

An Open Government Data Case Study

DigitalNZ (A-tihi o Aotearoa)

Making it easy to find New Zealand's digital treasures



Who: National Library of New Zealand/Department of Internal Affairs

What: An application programme interface (API) which enables users to find and query data from across New Zealand's cultural, education, and government sectors and create new digital experiences

Where: <http://digitalnz.org/>

Why: Helping to make New Zealand digital content easier to find, share and use

When: 2008 –

Finding material online can be a complicated and confusing process, especially when looking for New Zealand content. DigitalNZ provides one simple place to access this type of content.

DigitalNZ brings together over 29 million digital items to help make New Zealand digital content easier to find, share and use. To do this, DigitalNZ works with almost 200 partner organisations, including Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, National Library of New Zealand, Ministry of Health, Department of Conservation, Auckland Council, Radio New Zealand and Television New Zealand. The service aggregates these organisations' metadata (descriptive information about the content) into the DigitalNZ system and makes it easy to search at www.digitalnz.org.

However, one of the most valuable things about DigitalNZ is that the data is also available for anyone to use to build their own front-end web-sites or applications. DigitalNZ provides an Application Program Interface (API) which, put simply, provides the aggregated metadata in a format that developers can use to build new services.

One example of DigitalNZ use is the Canterbury Earthquake Digital Archive (CEISMIC) which is run by University of Canterbury (UC) and a national consortium of cultural heritage organisations. UC wanted to build a comprehensive archive of digital content related to the Canterbury earthquakes in 2010 and 2011.

DigitalNZ was able to power the metadata search platform and the backend infrastructure using their technology. Impacts include being able to build the CEISMIC website on top of the DigitalNZ API which simplified the project, and a reduction in the number of technical components that were needed to be built and maintained. This, in turn, enabled the team to focus their efforts on the front-end user experience.

The Data

Data: DigitalNZ

Source: National Library of NZ/Department of Internal Affairs

Formats: Open Data

Licence: [DigitalNZ API](#)

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“Imagine a place where you could search for 29 million items of digital content.”



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