

Title of Talk:

Virtual Local Repositories

Presenters:

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Abstract:

A viable repository system is often out of reach for smaller cultural institutions due to the financial costs and technical expertise usually associated with such software. But does every institution actually need its own local repository? Why not instead reap the benefits of contributing digital objects to a larger regional system and use APIs and other tools to create a “virtual” local repository? This talk will look at the case of Digital Commonwealth (<http://www.digitalcommonwealth.org>), a statewide repository system which hosts and aggregates content from over 100 libraries, archives, and museums across Massachusetts, and the turn-key “virtual repository” application that allows member institutions to re-use that content locally.

The primary examples shown in the talk will be on customized, branded virtual repositories for the Boston Public Library and Norman B. Leventhal Map Center, two institutions that have digital objects hosted within the Digital Commonwealth repository. While their data may exist within a statewide system designed to leverage economies of scale with regards to preservation and access, the content has been integrated it into each institution’s web presence as if it was stored locally. Once public deployment of those two Virtual Local Repositories (VLRs) is complete in the next few months, we plan to roll out the option to other member institutions.

While conceptually not limited to a specific technology, our implementation is based on Fedora/Hydra/Blacklight.