

Appendix D: Use Cases

Use Cases

Small historical society installs *Omeka* and joins the *Omeka Commons*

The Chesterfield Historical Society (CHS) has one of the best collections of early American pewter outside of New England. After watching an *Omeka* demonstration at the American Association for State and Local History conference, the director decided that his institution should experiment with sharing their collection online, beginning with their pewter collection. To help with the task at hand, CHS hired an intern from the local college to assist the curator with signing up for an *Omeka* hosted account and importing the collection records from Past Perfect into the installation, using the import plugins that were recommended in the *Omeka* documentation.

During the process of setting up *Omeka*, the intern asked the curator if she would consider participating in the *Omeka Commons*. The intern's professor introduced his Material Culture 301 class to the *Commons*, and the intern found that it was very easy to discover and find objects at museums around the country. He didn't realize how easy it was for an institution to participate and so he convinced the wary curator to join. The curator chose to join the *Commons*, because the CHS collections are not well known outside of the immediate southern Ohio region and she hoped the *Commons* would expose their holdings to a bigger audience and increase visitation.

After about fifteen minutes of setting up *Omeka* and installing a few plugins, the intern and curator filled out the short application requesting permission to participate in the *Commons*. By the following day, CHS's *Omeka Commons* application had been approved from the *Commons*' staff and CHS received an authentication key that was then pasted into a text box in the *Commons* plugin configuration panel. After saving the configuration, they were ready to share with the *Commons*. From the administrative dashboard, the intern was able to check the "*Commons*" box on the collection management page. Also in that interface, they had to choose what type of copyrights to attach to the items in the collection. After reading over the full list of choices, CHS's director and curator chose the most restricted Creative Commons licensing option, the "Attribution Non-Commercial No Derivatives." This license allows others to download works and share them with others as long as they mention the contributing institution and link back to that institution. Users cannot change digital files in any way or use them commercially. Finally, the intern uploaded CHS's logo and brief institutional profile to the museum's *Commons* "channel." After feeling satisfied with the work they had done, they saved all of the changes in the plugin and the archive.

Within two months, the curator had received double the average number of inquiries from scholars and researchers who were interested in viewing the pewter collection in-person. As a result, CHS's visitation began to increase slightly, which pleased the director. In the meantime, the intern continued to add and tag items in the CHS's online archive.

Researcher Discovers the *Omeka Commons*

Rachel is an independent scholar living in Illinois where she is writing a book on rural life in the Cumberland Plateau region of Kentucky and Tennessee. She moved back to her home town to care for ailing parents, so while she occasionally can afford to travel to large libraries and archives, she is essentially relying on her broadband internet to connect her to sources. She has been frustrated recently by the lack of accessibility to the Proquest databases of historic American periodicals and newspapers because she is not employed by a university and her local library does not subscribe to this service.

She is, however, delighted to find that the *Omeka Commons* provides her open access to material culture resources and photographs from this region that informs her research in ways impossible before the *Commons* made this resources available. She also found that everything in the *Commons* is *Zotero*-readable, making managing her sources even easier. She signed up for an *Omeka Commons* user account and started saving, tagging, and organizing her newly-found sources. Rachel works with a writing group of scholars from all over the country, so when she spots an resource that is relevant to the work of one of her colleagues, she uses the “share” features on that item’s page to email a the link to the other scholar.

Rachel is now able to plan a focused research trip to two small museums in Tennessee that hold pertinent collections that she would not have discovered if not for the *Commons*.