

Museums and the Web panel discussion proposal

Title

A Little Sweat Goes A Long Way, or: Building a Community-Driven Digital Asset Management System for Museums

Panelists

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David Wilcox – Fedora Product Manager, Duraspace

[one Hydra developer AND/OR]

[one Islandora developer]

Abstract

In 2013 the Art Institute of Chicago started evaluating solutions for a DAMS. The AIC needed a central facility for the ingestion, preservation and delivery of millions of documents of many different types, accessible by more than 20 different institutional departments with different permissions and by web users via websites, mobile apps and public APIs. This system also needed to aggregate data from existing applications as well as to become the sole API for all shared collection information. Finally, the AIC collection and content managers are accustomed to a home-built, very adaptable Collection Management System: they wanted the same flexibility in the DAMS user interface and a seamless user experience between the two.

None of the solutions reviewed showed the flexibility and robustness necessary to fulfill all these requirements, except for Fedora, an open source, community driven software very popular among libraries and archives, but scarcely known within the museum community.

~ Two years later... ~

The first beta release of the AIC DAMS, named LAKE, has been recently launched. It is an ecosystem consisting of several data stores and applications, all maintained by communities of educational institutions, with Fedora serving as the central repository. These systems store and exchange Linked Data natively following open and widely adopted standards. All the code produced is open source and available online.

This panel discussion wants to share the LAKE experience as a case study for Fedora as the core information repository of a major museum.

We also want to shift the attention from features to sustainability for a moment and shed light on the communities behind Fedora and its related projects: how these work together to improve interoperability, how all decisions are made through an inclusive and transparent process, and how individual adopters' needs are addressed as part of a larger issue when possible.

[Active committers of Hydra and Islandora, two projects aimed at providing content management facilities for Fedora, will illustrate the user-facing side of Fedora and how ontologies, protocols and services jointly designed by these groups can become the foundation of a museum DAMS.]