

Spotlight Breakout

Facilitated by Jessie Keck (Stanford)

Jessie: *Who is working with Spotlight or thinking about it?*

- John (U of Michigan): Using Omeka but interested
- Lynne (UC Berkeley): In development
- Linda (U of Cincinnati): Interest to avoid using Omeka
- (?): About to use Omeka but interested
- Christian (Royal Library of Denmark): In development

Questions from the group

Christian: *Is there a reason to use Blacklight if using Spotlight?*

- Jessie: Spotlight's admin interface provide a GUI to make it easy to customize the facet labels, etc. Those same things can be configured via the Ruby code in Blacklight but are easier to work with in Spotlight. And the configuration selections made in Spotlight are serialized and stored in the database.
- We anticipate a future conversation to talk about abstracting out things like the GUI configuration for use in core Blacklight.
- There are applications such as a library catalog (e.g. SearchWorks at Stanford) where you want customized results views, for example, that the Spotlight result views don't provide. So that's a good case where you want Blacklight but not Spotlight.
- Linda: A way to think of it is that Spotlight presents content in "an opinionated" manner, but there are use cases for presenting content in an unopinionated manner.
- Sure.

Linda: *It seems like the underlying concept behind Spotlight as a "digital exhibits" tool could be expanded to provide features that wouldn't be considered a digital exhibit.*

- Jessie: True. We've been using "digital exhibits" as a convenient label for Spotlight but we agree it could have broader uses beyond exhibits.

John: *Could Spotlight be useful if you just want to provide access to a large collection of items, but not necessarily with any curatorial description?*

- Jessie: We typically would do that in our search catalog. But Spotlight does provide a feature called browse categories that are saved searches that you can optionally add text to. So you could use Spotlight to split up a larger collection into smaller browse category collections to give users access to them without having to add curatorial description.
- You have the option in Spotlight to create very minimal exhibits with no curatorial text, or even to use the configuration to turn off the facets and searchbox so it isn't a searchable site.

Gordon? (U of Michigan): *Is a Spotlight a solution for a use case where a professor wants to create a Spotlight site for a course, and potentially have students contribute to it?*

- Tony (Stanford): Yes, one of Spotlight sites in production at Stanford ([Digital Manuscripts at Stanford](#)) was created by a post-doc and involved working with a course.
- (?) It seems feasible to add learning management system integration.
- (?) Avalon has this.

Linda: *If we have to maintain multiple Spotlights with multiple Solr indexes doesn't that increase required resources?*

- Chris: At Stanford, we create a separate application for each Spotlight exhibit and it doesn't seem like that approach requires significantly more resources than a multi-tenant approach.

(Linda?): *How are exhibits themselves discovered?*

- Jessie: At Stanford, we plan to augment the catalog record for items to indicate which exhibits they are part of, so exhibits would be discoverable through SearchWorks, our main library catalog.
- We also have a site at exhibits.stanford.edu that lists our Spotlight exhibits in production.