

Library Lab Project 608: Media Capsule — Making Multimedia Content Viewable and Interactive on Harvard Platforms — Phase One

Project Leads

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Brief Description

Multimedia content is an increasing part of our online lives, not least at Harvard's Libraries. Unfortunately, institutions like the Harvard Libraries face persistent dilemmas in making video and audio holdings accessible to users on the web.

Media Capsule addresses the challenge faced at Harvard Libraries of how to present multimedia holdings by researching the feasibility of developing an open source multimedia player plug-in that can be installed on Harvard web properties.

Project Update

Berkman Project Leads spent several hours in the first stage of the project phase researching a variety of different open source options for the multimedia players. These ranged from existing plug-ins that could be built out, to full-fledged contracted service providers. The team also researched costs associated with developing a multimedia player from the ground up.

Concurrently, Project Leads reached out to members of the Harvard community -- from librarians, to professors, to communications, to technologists -- to discover what kinds of issues and needs these individuals faced with making multimedia content available on the web.

In the second stage of this project phase we discovered that HUIT (the Harvard University Information Technology group) along with the Harvard Communications office had been working to acquire a site license for a preferred vendor we researched, Kaltura.

This license acquisition essentially met the research mission of our Library Lab project. Kaltura is one of the most robust and extendable multimedia platform currently available, that also meets the open source mission of the Library Lab project.

This development gave us a head start in moving into Phase Two of our project: deployment of the platform. Deployment will allow us to test out the extendability of the platform using Berkman's own multimedia library. We will also be able to test and develop the most appropriate player configurations to recommend to other stakeholders in the Harvard community: the libraries, professors using iSites, and communications teams around campus.

In this phase, project leads at the Berkman Center spent about 80 of the projected 150 hours on research and consulting throughout the Harvard community.

In 2014 we will spend the balance of our hours (and more) deploying Berkman geek resources towards the development of this platform.