

# Connecting Presidential Collections

PresidentialCollections.org



Thanks to a planning grant from the IMLS, we're creating a beta product to build partner relationships, assess technological options, and draft policies with the goal of increasing visibility of all presidential materials.



## The Problem

Presidential materials are spread across libraries and museums throughout the country.



Users visit many locations, search within varied systems, and get inconsistent results.

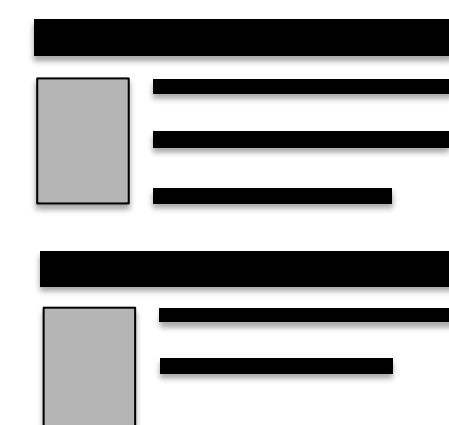
## The Solution

Many sources...

one database, one search...

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complete and orderly results!

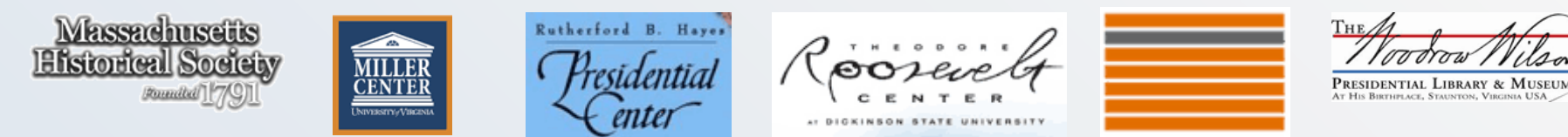


We receive metadata from our partners which contains descriptive information about their collections. Then, using *just one* search, users can find relevant digital objects no matter where they are located. When users are ready to learn more, they click through to see the object or find out how to access it.

**The project will unify search for our users and drive traffic to partner sites!**

## Initial Partners, Partial Collections

- Massachusetts Historical Society, MA
- Presidential Oral History Program, Miller Center, VA
- Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center, OH
- Theodore Roosevelt Center, ND
- The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza, TX
- Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library, VA



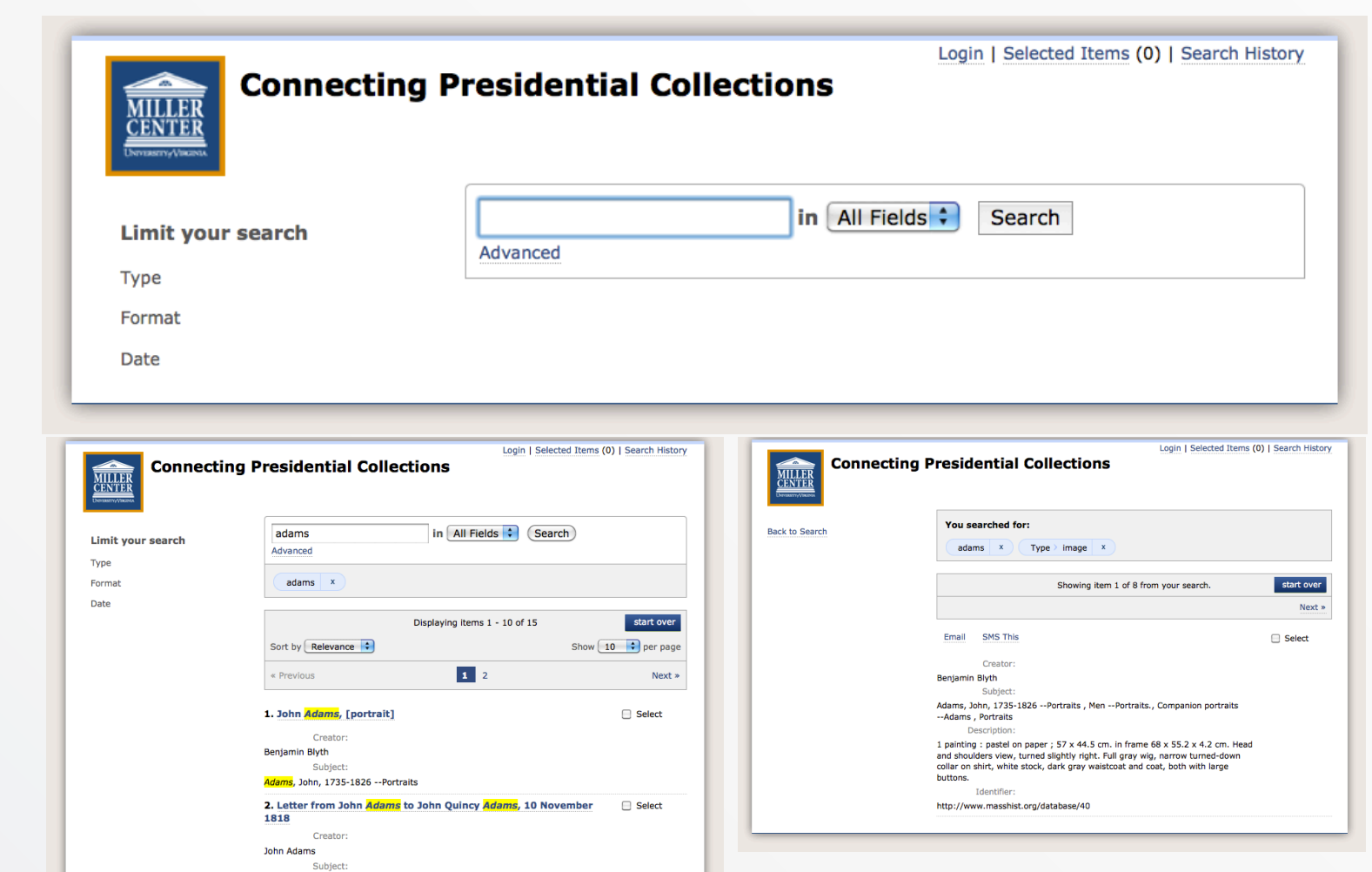
## Technology Choices

- Dublin Core: Versatile metadata standard
- XSLT transformations: Create consistent XML in Dublin Core
- Solr: Faceted indexing allows for multiple collections and easy, effective searches
- Blacklight: User-friendly discovery interface

## Partner Relationships

- Collaborative environment
- Partners choose which collections to include
- Partners retain ownership and rights

## Beta Product



## Challenges and Open Questions

### Partners tend to have widely varied...

- object types: images, furniture, letters, speeches, multimedia files
- technical description standards: Dublin Core, MARC, proprietary systems
- accepted practices: date format, subject headings, level of specificity
- ability to provide metadata: XML file, Excel spreadsheet, 3rd-party tools

There are limitations related to our technical choice to use Solr and Blacklight, including the fact that no "built-in" staff have suitable expertise.

**Perhaps most important:** Our relationship with partners is crucial. The project is meant to provide benefit to the community, not compete with it. It's vital that we clearly communicate and carefully steward our role as the hub of presidential materials, intending to drive traffic and public interest to *all* content providers.

### Ongoing questions

- How can we best convey our role as aggregator (not owner) of content?
- Can we help partners find financial and technical resources to enable participation?
- How do we best keep the data up to date? How frequently do we update?
- How do we encourage best practices in ways that recognize partner realities?
- What structures can we establish to ensure sustainability?