

Arca Admins Meeting Notes

Dec. 13, 2023

1. Migration update:

- Where we're at:
 - Arca Office has been working with Arca Admins to get controlled metadata organized – most critical items (dates, genres) have been resolved.
 - Metadata consistency and accuracy will be a key piece of your site being ready to migrate
 - Will be working more closely with individual sites on metadata once we set up the migration schedule
 - Signed contract with discoverygarden, hoping to get work going soon
 - Made a deal with SFU Cloud Services for our expanded infrastructure:
 - Moving from 4 servers shared by all members to 30 members each with their own server means higher costs; however, the Arca Office has negotiated a very good deal with SFU Cloud.
- What's coming:
 - After working out the project plan with discoverygarden, the Arca Office will post an action plan in the new year to the Arca Support Site. Action plan will cover major milestones and approximate timelines, to share progress and keep Arca Admins informed.
 - Then, we'll be building out the base servers that your new repositories are going to live in
 - Once we have the groundwork laid, we will be in touch with you all about scheduling the migration of your sites
 - We'll be doing one at a time, as this is going to be a learning process, which will be refined as we go
 - Planning to start with the smallest and least-complex sites first
 - Criteria for scheduling will be based on a combination of the complexity of your repository, and your readiness to migrate (eg how standardized your metadata is)
 - In the meantime, we will be sending out some more calls for input around default configurations – there are a few default settings that we will want to settle on
 - Things like default paths for objects, PIDs, pre-made pages, user roles, facets, etc.

2. Service Support update:

At the November Arca Advisory Committee meeting, the committee approved a migration budget, and a plan for service support over the next few years.

- Migration Budget:

- Of the \$500,000 funding from Ministry for the migration, \$400,000 is coming this fiscal year, and \$100,000 in 2024-25 fiscal
- In 2024-25, an estimated shortfall of around \$44,000
 - Primarily due to the USD exchange rate
 - Arca Office has made a deal with discoverygarden to cap the exchange rate at 1.35, which protects us in case rates get worse
- The Advisory Committee decided on two actions to address the shortfall:
 - First, to approach Ministry to request an increase to our funding
 - If that approach is not successful, the Arca Office has been instructed to explore approaches to implementing a one time “migration fee”
- Migration expenditures are based on hours of work done, and these could potentially come in below the quoted amount, as the Arca Office and Arca Admins contribute time to ensure migration is smooth. Whether this contingency is needed will not be known until further into the project
- If a migration fee is needed, it would not be until the 2024-25 fiscal year
- Service support from 2024-27:
 - New infrastructure means improved performance, but higher costs. However, the Arca Advisory Committee has approved a plan to keep service support costs close to status quo
 - Historically Arca support fees have increased annually, between 0% and 5%. The Advisory Committee has planned on a 5% annual increase for the next few years, which is in keeping with typical BC ELN rates.
 - A 5% increase means that next year’s Service Support will be \$5,795 – an increase of \$27
 - One change to the service support approach:
 - In the past, storage fees were not subject to the inflationary increase
 - Higher infrastructure costs, which will now increase with inflation, mean that storage fees will be subject to an annual increase, going forward from 2025-26
 - The storage fee percentage increase will match the service support fee increase each year
 - SFU Cloud remains an excellent deal for Arca: a single Arca server set up in AWS would cost approximately \$8,400 USD per year for each Arca member, with extra costs for storage
- Official notice of the 2024-25 service support fee will be sent after the Advisory Committee minutes are released, which should be next week

Questions:

- When you mention 5% increases effective for storage in fiscal 25 and then you mentioned subsequent years, is it 5% every year for next 3-5 years?
 - BW: The storage fee increase will match the service support fee increase each year. This will not take effect until April 2025. As annual service fees increase, the storage fee will also increase.
- You mentioned after migration, we will each have our own server so one going down won't affect others?
 - BW: Correct. In our current infrastructure, problems at one site can impact all sites. In our future environment, if there's an issue with one site, other sites will be unaffected. This also applies to DDoS attacks.
- Is our new system architecture hosted by discoverygarden, or do we need to build our own servers?
 - BW: We are still hosted by SFU and their cloud environment. The only difference will be a higher cost, because we are using more resources. Physical servers remain at the SFU campus, local hosting and privacy protection remain intact. Discoverygarden will continue to provide maintenance and higher level technical support.

3. Theming update:

Sasha has been coordinating a group of interested Arca Admins to identify theming requirements and needs.

- Theming group findings:
 - No code changes needed to the base theme; mainly questions about block placements and similar
 - Main outcome will be documentation of how to do things that people want to do
 - Next step: finding out what people want to do
- Footer:
 - A standard low-profile footer with Arca branding will be required on all sites
 - Can be placed below an institutional footer or anything else you want in the footer
 - A mockup can be seen on <https://bceln-demo.i8.dgicloud.com/>; this will be refined for the final version.
- Mattermost as migration communication tool:
 - An open source Slack alternative, can be accessed via the browser or a desktop app
 - Have been using Mattermost to communicate with the theming group; proposing to make use of it more broadly with Arca Admins for communication about the migration

- Question to group: Would you use this?
 - Result: General enthusiasm in the chat for using Mattermost
- **ACTION for all Arca Admins:** Submit use cases to the webform on arca.bcelnapps.ca.
- **Next Step for Arca Office:** Send Mattermost invitations to Arca migration contacts (January 2024)

Questions/comments

- Are there ways to “theme” specific collections? (Example given was to have images/descriptions for some and not others)
 - BW: Sounds like a configuration task; please send use cases like this through the webform so we can investigate and document.
- Can search be configured to individual collections?
 - BW: This is possible both in the new environment and in our current site, with configuration. (Please contact the Arca Office to discuss.)
- For accessibility, are we going to WCAG compliant and at what level? This is an organizational directive.
 - BW: That is the plan. DGI has told us their base theme is WCAG (2.0 or 2.1) compliant. A big part of accessibility compliance is up to you, in terms of ensuring that essential descriptive metadata is present on your objects (e.g. alt text for images). There are default alt text that is poorly set in the basic Islandora, which you have to configure yourself to work properly. The community is working on this to make it better. Theme-wise, we are WCAG-compliant.
- Any changes to the individual record (item) display/view other than font/colours? IIIF viewers or anything of that sort? Will look and feel for objects be different? Tried 3-D viewers in current Islandora and looks terrible.
 - BW: Specific work has been done on 3D viewers in the new platform. Basic viewers can be seen on the demo site; exploring other existing Islandora sites to get a better sense of what viewers looks like is encouraged. Mirador viewer for paged objects is not installed on the demo site, but will be in our new environment.
- Re: metadata tidying... is there a way to work in spreadsheets for bulk remediation? Or just not with XML? I know it was desired to use the Find and Replace option initially; is that still okay?
 - BW: The Find and Replace module is not recommended, because it can break your site. What I do recommend is using Islandora Datastreams I/O to bulk export your records, edit the XML using something like BB Edit, then re-import as zip back into your repository. (See instructions in the support site.)
 - So that’s a no to spreadsheets?
 - BW: It is possible to make spreadsheet-based updates using Islandora Multi-Importer, but the setup is extremely complex and difficult to get

correct. The hierarchical structure of the metadata does not play well with spreadsheets. It would require a lot of work on your side to prepare it and make it work.