Canadiana Platform: Exploring New Features and Capabilities

This document summarizes the suggestions and requests CRKN has received for enhancements to the Canadiana platform. We have summarized these enhancements into 11 functional areas, grouped thematically. For each area, we have provided additional examples and context. These examples include both lower-effort features which could be implemented relatively quickly, and higher-effort ones which would require a more significant investment to design and implement.

During the Preservation and Access Committee and Heritage Program Update at the CRKN conference, speakers will be asking for input from our members and stakeholders to identify which of these feature areas are most important to them and their users. We will use your feedback to help us plan and prioritize the next phase of development.

User Interface Enhancements

User Interface/User Experience (UI/UX) Review

This project would start with a usability study undertaken by an UI/UX consultant and include a report on potential improvements to the website layout, design, and information architecture. Recommended improvements could then be assessed and implemented by staff.

Lower-effort examples	Changes to layout, graphics, look-and-feel
Higher-effort example	Adding major new functional elements; significantly revising the site structure and organization

Enhanced Searching and Browsing

Currently, the most commonly used search functionality is the keyword search. Considering the size and scope of the collection, keyword search is not ideal for returning targeted items or to encourage browsing of the collections.

Lower-effort examples	Additional search options using existing metadata; additional search result display options
Higher-effort example	Search term highlighting

Updated Content Access and Image Viewing

This area includes improvements to the way that content is presented or made available to users. The Canadiana platform is transitioning to full IIIF implementation, which will enable the adoption of many enhancements, but others would need to be developed separately. Frequently suggested features include the ability to download customized PDF selections; downloading full-resolution images; and an online page viewer with pan and zoom features.

Lower-effort example	Download high-resolution and/or original archival digital images
Higher-effort examples	Create and download PDFs consisting of a customized selection of pages from a document; format-specific tools providing enhanced access to maps, newspapers, and similar complex or large-format items

Personalization and Customization

This includes features that would enable users to customize the way they use the collections. These could include customized views, reading lists, automated alerts, and other features that would help users organize, highlight and manipulate relevant content.

Lower-effort examples	Create and manage a personal bookshelf/reading list; saving searches
Higher-effort examples	Implementing the user management infrastructure required to support customizations; automated email alerts for new content based on identified user preferences

Content, Media and Metadata Support

New Media Types

The Canadiana platform currently supports image files and born-digital PDFs. Interest has been expressed in supporting other media types, with audiovisual materials being of primary interest. Planning to include new content types may include the incorporation of additional metadata types for searching and description; and support for navigating, accessing, and downloading these content types.

Lower-effort examples	Discovery of audiovisual materials using standard metadata; streaming and download of audiovisual materials
Higher-effort examples	Discovery and navigation of audiovisual materials using enhanced metadata, such as captioning and event tagging

Enriched Metadata Support

This area includes support for additional metadata types and fields, which can facilitate discovery, sorting, and interoperability.

Lower-effort example	Support for archival metadata
Higher-effort example	Linked open data implementations

Curated Collections

This area includes features to support the development and maintenance of enhanced curated collections. These collections could be based on subject matter; support for a particular course or curriculum; and a variety of other purposes.

Lower-effort example*	Browsable collection landing pages with descriptive text, images, and highlights
Higher-effort example*	Structured browsing of collections by multiple facets

* Estimates are for implementing support for curated collections only; development of collections and supporting material is not included

Integration and Collaboration

User-Contributed Content

This area includes features that would allow individual users to enhance the value and discoverability of the collections through their contributions, as well as aiding in their own use of the collection by allowing them to annotate and organize content. The development of user registration, authentication and management features is, overall, a high-effort project and is a prerequisite for any user-contributed features. However, once user registration, authentication and management features are built there are options for lower-effort features and higher-effort features.

Lower-effort examples	Tagging or annotating pages or documents
Higher-effort examples	Creating or editing page transcriptions; OCR text correction

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Sharing, Harvesting, and Search Engine Indexing

This area includes support for features that facilitate accessing and discovering content from beyond the Canadiana website.

Lower-effort examples	Sharing links for social media sites; exposing document full text to search engines
Higher-effort examples	Metadata or content harvesting support (e.g. via OAI-PMH)

Research and Text Mining APIs

This area includes the development of APIs targeting researchers wanting to use the collection for text mining and other data-centric research applications. These features would enable defining data sets based on researcher criteria, and providing programming interfaces to enable researcher applications to retrieve, parse and analyze text and metadata.

Lower-effort example	API for running searches and retrieving results based on existing platform search capabilities
Higher-effort example	Text mining support

Institutional Collections Integration

This area includes support for integrating the collections of members and partners into the Canadiana collections, providing a single point of access for content from a variety of digital collections.

Lower-effort example	Integration of selected third-party content hosted on the Canadiana Platform with the Canadiana collections
Higher-effort example	Integration of third-party content or metadata hosted on other platforms into Canadiana Online for federated searching and/or access