History of the Lightbox

Why the Lightbox?

> **Background information**
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> This documentation was written early in the project to explain the thought process behind choosing the Lightbox as the first component to be developed under Fluid.
>
> A bit of Fluid Project history...

The Lightbox is the first component developed by the Fluid Project. We chose the Lightbox because it provides a number of visible improvements to the Sakai Image Gallery tool while simultaneously offering us a focussed, manageable environment in which to define an architecture and process for creating reusable user interface components.

A significant amount of effort was put into designing and planning the Gallery tool as part of UCB's user-centered design process before the Fluid Project started. This means that we were able to more quickly coordinate with designers to improve the user interface of Sakai without a significant amount of up-front design research.

The functionality of the first Fluid component is simple and focussed, ensuring that we can quickly implement it and refine our work based on design and testing feedback. It also provides some substantial and meaningful accessibility issues to consider during development: What is the keyboard-accessible equivalent for drag and drop when organizing images? How can the layout best scale itself for users who need larger magnifications? What kinds of short cuts can optimize the experience for non-mouse users?

The Gallery lightbox component is an opportunity for us to explore rich, accessible interactions for directly manipulating resources using drag-and-drop and the keyboard. Our approach is to design for the specific context ensure that we create a component that is focused and effective, and then to generalize based on common patterns across applications. On-going refinements of this component are applicable to a wide range of contexts within both Sakai and uPortal. This component is the first step towards an accessible, reusable drag-and-drop solution for both applications.