

New “Exhibit” Data Publishing Tool Released

MIT Libraries and Zepheira complete “Exhibit 3.0” software project

A grant from the United States [Library of Congress](#) has funded development of a new version of [Exhibit](#), the popular open source software tool developed at MIT to help people search, browse and visualize data on the Web. [The MIT Libraries](#) and [Zepheira, LLC](#) have enhanced the tool to create “Exhibit 3.0”, with support for much larger data collections and a number of new features requested by the community. Exhibit 3.0 will be useful for a wide range of organizations that manage and publish data collections of all types and sizes – particularly libraries, cultural institutions and other organizations grappling with large amounts of digital content will benefit from Exhibit 3.0.

“This innovative work has already made a considerable impact on digital content communities whose data is diverse and complex. The visualizations bring new understanding to users and curators alike,” said Martha Anderson, Director of Program Management at the Library of Congress.

Exhibit was originally developed as part of the MIT [Simile Project](#), a collaboration of the MIT Libraries, the MIT CSAIL, and the [World Wide Web Consortium \(W3C\)](#) to explore applications of the [Semantic Web](#) to problems of information management across both large-scale digital libraries and small-scale personal collections. Exhibit runs inside a Web browser and supports many types of information using common Web standards for data publishing.

Since its release, Exhibit has been used by thousands of websites worldwide across a range of diverse industries and institutions. For example, Exhibit was used by [Data.gov](#), an Open Government Initiative by President Obama's administration to increase public access to high value data generated by the Executive Branch of the Federal Government. It also underpins the Library of Congress's own [Viewshare](#) Website that allows data producers across the cultural heritage community to publish their collections on a shared platform. “The web provides a common platform for reducing the social and technical costs for sharing and reusing data,” said Eric Miller, President of Zepheira. “Viewshare is the result of applying the power of the web to help address the preservation needs of the digital cultural heritage community.”

The Exhibit 3.0 project redesigned and re-implemented Exhibit to scale from small collections to very large data collections of the magnitude created by the Library of Congress and its National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program (NDIIPP). The redesigned Exhibit is as simple to use as its predecessor but is more scalable, more modular, and easier to integrate into a variety of information management systems and websites—making it valuable to an even larger audience of individuals and organizations publishing information on the Web.

Exhibit 3.0, as with the previous versions, is free and open source software supported by the community of its users around the world. Adopters of Exhibit are encouraged to participate in the community by sharing information about their use of the tool, supporting each other, and contributing improvements to the open source software.

“Exhibit has been a great help to libraries around the world to publish and promote their impressive digital collections, including catalogs, datasets and digital libraries. And given the limited resources libraries have to develop and customize software, an easy-to-use, free and open source software tool like Exhibit is critical to our ability to get our collections out on the Web. But library collections are often very large, so the new, scalable version of Exhibit will make it useful to a much wider audience,” said MacKenzie Smith, Research Director at the MIT Libraries and the project’s PI.

For more information see <http://simile-widgets.org/exhibit3>