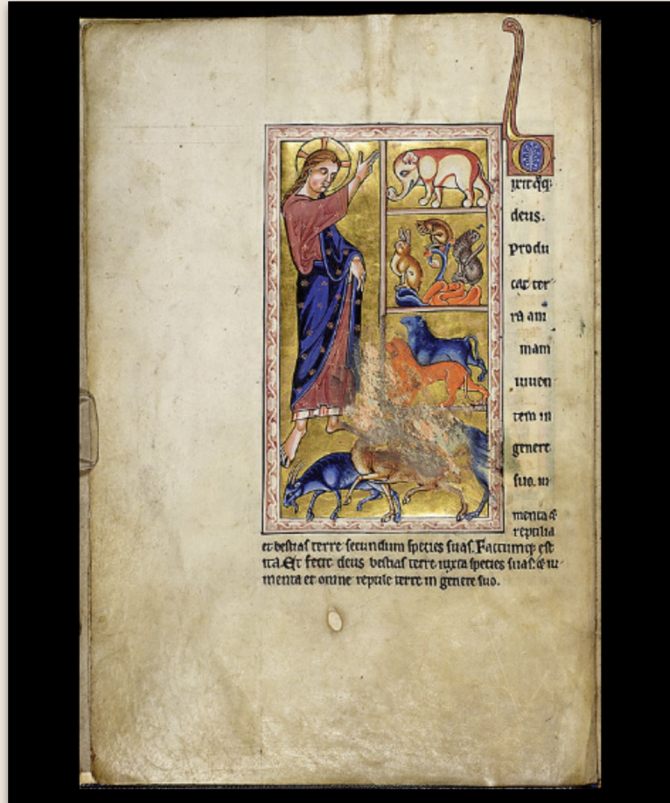
Accessibility Standards, Images

- Alt text tends to be hidden from most views of the browser, can be seen by hovering over the image and is read aloud by screen readers, or interpreted by other assistive technologies. Tend to be brief and simple.

- Image description text can be detailed and provide more information about the item. Image description text can be useful to all users not just those that use assistive technologies. They are visible in the standard view of browser and are analogous to label text in online exhibits

- interpretative text provides context or analysis to the item included. Helps provide understanding why an item was chosen for the exhibit.

Accessibility Standards, Images

- Alt text and image descriptions should adhere to some basic principles:

  - **Some description is better than no description**
    - it's better to have an imperfect description rather than no description at all
  - **Every description has a point of view**
    - image description is not neutral and makes an argument. image description can help you make your argument
  - **Balance completeness and concision**
    - strike a balance between providing enough description without being overly verbose and affect the readability of your exhibit
  - **Order for Efficiency**
    - order your description: left to right or foreground/background
    - order should also take into consideration purpose, content, and importance for efficiency
    - don't bury important information. 🚫: the sign is pink and green, it's "do not enter. toxic mold." ✅: The sign reads 'do not enter, toxic mold with pink and green background."

Accessibility Examples

"Watering Place. | Morning Dress." *Gallery of Fashion*, vol. II, October 1795. Hand-colored etching and aquatint. London: Nikolaus Wilhelm von Heideloff. On loan from the private collection of James Ravin.

Accessibility Standards

- Accessibility requirements based on these best practices should be written and shared with exhibit creators

- Exhibit should be reviewed to make sure that they follow the accessibility standards

- Regular workshops and reviews of the accessibility standards for exhibit creators.

Metadata Requirements

- different types of resources will require different types of metadata but there should be a core set of metadata field required for all items when available
- consistent metadata can help with discovery as well as questions about content
- metadata requirements suggestions:
  - title
  - creator/responsible party
  - date
  - description
  - provenance
    - can link to the holding repository
  - identifier
    - call numbers and accession numbers

Teaching with Online Exhibits

- what is the scope for faculty who want to teach with online exhibits and host a class exhibit with the library?
  - the exhibit should be something the library can easily steward once the class has concluded. this may look like restricting faculty/library exhibits to library collections.
  - the students work in Word and GDoc documents, and don't work in Omeka S
  - the librarian is a partner with class, teaching writing for the public or how to write label text for the students
  - adhering to accessibility requirements
  - do the learning objectives of the class align with values and missions of the UR online exhibits program?

Sensitive Materials

- online exhibits can contain materials or discuss topics that maybe harmful or sensitive
- the purpose is not to censor or restrict topics that can be discussed but how can readers be alerted that the exhibit handles difficult materials
  - how are sensitive materials contextualized? are they contextualized well?
  - who assesses how well something has been contextualized?
- Exhibits that have sensitive materials or topic should have a sensitive materials statement on the exhibit's home page and on the specific page with sensitive materials
- UR should define what is sensitive materials?
  - Typically: nudity, dead bodies, and violent symbols and words
  - this can all be nuanced and may need a case-by-case review

Peer Review

- are exhibits fully peer-reviewed? or just lightly reviewed for accessibility and spelling/grammar

- are just proposals reviewed?

    - by one person

    - by a committee (who comprises the committee)

    - by what criteria

- If the program allows teaching collaborations, what does that mean for peer review of an exhibit

Archiving and Sustainability

- how should exhibits be archived?
  - timelines
  - review and criteria
    - accessibility
    - out of date metadata language
  - where should they go
    - institutional repository/elsewhere?
  - tombstoning language
- how is archiving of exhibits alerted to exhibit creators

04

putting it together

finalizing a service model draft