# Hydra: making the case and getting going

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# Getting involved with Hydra

- Getting involved with Hydra can be at different levels
    - Adopter
    - Developer
    - Partner
- Need to ask:
    - What involvement is required to enable you to meet your needs?
- But also,
    - What benefit can you gain from getting actively involved?

# Making the case

- Building the case for any content management software solution needs to address a range of criteria
  - Functional
  - Community
  - Technical
  - Staff
  - Financial
  - Legal
  - Sustainability
  - …other?

# Functional

- Hydra development (Hydra heads) have demonstrated a wide range of capabilities for managing different types of content
  - And the flexibility to adjust to local needs
- Solution bundles are emerging to enable more rapid 'out of the box' implementation
  - But the software can also be adapted to fit needs
    - *(adaptations fed back make the solution richer!)*
- Functionality can also be built from the ground-up to meet needs

# Community

- Hydra's community is vital for its ongoing development
  - Much effort continues to go into ensuring this grows sustainably
- It exists because we have a shared issue with regard to repository development
- Working together toward a shared purpose, and developing a shared approach
- Active discussion lists/meetings covering all topics
- We are a community that wants to know each other!
- Community reduces risk and broadens knowledgebase

No single system can provide the full range of repository-based solutions for a given institution's needs,

...yet sustainable solutions require a common repository infrastructure.

No single institution can resource the development of a full range of solutions on its own,

...yet each needs the flexibility to tailor solutions to local demands and workflows.

# Technical

- Shared development platform through github
- Test-driven software development
  - Nothing gets in without full tests showing code does what it is supposed to
- Ruby on Rails offers a highly flexible environment for creating solutions and rapid development
  - Very well resourced global library of components (gems) to tap into
- Very active and responsive developer community
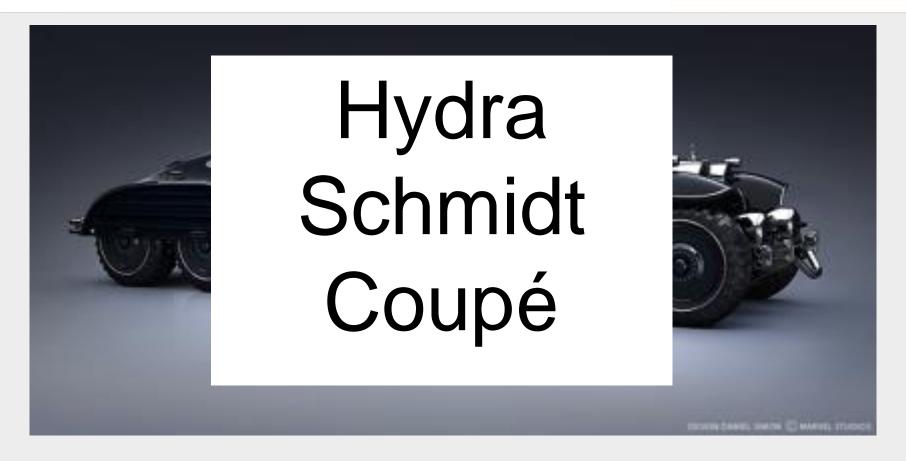- Well structured code contribution and licensing

# Staff

- Staffing required will depend on your aims
- Hydra Partner staffing varies
  - 7-8 staff at Stanford, single developers at Rock'n'Roll and Hull
- Never limited by local staffing
  - Community input available additionally
- Vendor support available for initial implementation or specific development
- Good to blend technical and curatorial staff as part of development and operation

# Hydra Schmidt Coupé

Made up from different components
functionality, community, technology and staffing

# Financial – the petrol

- Hydra is open source software
  - Free to use, under the Apache 2.0 licence
- Investment will be according to scale of need
  - Developer resource
  - Repository management resource
  - Hardware / Training / Vendor support
- Additional costs in more active involvement
  - But worth investment to make progress together
- Save money cf. sustaining a local solution
  - And help others as others have helped you

# Legal – the oil

- Apache 2.0 licence previously mentioned
- All contributions are made under a Contributor Licensing Agreement, granting a perpetual licence to the Hydra Project – based on Apache
  - Corporate
  - Individual
- All documentation is shared using a CC-BY-SA Creative Commons Licence
- Partners sign an MoU highlighting expectations and requirements of Partnership

# Sustainability

- Hydra initially set itself up as a project for three years
- The project recognised the need to establish a community and mode of practice for the technology outcome to be sustained
- Community interest and now involvement have led to an indefinite continuation of Hydra
  - 3 -> 22 Partners in 4 years, plus other users
- Dynamic combination of the factors mentioned in this presentation, all underpinned by mutual desire to ensure Hydra's future sustainability

# So Why Hydra?

- The community (and the partners involved)
  - More than the sum of our parts
- The scope for collaboration
  - Identify and work together on common needs
- The Ruby on Rails codebase
  - Common software development process
- The modular make-up of components
  - Not siloed or tied down
- The use of Blacklight
  - Flexible discovery interface

# Getting going

# Getting going

- Once decided to pursue Hydra, how to get involved?
  - The same breakdown can be applied
    - Functional
    - Community
    - Technical
    - Staff
- The resources are there for you to go ahead and get going by yourself
- It would be great if you joined in and made progress with the community

# Functional

- Decide on the aim and scope of your initial project
  - Start with a high level story, and breakdown into component stages of activity
- Decide on the metadata to be used and how objects within your collection(s) will be organised
- Define the workflow steps you need to achieve the stages you are aiming for

- Do ask others in the community if you have questions
  - hydra-users or hydra-tech lists

# Community

- Make use of the available resources
    - Website
    - Wiki
    - Github
    - Email discussion lists
- Identify a Hydra Partner doing similar work and get in touch
- Identify need for vendor input and make contact to discuss options
- Come to events (like this one!) – also Hydra Connect

# Technical

- Start with the github site for Hydra gem
  - http://github.com/projecthydra/hydra
  - Use the Dive into Hydra tutorial
  - Railsbridge tutorial also good for those new to Ruby
- Distinct heads and gems are available through the github site as well – http://github.com/projecthydra
- Use hydra-tech and the projecthydra IRC channel to see latest developments and ask questions
- Attend training
  - Hydra Camps - ~3 a year, at least one in Europe

# Staff

- A certain knowledge set is required to work with Hydra
    - Technical knowledge through training and testing
    - Functional knowledge through awareness of collection(s) and how they should be curated
- Focus on working according to the Hydra Way
    - Enabling, for all concerned
    - Working together across institutions
- Work out what you need in-house and what you need to call on from outside
- NB. We have all worked through this – you are not alone

# A word of (polite) warning

- Hydra is open source – anyone can use it freely

- Working with Hydra is not, though, free
    - As in 'puppies are not free'
    - It requires investment
        - Towards achieving a goal
        - Towards sustaining a solution

- Hydra recognises this and is seeking to provide a way to invest in a mutual direction of travel – come with us!

# Thank you

...and questions