



Advancing exploration, innovation
and community building for
libraries and archives



OCLC[®]

The world's libraries.
Connected.™

Does your library catalog its collections? Borrow materials for users? Experiment with new tools and interfaces? If so, chances are that you are already familiar with OCLC® and its innovative library support services. There's another part of OCLC that's dedicated to projecting your work into the future and shaping information discovery and use for the benefit of your users—OCLC Research.

As one of the world's leading centers devoted exclusively to understanding the challenges facing libraries in a rapidly changing environment, OCLC Research delivers value to cultural heritage institutions around the world. Our multidisciplinary staff carries out research and prototyping that enhances the value of library services and improves the productivity of librarians and information seekers. Our focus is on advancing the state of the art, improving the efficiency of bibliographic and library operations and prototyping new approaches.

We do this by:

- Monitoring technological developments and testing new applications of potential value to the community
- Organizing and managing collective action
- Working with a cohesive community of invested institutions
- Representing the interests of libraries and archives on international standards efforts.

We work collaboratively with the community to:

- Identify problems and opportunities
- Prototype and test solutions
- Develop consensus
- Make our collective resources go further
- Share products of our activities—papers, presentations, prototypes and open-source software—freely to the larger community.

For a list of our current prototypes, visit www.oclc.org/research/activities/researchworks.htm.

The OCLC Research Library Partnership

OCLC recognizes the valuable contribution that research libraries play in the cooperative and provides a specific venue for engagement around shared issues. This venue is the OCLC Research Library Partnership, and it represents OCLC's commitment to the research library community.

OCLC provides shared infrastructure for research libraries that will become more important as research libraries modify their service portfolio to continue to deliver value to their home institutions. Many of those future services and the supporting structures are best built through collective investment and collaboration. OCLC Research has important capacities that when deployed in partnership with motivated research libraries can have significant impact on our shared future. If you'd like to work with motivated peer institutions in a dynamic collaborative setting please explore affiliation with the OCLC Research Library Partnership by visiting www.oclc.org/research/partnership/.

The Innovation Lab

The OCLC Innovation Lab is a division of OCLC Research created to speed the adoption of new ideas, new methods and new policies, and also to generate new services, test existing services in new markets, and explore new ways to deliver existing services to OCLC members.

Its efforts are primarily focused on:

- **Analytics:** Making library data work harder by understanding its usage and influence on purchasing workflows and the movement from print to electronic.
- **Mobile technology:** Accelerating our mobile deployment, plus testing new mobile gadgets as they are introduced, including the slate/iPad space, with the goal of putting libraries in all of the places users may be.
- **Data innovations:** Investigating policy and methods for speeding the path of data innovation in WorldCat and related data sets. As the cooperative needs move beyond simple record supply, the community must explore new ways to involve end users and domain experts, and include rapid integration of research work into a widely available platform.

Our work

OCLC Research—including the OCLC Research Library Partnership and the OCLC Innovation Lab—is involved in collaborative work that includes a number of ambitious and transformative projects in the following thematic areas.

Research Information Management (RIM)

We are exploring new prospects for adding value to the scholarly communication process, helping scholars get the most out of new technologies that can enhance the quality of their work, and helping academic institutions with the assessment of their research output. The objective of our efforts in this area is to reach a collective understanding of the responsibilities of, and opportunities for, libraries in a changed research environment.

Examples of current activities underway in this area include:

- **Support for Research Workflows**
Conducting a collaborative project with the UK's Research Information Network (RIN) to examine the use and provision of information-related tools and services to researchers throughout the lifecycle of the research process.
- **Supporting Research Dissemination**
Examining researchers' nontraditional dissemination behaviors in order to identify new support roles for libraries.

For more information about our work in this area, see www.oclc.org/research/activities/rim.htm.

Mobilizing Unique Materials

We're working to bring about greater collaboration among libraries and archives by surfacing models for sharing data, services and expertise. Our objective in this area is to achieve economies and efficiencies that permit the unique materials in libraries and archives to be effectively described, properly disclosed, successfully discovered and appropriately delivered.

Examples of current and recent activities underway in this area include:

- **ArchiveGrid**
Developing a new, freely available ArchiveGrid discovery system to provide access to detailed descriptions of archival collections held by thousands of institutions worldwide. This new system will replace the current ArchiveGrid subscription service by June 2011.
- **Survey on Special Collections and Archives in the UK and Ireland**
Surveyed library special collections holdings and practices of 100 research libraries across the UK and Ireland, including all members of Research Libraries UK (RLUK), OCLC Research Library Partnership institutions in the UK and Ireland, and selected other institutions, building upon the similar survey conducted in the US and Canada in 2009. Our goals are to identify norms across the community and to define needs for community action and further research.

For more information about our work in this area, see www.oclc.org/research/activities/mum.htm.

Metadata Support & Management

Our work in this area focuses on setting new expectations for investing in metadata creation and maintenance, modeling attendant workflows and facilitating the discovery of research institutions' resources by users wherever they are. Our goal is to engage OCLC Research Library Partners and OCLC member libraries in adapting descriptive practice to economic realities, user expectations and the requirements of network-level services.

- **VIAF (Virtual International Authority File)**
Exploring virtually combining the name authority files of national level authority files into a single name authority service.
- **FAST (Faceted Application of Subject Terminology)** Adapting the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) with a simplified syntax to retain the very rich vocabulary of LCSH, while making the schema easier to understand, control, apply and use through an enumerated faceted subject heading schema.

For more information about our work in this area, see www.oclc.org/research/activities/msm.htm.

Infrastructure & Standards Support

We focus on participating with research institutions and OCLC member libraries in the development of needed architecture and standards, supporting their adoption and finding appropriate venues for their sustenance. Our objective is to create an efficient environment in support of the declared activities associated with infrastructure and standards support.

Examples of current activities underway in this area include:

- **Linked Data Research**
Supporting the collaborative and the larger community with Linked Data-related research and standards activities, as well as exploring Linked Data activities and applications.
- **PURLs (Persistent Uniform Resource Locators)**
Creating Web addresses that act as permanent identifiers in the face of a dynamic and changing Web infrastructure.

For more information about our work in this area, see www.oclc.org/research/activities/iss.htm.



System-wide Organization

Our objective here is to use our perspective and data to understand, prepare for and help libraries and archives advance through utilizing cooperative models of acquiring, managing and disclosing collections.

Examples of recent activities underway in this area include:

- **Shared Research Collections**
Reviewed a case study of a single consumer institution and two representative print and digital suppliers to model requirements for increased institutional reliance on shared print and digital repositories, and offer recommendations for broader adoption of interdependent collection management regimes.
- **OhioLINK Collection Analysis**
Examined bibliographic, holdings and circulation data from Ohio college and university libraries in a joint project with the OhioLINK library consortium and OhioLINK's Collection Building Task Force to better understand the usage patterns of books in academic libraries.

For more information about our work in this area, see www.oclc.org/research/activities/swo.htm.

User Behavior Studies & Synthesis

Our focus in this area includes studying the behavior of library users, from public library patrons and undergraduate students to scholars and researchers, to determine their perceptions and information usage habits of a variety of reference services. Our objective is to identify and share recommendations on how to better serve library users' needs now and in the future.

Examples of our work in this area include:

- **Digital Visitors and Residents**
Investigating the theory of digital residents and visitors with students in the transitional educational stage, the time between late-stage secondary (high school) and the first year of college or university through a short-term, IISC-funded, collaborative pilot project with the University of Oxford.
- **Cyber Synergy: Seeking Sustainability Through Collaboration Between Virtual Reference and Social Q&A Sites**
Proposing a new model that enables Virtual Reference Services (VRS) to remain viable despite today's environment of reduced resources. This project investigates the possibility of seamless collaboration between knowledge institutions such as libraries and the Social Q&A (SQA) community.

For a complete list of our current areas of focus, visit www.oclc.org/research/activities/ubs.htm.

OCLC Research—at a glance

OCLC Research is one of the world's leading centers devoted to exploration, innovation and community building on behalf of libraries and archives. It serves a global membership and supports the OCLC Research Library Partnership. By leveraging community investment, program strengths and innovative research initiatives, OCLC Research delivers value to cultural heritage organisations around the world.

OCLC Research currently comprises nearly 50 staff located in the US: Ohio (Dublin—our headquarters), California (San Mateo), and Colorado (Grand Junction), plus The Netherlands (Leiden).

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