

Commons Update

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WIKIMEDIA
FOUNDATION

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How We Started

As part of the WMF's Annual Planning Process (APP) for FY 2022 we committed to "**deepen our commitment to Knowledge as a Service** by strengthening how we prioritize and allocate product and tech support to 740+ Wikimedia projects, starting with Wikimedia Commons and Wikidata."

See [Wikimedia Foundation Annual Plan/2022-2023 - Meta](#) for more information.

Our Approach

1. Start by listening to the needs of the Community
2. Outline some key focus areas to begin digging into
3. Determine how to iteratively and incrementally deliver on a few priorities
4. Evaluate progress, challenges, and lessons learned
5. Work with the community to address and move forward

See [Wikimedia Foundation Annual Plan/2022-2023 - Meta](#) for more information.

Listening to Community Needs & Identifying Key Focus Areas

Based on our listening tour and conversations with the [Commons Community](#), we identified 2 key areas of focus:

1. Address user top pain points for **adding images**; for example: supporting work on the bulk upload issues.
2. Close the gaps with **image data**; for example: fix bugs for structured data.

Product & Tech Priorities

Targeted Product & Technical Projects based on key areas:

1. OpenRefine Commons Bulk Upload Tool Support
2. Improving Thumbor
3. Improvements to Structured Data

Additionally we are also exploring:

4. Supporting different users, partners, institutions, community members, etc. that are using Commons to help understand and potentially resolve challenges
5. How to improve discovery of community-maintained tools & gadgets

Product & Tech Priorities

OpenRefine Bulk Upload Tool

The Goal: Provide low-code/no-code tool that enables bulk editing of existing structured data on Commons + bulk uploading images with structured data.

Target Impact: By describing Wikimedia Commons files with structured data from Wikidata, the descriptions become multilingual and machine-readable.

Status: [OpenRefine v3.7-beta2](#) was released in December

For More Info:

[Grants:Project/CS&S/Structured Data on Wikimedia Commons functionalities in OpenRefine/Final - Meta](#)

The screenshot shows the OpenRefine interface for a bulk upload tool. The title bar indicates "OpenRefine Kittens playing" with a permalink. The main area displays "36 records" and a table with columns: "All", "title", "depicts", "copyright license", and "Wikitext". The "copyright license" facet is expanded on the left, showing 9 choices sorted by name and count. The table shows three records with their respective Wikitext values, including descriptions and categories.

id	title	depicts	copyright license	Wikitext
1.	File:Cat when playing.jpg	kitten	GNU Free Documentation License, version 1.2 or later	[[[:en:File:Cat when playing.jpg]]] My photo of my cat Tippi when is playing. {{#if:license-header}} {{GFDL migration=relicense}} [[Category:Kittens playing]] [[Category:Files by Broc]] [[Category:Media missing infobox template]]
2.	File:2006-07-03 Katze1.jpg	kitten	Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 2.5 Generic	[[[:en:File:2006-07-03 Katze1.jpg]]] [[Information]] [[Description:cat, 7 weeks old]] [[Source:{{Own}}]] [[Date:2006-07-03]] [[Author=Stephan Czurat]] [[Permission=CC-BY-SA-2.5]] }} [[[:en:license-header]]] [[self:cc-by-sa-2.5]] [[Category:Kittens playing]] [[Category:Brown tabby and white cats]] [[Category:One month old kittens]]
3.	File:2006-07-07 katze mit angel.jpg	kitten	Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 2.5 Generic	[[[:en:File:2006-07-07 katze mit angel.jpg]]] [[Information]] [[Description=playing little cat]] [[Source={{Own}}]] [[Date=2006-07-07]] [[Author=Stephan Czurat]] [[Permission=CC-BY-SA-2.5]] [[Other_versions=gamma-adjusted version [[[:Image:2006-07-07 katze mit angel (ha).jpg]]]]

Product & Tech Priorities

Thumbor

Goal 1: Upgrade Thumbor to facilitate maintenance + contributions - STATUS: **TESTING**

Goal 2: Improve file handling by Thumbor - STATUS: **IN DEVELOPMENT**

Target Impact: Lower barriers to developer contributions + resolve a number of bugs and issues.

WMF Learning Objectives	Learning Outcomes
With Thumbor unmaintained for several years, what additional efforts are required?	Additional time spent getting familiar with technology, distilling requirements, planning, and testing.
Do we have the expertise required?	No, we lacked familiarity with technology
Can non-WMF staff assist with this work? Are there specific types of work that requires WMF staff support?	Yes, able to integrate non-staff into upgrade efforts + work on enhancements. Required WMF staff for prep, testing, & deployment.
What dependencies does this work have?	Upgrade: upgrades to python packages. Enhancements: additional properties in wikidata schema & user experience.

Product & Tech Priorities

Improvements to Structured Data

Goal 1: Address structured data bugs - STATUS: **CONTINUOUS**

Goal 2: Improve discoverability of Commons content - STATUS: **IN DEVELOPMENT**

Target Impact: Enable new features/tools that improve search, re-use, and maintenance of media

WMF Learning Objectives	Learning Outcomes
Can we successfully enable communities to drive + develop new features using structured data?	Yes! We put out a call to the community to ask them to propose ideas & funded a top proposal, Viewit!
What potential blockers or dependencies do we have related to structured data?	Adding properties to Wikidata's schema, lacking clear requirements for some enhancements (ex: make it flexible)
Without having a dedicated Commons team, how can we make progress on structured data?	Yes, able to integrate non-staff into upgrade efforts + work on enhancements.
What is the efficacy of current structured data?	We have seen polarities between the efficacy of fields. For example categories usefulness varies greatly by users.

Commons User Support Efforts

Goal 1: Understand various different Commons use cases while refining needs and requirements, by directly engaging with partners, institutions, community members, etc. - STATUS: **ONGOING**

Target Impact: Generate a more holistic strategy to solve for re-use and tooling challenges.

Common Challenges	Opportunities
Various use cases struggled to programmatically identify and pull specific media they needed. (Ex: filtering explicit content or specific image sizes)	We can add/enhance structured data on media that may not yet exist. We could on-request, leverage ML/AI technology to help with identifying and/or filtering content.
For users with less technical backgrounds, they struggled to work with existing APIs.	Improve API documentation and examples. Refactor or develop APIs for specific use cases.

What Else We've Done

In order to support the priorities and make progress on Commons we've:

- **Created an internal Commons Working group** that helps to coordinate overall efforts, run different priorities, and steward next steps
- Hired a **dedicated Community Relations Specialist**
- **Added a central place to track developments:** [Commons:Product and technical support for Commons 2022-23 - Wikimedia Commons](#)
- Started **inventorying our collective Commons knowledge and experience** to help see where our gaps are and proactively address them
- Begun **re-building our understanding & domain expertise** by digging deeper into current technical infrastructure & tools

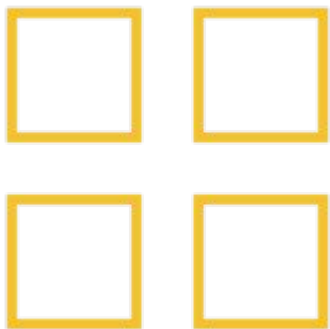
Things We Just Don't Know Yet

As the WMF continues to deepen its understanding of Commons through targeted improvements & explorations such as those mentioned, it will still take some time to figure out what the path forward is for various different areas. Some of these include:

- Video
- Mobile
- UX Modernization
- Future Commons technologies (ex: refactoring Commons completely)

Charting a Path Forward

As the WMF continues to learn and improve its understanding of Commons, we'd like to partner closely with the Commons community to:



[Goran Markovic](#), CC BY 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Work through disagreements
within the community



[Artدابانا@design](#), CC BY 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Define a community priority list,
that aggregates all Commons
needs



[Maxim Basinski](#), CC BY 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Explore different ways to
deliver together

Next Steps

- **Monthly Commons Updates** will be posted here: [Commons:Product and technical support for Commons 2022-23 - Wikimedia Commons](#)
- **General Commons Session** to share updates with the wider Commons community
- **Commons community & WMF co-working sessions** - the WMF will host several co-working sessions aimed at diving deeper into specific topics

Questions?



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