First I want to thank Diana and her colleagues at the University of Washington, Bill Jordan and Steve Shadle, for helping my OCLC colleagues and me start rethinking maintenance of records in WorldCat.

But we can’t begin to think about the future without thinking about where we’ve come from and where we are currently ...
For almost all of the existence of WorldCat, OCLC staff have been dedicated to maintaining it. And, for much of that history, there has also been a tradition of decentralized and collaborative maintenance. That tradition began with the CONSER Program in the mid 1970s and has grown to include a mixture of activity both within the OCLC membership and in cooperation with national- and international-level programs.
It may also be useful to get a sense the volume of activity during the last fiscal year and the first half of the current year. The “member library” activity includes Database Enrichment, Minimal-level Upgrade and Enhance activity. The level of member library activity is certainly influenced by the number of libraries that make enhancements only in their local systems.

And, it may also be useful to look briefly at what each of those member library activities includes.
Database enrichment

- Any full-mode Cataloging authorization

- Specific list of fields that can be added, edited and deleted
  - Currently 45 fields

- Records with encoding levels I, K, L, M, Blank, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8
Minimal-level upgrade

- Any full-mode Cataloging authorization
- Allows editing the entire record.
- Records with encoding levels K, M, 2, 3, 4 (without 042 field PCC), 5, and 7
  - Roughly half of WorldCat
The application and review process focuses primarily on providing accurate access to information.
Improving these programs

• Some things could be done easily:
  • Expanding the fields that can be touched in Database Enrichment
  • Reviewing the Enhance application process

• Some require more effort:
  • Reviewing and rationalizing the credit associated with each kind of activity

• But ...
Do we need to take a step back?
We’re living in a much more complicated technical services landscape than we were when these distributed maintenance programs were set up ... And WorldCat is a much more complicated database that serves more purposes than it was in the past and the systems that support it could offer more options.

Before we apply what might be considered Band-Aids ...
The “Quality” Debate

Specialist’s view:
• Fullness and detail
• Review every record

Pragmatist’s view:
• Speed and efficiency

User’s view:
• Easy, fast and convenient

... we need to take a look at the various views of “quality” within the OCLC community.
These views definitely represent one of those “chasms” that divides our community and, often, makes rational discourse difficult.

Just one aspect of that is what constitutes a “full” record …
Assumptions and Mindsets:
What is “Full”? 

On the left, we see a typical OPAC display from Libraries Australia that represents what many would consider a full bibliographic records with holdings. In the middle, we have a WorldCat.org display in which the bibliographic data and holdings are supplemented by other editions of the same work as well as cover art and reviews. On the right is a display from Amazon.com with much more information (including 3 more screens not seen here). Which would our users consider to be the fullest record?

With thanks to David Lankes: 
http://quartz.syr.edu/rdlankes/Presentations/2007/ALCTS.pdf
While we’re having these discussions about quality, about the continued need for local editing practices and the master record and other points that our University of Washington colleagues raised — and reaching some level of agreement — there are some things we at OCLC are pretty sure that we need to do to improve maintenance at the network level.

It seems pretty clear that we need to complete the work that was started with the migration to Connexion to control as many headings in WorldCat as possible. It’s these controlled headings that facilitate the FRBRization of WorldCat that is part of the WorldCat Local interface. Controlled vocabularies are also an important part of faceted browsing.

We also need to deal more effectively with duplicate records that complicate WorldCat, not matter what interface you’re using.
So, we invite you to start the discussion with questions and comments for the panel. Please use the microphones and tell us who you are and what institution you are from.