CONTENTdm September 2017 Release Notes

Release date: September 14, 2017

Overview

This release brings support for the International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF) Presentation API to CONTENTdm®. Coupled with previous support for the IIIF Image API, CONTENTdm sites now serve as a platform for IIIF-compliant image viewers, such as Mirador and the Universal Viewer. For more information about IIIF, see http://iiif.io/.

This release also includes some significant improvements to the management of advanced website customizations. We have greatly increased the power of the graphic web editors in the responsive Website Configuration Tool so that you can do more using the UI of the editor. We have also standardized the class names in the HTML of the responsive website to make managing custom CSS significantly easier and future proof.

The responsive website adapts to any screen size and has significant usability, performance, and accessibility improvements. The responsive website is production-ready and is now the default end-user website for more than 50 active CONTENTdm users.

A note on the new responsive website

The CONTENTdm responsive website exists alongside the 6.x CONTENTdm website. Your public CONTENTdm URL will default to your version 6.x website until you request to make the switch. When you are ready for your end users to start using the new responsive website, contact OCLC Support to schedule the upgrade.

OCLC is continually improving the responsive website and is no longer enhancing the 6.x website. You decide when you and your end users are ready to start using your responsive site. Please see the document Upgrading to the CONTENTdm Responsive Website for more details about what to consider before requesting your upgrade.
Features and enhancements

This release continues to add features to the new CONTENTdm responsive website. These are the improvements described in more detail below.

- IIIF Presentation API support, which allows you to leverage the work of the IIIF community
- More HTML and CSS options in the graphic web editors, so you can create more sophisticated customizations without being a web developer
- Friendlier HTML class names that make it easier for you to use custom CSS to match the style of your library site or other sites you manage
- Support for line feeds in all metadata fields gives you more control over the display of metadata
- Accessibility improvements to increase WCAG 2.0 compliance

IIIF Presentation API support means that your CONTENTdm site is now a platform for IIIF-based viewers and data visualizations

The IIIF is a vital community with the goal of standardizing how digital repositories can be accessed on the open web. They have produced high-quality APIs to provide a consistent mechanism for custom image viewers to display digital collections. CONTENTdm added support for the IIIF Image API last October and has now added support for the IIIF Presentation API. Taken together, these two APIs provide the backbone of a platform for supporting end-user viewers, such as Mirador and Universal Viewer.

The Mirador project (see http://projectmirador.org) is an end-user image viewer that gives your end users the power to see multiple images in one window, even if those images are coming from separate digital repositories.
Any repository that supports the IIIF Image and Presentation APIs can load their records to an instance of the Mirador viewer. This is an excellent tool for scholars who want to compare high-resolution images either from the same or different digital repositories.

The Universal Viewer (see https://github.com/UniversalViewer/universalviewer) is a project focused on the display of multi-page documents, such as manuscripts. It offers a document-focused UI and includes a book reader mode and thumbnail navigation.

Both Mirador and Universal Viewer are being actively developed and improved. It is possible to use CONTENTdm data with both viewers as of the September release. We are also working to support the direct integration of Mirador into your CONTENTdm instance. It is possible to integrate Mirador now, but it is somewhat complex. We are working to make this integration easier to achieve using the Website Configuration Tool.

Even if you haven’t integrated Mirador into your CONTENTdm instance, you and your users will still be able to visualize your CONTENTdm data in any live instance of Mirador because it offers an “add by URL” option. You can experiment with how this works using the official Mirador demo site, http://projectmirador.org/demo/.

**Additional HTML and CSS options in the graphic web editors allow you to create more sophisticated customizations without a web developer**

The responsive Website Configuration Tool provides a graphic web editor tool in several of the custom page sections (i.e., home page, collection landing pages, about page). This web editor now supports more advanced HTML tags and will preserve class names so that you can style your customizations to match the rest of your site’s branding. These additional options make the graphic web editors significantly more powerful in terms of how complex your customizations can be. This means you can use the toolbar options to create quite sophisticated custom page content without needing to know how to produce custom HTML, JavaScript, and CSS.

**Friendlier HTML class names make it easier for you to use custom CSS to match styles across websites**

The responsive website had been using class names in the HTML that included a randomized character sequence as a hash. These class names were difficult to work with and would also change with each release, making custom CSS more difficult to work with. In this release, these class names have been changed to follow a standard, predictable structure, and the randomized hashes have been eliminated. This makes customizing using CSS a lot easier, and it also future proofs your customizations in subsequent releases of CONTENTdm.

Note that you may need to update your custom CSS rules if you have already started using the old class names. With this shift to a standard class name syntax, this will be the last time you will need to update your CSS to align with the responsive website HTML.
Support for line breaks in all metadata fields gives you more control over the display of metadata

If you have metadata that is easier to understand with a forced line break, the responsive website will now honor that line break in the Item Description and Object Description section of the item view page. Line breaks were already honored in the Transcript metadata section. This change means that the HTML <BR> tag is no longer needed to force a new line in the UI. Putting HTML into text metadata has never been a good practice due to incompatibilities with harvesters and metadata exports, and now it is no longer necessary.

If you have used <BR> tags in the past, please contact OCLC Support to ask about converting those <BR> tags to standard line feeds. We have created some scripts that can scour your existing collections and transform those HTML sequences into line feed characters. Note that this relates only to the responsive website, so you should not request this metadata change until you are ready to upgrade to the responsive website (or if you already have).

Also note that Controlled Vocabulary fields already have some automatic line break functionality built into them. If you have added multiple terms to a field with a Controlled Vocabulary, each term will display on its own line automatically. There is no need for additional <BR> tags or line feed characters in Controlled Vocabulary fields.

The most common use case for manual line breaks is to align a transcription with the arrangement of the text on the original document (e.g., poetry with short lines). Another good use of manual line breaks is large blocks of text (e.g., abstracts or summaries) that can be difficult to read as a single, large paragraph, especially on small phone screens.

Accessibility improvements lead to better WCAG 2.0 compliance

- Menu item color contrast increased to boost legibility for those with low visual acuity
- Tab order and button focus corrected for easier navigation when using screen readers
- Button labels in image viewer reworded for clarity in screen readers
- Links corrected that were missing labels
- Ability to close modal windows with <ESC> key added

Other miscellaneous improvements

- HTTPS requests in the 6.10 website interface are now redirected to HTTP.
- Website Configuration Tool's Responsive “Preview” mode no longer overlaps the page being previewed.
- Option now available to support Turkish in the Website Configuration Tool’s language options for the responsive website.
- Copyright symbols and other encoded special characters now display properly.
- Sites with fewer than 10 collections now show the correct total number of cards on the home page.
• Website Configuration Tool responsive home page settings no longer give error about missing HTML file when saving changes.
• Background 404 error no longer displays when custom JavaScript has been removed.
• Audio and video players in the 6.10 website now function as expected after several web browsers changed the way they supported streaming content.

Upgrading to the new responsive website

After you have configured your responsive website in the Website Configuration Tool and are ready to publish it as your production website, contact OCLC Support and request that the responsive website be set as your default CONTENTdm home page. Please see the document Upgrading to the CONTENTdm Responsive Website for more information about upgrading your site.

Looking ahead

We have many more improvements slated for upcoming releases of CONTENTdm. What follows are some of the things that we are currently considering for the next release in October or November 2017.

• Support for fully custom collection landing pages
• Support for the direct integration of the Mirador viewer into your CONTENTdm website
• More options for adding menu items to the main site navigation
• Options to point CONTENTdm pages to external URLs (e.g., your library website)
• Support for the CONTENTdm data API when building customizations in the responsive website

Not all these items will necessarily be completed by the next release. We are always looking to you to help us determine the priority of new features, improvements, and bug fixes. If one of the above issues is urgent for your site, or if another issue entirely is more important, please contact OCLC Support with that information. You are also invited to post your ideas to the CONTENTdm Community as a discussion thread or an enhancement suggestion. The OCLC Community Center is a good place to bring in feedback from different institutions that may have the same needs as yours.