

## **Appendix C: About *Omeka***

## About *Omeka*

From the Swahili word meaning “to display” or “to lay out for discussion,” *Omeka* <<http://omeka.org>> is a next generation web publishing platform for collections-based research of all kinds, one that bridges the museum, library, and scholarly worlds through a set of commonly recognized standards. In doing so *Omeka* puts serious web publishing within reach of all cultural heritage professionals and scholars.

*Omeka* is free and open source, easy to use, standards based, and extensible. It is designed with non-IT specialists in mind, allowing users to focus on content and interpretation rather than programming. Its unqualified Dublin Core metadata structure and adherence to web standards allows anyone to design fully accessible online exhibitions efficiently. *Omeka*'s modular architecture and rich API empower people with a range of programming skills to participate in its open source community and expand its capabilities by adding specialized metadata element sets and plugins. Plugins bring Web 2.0 technologies and approaches to academic and cultural websites that foster user participation. Currently available as a server installable download, starting in late-2009 *Omeka* will also be available as a low- or no-cost subscription web service at *Omeka.net*.

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## **Sites Built with Omeka**

(For a complete list see: [http://omeka.org/codex/View\\_Sites\\_Powered\\_by\\_Omeka](http://omeka.org/codex/View_Sites_Powered_by_Omeka))

\* **Bracero History Archive:** <http://braceroarchive.org>, Center for History and New Media, the Smithsonian National Museum of American History, Brown University, and The Institute of Oral History at the University of Texas at El Paso

\* **Catawba River Docs:** <http://www.catawbariverdocs.com>, Light Factory and Cultural Heritage Museums

\* **Gulag: Many Days, Many Lives:** <http://gulaghistory.org>, Center for History and New Media in partnership with the Gulag Museum at Perm 36, Perm, Russia and the International Memorial Society, Moscow, Russia

\* **Hawaiian Historical Society Historical Photographs:** <http://huapala.net/>, Hawaiian Historical Society

\* **Hurricane Digital Memory Bank:** <http://hurricanearchive.org>, Center for History and New Media and the University of New Orleans

\* **Lincoln at 200:** <http://lincolnat200.org>, Newberry Library and Chicago History Museum

\* **A Look Back at Braddock District:** <http://braddockheritage.org>, Braddock District, Fairfax, Virginia and the Center for History and New Media

\* **The Object of History:** <http://objectofhistory.org>, Smithsonian Institution National Museum of American History and the Center for History and New Media

\* **Upper Ringwood Collections:** <http://www.upperringwood.org/index.php>, Ringwood Public Library, New Jersey

\* **Yaddo:** <http://exhibitions.nypl.org/exhibits/yaddo>, New York Public Library

## Omeka Feature List

- **Free, open-source, digital publishing suite for scholars, librarians, archivists, museum professionals, and cultural enthusiasts**
  - Publish archives, collections, exhibits, teaching materials; and provide ways for the public to interact with your sites.
- **No contracts or annual fees**
  - Download and use the software for free.
- **Easy to use**
  - Its “five-minute setup” makes launching an Omeka site as easy as launching a blog.
  - Omeka is designed with non-IT specialists in mind, allowing users to focus on content and interpretation rather than programming.
  - Omeka is a web application, making it accessible from any computer or mobile device with an internet connection.
  - Users say Omeka is “simple,” “logical,” and “unscary.”
- **Strong community of documentation and support**
  - Learn to use Omeka with step-by-step tutorials and screencasts available in the documentation.
  - Connect with other Omeka users and the Omeka team through end user forums and developer discussion lists.
- **Extensible, scalable, and flexible**
  - Omeka can handle large archives of metadata and files (with over 100,000 items). The only limitations are on your own server.
  - Element sets for institution-specific metadata may be added.
  - Zend framework for PHP allows for customization.
  - Omeka accepts and stores all types of files, including images, video, audio, multi-page documents and PDFs, Power Point presentations, et al. Individual items may contain multiple files.

## Features

- **Standards-based metadata and web design**
  - Every item and file contains fields for Unqualified Dublin Core elements. Dublin Core is an internationally-recognized and widely-adopted schema.
  - Omeka comes packaged with design themes that follow best practices in accessible web design and are section 508 compliant.
- **Customizable Web Design**
  - Omeka's pre-packaged design themes can be quickly modified.
  - Custom themes can be built using Omeka's flexible API and documentation.
- **Interoperable**
  - Unqualified Dublin Core data, combined with Omeka-generated feeds and OAI-PMH harvestable data, give Omeka sites the ability to share data among different systems and with other Omeka sites.
- **Data Migration**
  - Populate an Omeka site by adding items individually or batch add using data migration tools, such as the OAI-PMH harvester and CSV importer plugins.
- **Re-Purposing Content**
  - Enter or import item metadata once, and use items and metadata in multiple instances across website.
  - Items may appear in multiple exhibits.
- **Exhibit building**
  - Create rich, interpretive exhibits that combine items in your Omeka site with narrative text. An item may be used in multiple exhibits.

## Features

- **Create and organize items into collections.**
- **Tag items and exhibits with keywords.**
  - Items and exhibits may contain an infinite number of tags.
- **Publish non-Roman characters.**
  - Omeka supports Unicode (UTF-8) that allows users to build sites with non-Roman characters, including scientific symbols, that display properly in web browsers.
- **Plot individual items on a Google map with the Geolocation plugin.**
- **Syndicate Omeka site content with RSS and Atom feeds.**
- **Reporting**
  - Create customized reports with a simple HTML export, or PDF export that prints QR Codes.
- **Extend core functionality through plugins**
  - Omeka's plugin API makes development of plugins to suit the needs of your project quick and easy.

## Visitor Experience with an Omeka site

See Omeka Showcase for examples of site designs and experiences possible with an Omeka site: <http://omeka.org/showcase>

- Visitors with a variety of web browsers and internet bandwidth can access your site because packaged themes are designed to be ADA compliant (section 508).
- Visitors have multiple access points to browse your content by items, collections, tag clouds, a Google map, and exhibits.
- Advanced searching allows anyone to conduct simple keyword searches or to refine searches to any Dublin Core metadata field, tag, item type, or collection.
- Pre-packaged design themes offer logical website architecture for easy site navigation.
- Invite the public to contribute content and comment on items with Contribution and Simple Comment plugins.
- Visitors may follow updates to your site's content with RSS and Atom feeds.
- Visitors may personalize favorite items and annotate those items with MyOmeka plugin.
- Researchers can easily insert items and metadata into their Zotero libraries.
- Let visitors share collection items they like with their social networks by adding the Social Bookmarking plugin.
- Invite users in galleries to dig deeper and access additional object information stored in Omeka via QR Codes (square bar codes).