

Zeega: A Slideshow Machine for Harvard Library Images -- and of course, much much more.

This proposal is an update to the previously submitted round 5 proposal, "[Spectacle: A Slideshow Machine for Harvard Library Images](#)".

Impetus for this revision

The Library Lab Review Committee asked Bill Comstock and Jesse Shapins to explore whether the functionality of Spectacle could be added to Zeega; could overlapping features and design goals be harmonized so that a single application, Zeega, could provide users with what the review committee found to be the most desirable elements of Spectacle?

Spectacle functionality compared to Zeega

	System open and accessible to all	Displayed images linked to catalog records	Slideshows are website embeddable	Search HL collections	Keyboard controls (classroom use / public presentations)	Auto-advance (kiosk mode)	VIA portfolio import	Record import scheme for page-turned (PDS) objects, objects described in OASIS, VIA and TED	Export metadata records	Public gallery	Social media functions: share, like, follow
Spectacle	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	
Zeega	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	?	Y	Y

A great opportunity

- If only a few new bits of functionality are added to Zeega, Zeega will cover all of the core system requirements set out for Spectacle. The needed functions are: a search facility for Harvard image content, and the ability to build slideshows by importing VIA portfolios, or delimited lists of pointers to Harvard catalog records and linked images.
- Berkman developer, Justin Clark, has already developed and tested code for Spectacle that can search OASIS, VIA, HOLLIS, and TED databases for image content. He has also developed metadata import modules that will parse VIA portfolios or delimited text files to speed the incorporation of Harvard images and descriptive metadata into online slideshows.
- Justin's code relies on the same Symfony2 web development framework used by the Zeega developers, and we expect that this will make it even easier to repurpose his Spectacle code within Zeega.

Proposal

The Library Lab should provide a grant sufficient to allow Justin Clark to work with the Zeega development team to add the above described Harvard-specific functions to Zeega.

In addition, we recognize that Zeega's rich set of features and functions may be intimidating to some new users. Zeega developers should also consider developing a slideshow template that would streamline the process of creating a simple slideshow of static images. A slideshow template -- and perhaps additional templates that reveal more limited feature sets and workflows for specific types of simple Zeega creations -- might accelerate Zeega adoption and act as a gateway drug, leading new users toward experimenting with Zeega's more advanced features.

By re-purposing the hard fought lessons learned and the code developed for Spectacle, those Library Lab round one investments will be salvaged, the desired functionality of Spectacle will become available within Zeega, and the number of systems that the Library commits itself to supporting may be smartly reduced, all while simultaneously helping to make Zeega a tool that can draw in the rich and growing array of Harvard Library resources already available online.

Spectacle: A Slideshow Machine for Harvard Library Images

submitted by Bill Comstock

Spectacle: A slideshow machine for Harvard Library images

What is Spectacle?

Spectacle¹ was developed in Library Lab Round One as a slideshow generator that allows users to find images of interest from Harvard's online library and museum collections and to easily incorporate them into an online slideshow.

Functionality highlights

- Each “slide” is linked to the Library's descriptive metadata for the image, and to the Harvard collection within which it resides. Confronted with an image that piques their interest, users may then follow the image to the library catalog record for more information, and to discover links to other items and similar collections that may be of interest.
- Each slideshow is shared in a public gallery, allowing users to view and re-use slideshows created by others.
- Slideshows may be embedded within web pages, or they may stand alone and actively navigated within a classroom setting, or left to run in a kiosk mode, looping images that promote Harvard and its library collections.

Who may use Spectacle?

Spectacle may be used by anyone. We hope and expect that Harvard faculty, students, administrators, librarians and curators will all make use of the system, but we also hope that users beyond Harvard find the system useful and fun.

What library content does it make available?

For more than a decade Harvard libraries and museums have been making and collecting content that can be delivered online. Millions of public domain and Harvard-owned images can be included in Spectacle slideshows -- images of photographs, book and manuscript pages, paintings, plant and animal specimens, art objects and ephemera.

The Spectacle code employs a “bolt-on” architecture that may be used in the future to easily add additional sources of imagery via APIs (e.g., DPLA, Flickr).

Round 5 proposal

With a modest Round 5 award, I would like to complete the following tasks and deploy the application on a server for a one year trial.

- Implement the interface design created during Round One.

¹Spectacle beta site: <http://dev5.berkmancenter.org/>

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- Consider adding the following social media functionality, soliciting input from HL Communications so that the application can be used to serve and promote the Harvard Library:
 - Allow users to register and authenticate via FaceBook, Twitter, Google, OpenID
 - Allow users to "Like" slideshows created by others.
 - Allow users to "Follow" other users, receiving notices when "liked" slideshows are modified, or when "followed" users post new slideshows.
 - Make it easy for users to post slideshows on Google+, Twitter, or Facebook.
- Test existing code and, if necessary, update existing code to conform to any recent changes to Harvard Library systems APIs (VIA, OASIS, PDS, Aleph).
- Create technical documentation so that the application may be easily installed and the code re-purposed. Sharing the current code on GitHub without any documentation does not meet the Library Lab's goal of making truly reusable, shared code.
- Consider the registration of a domain, such as spectacle.harvard.edu .
- Deploy application on a server with usage tracking and analytics tools for a one year trial.

Benefits

- With tools like Spectacle, we hope that more people will discover and share library content. Further, we expect these platforms will allow users to suggest new meanings and support new scholarly arguments by gathering library resources into collections of their own creation – collections where the arrangement and composition of items is capable of conveying something that the individual pieces cannot.

Many of the projects supported by Library Lab aspire to provide innovative ways of discovering and exploring library content via new interfaces and modes of access. These types of projects drive the Library's development of APIs to catalogs and digital repositories, and they illustrate how others at Harvard and beyond are free to create innovative presentations and uses of Harvard Library content, without the Library's mediation.

Use Case Scenarios

We wanted an easy way to gather amazing images from Harvard collections and to share them online, and we had no trouble coming up with potential use cases:

- Faculty could create slideshows for classroom instruction, or link to them as supplemental resources for students.
- Slideshows could be regularly incorporated into the new Harvard Library portal, quickly and easily, and by a wide variety of staff.

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- Slide shows could be for public presentation by library and museum staff, university administrators and faculty.
- Slide shows could run on public kiosks and on idle workstations to raise local awareness of the riches of Harvard Library collections.
- Online exhibits could be assembled quickly, without tasking web managers or software developers.

We hope that many users beyond Harvard will find interesting content that they can assemble to support their own teaching and learning; or just for the pleasure of discovering and sharing the riches of Harvard Library collections.

In addition to all of the reasons that inspired the development of Harvard Spectacle, we hope to hear that it finds uses and audiences that we've never considered.