

# OCLC publishes Environmental Scan

By Brad Gauder

As part of its strategic planning endeavors, OCLC recently completed publication of *The 2003 OCLC Environmental Scan: Pattern Recognition*, a 150-page report to the worldwide OCLC membership. This report, also available on the OCLC Web site in an online format, looks at significant issues and trends that affect OCLC, libraries and other information repositories now and in the future.

According to Cathy De Rosa, OCLC Vice President, Marketing, the scan is a natural outcome of OCLC's role as library advocate. "Librarians should look to OCLC not only as a source of solutions for their day-to-day operations but also as a resource for information about navigating continually changing landscapes. The scan is one way we can engage in dialogue and together chart a course for the years ahead," she says.

Work on the scan began in the summer of 2003. Much of the information reported in the scan reflects input gathered from interviews with more than 100 persons, including librarians, information industry leaders and OCLC-affiliated partners, and focus groups with high school students, teachers and senior citizens. The scan also includes research findings from some 250 articles and other publications.

Working collaboratively with people makes things happen.



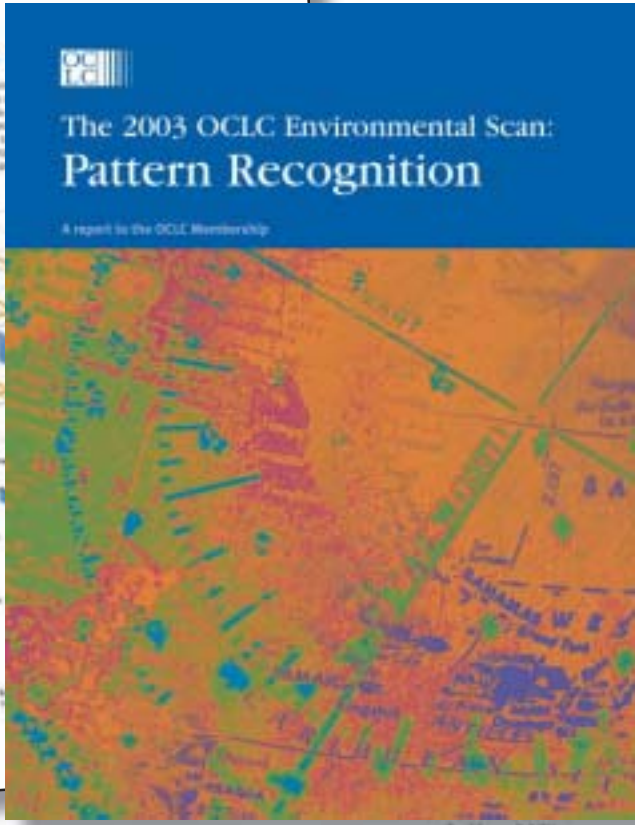
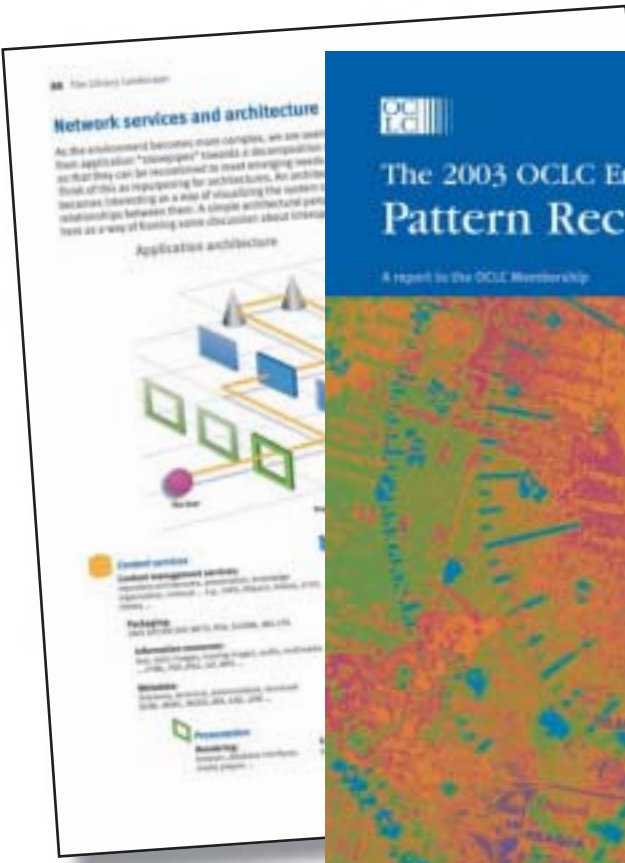
The scan surveys the library and information landscape from several perspectives or "landscapes," including social, economic, technology and research & learning. Data from 29 countries, representing all regions of the world and a broad range of economies, provides helpful perspective on the relative status of libraries in varying locations around the world.

A variety of profiles, charts and tabular data further illustrates the findings across the various landscapes. The profiles include a "Generation X" librarian and a "Gamer," plus a look at the growth of libraries in new residential developments in Guangzhou, China. The scan provides charts and other guides that help readers separate "the hype from the hope" as they read about emerging technologies.

The scan isn't intended to be a sole source of answers for circumstances affecting the library and information world. Instead, it's meant to engage library and information professionals in dialogue to purposefully consider how libraries and other information repositories can respond to the various trends discussed in the scan. Readers are encouraged to share comments and recommendations with OCLC in response to the scan.

Feedback from those who have read the scan has been very affirming, according to Ms. De Rosa. "We had some wonderful opportunities at the ALA Midwinter Meeting and the PLA conference to share an overview of our findings with librarians and now we're hearing from some of them how much they appreciate the publication of the scan as a much-needed discussion starter."

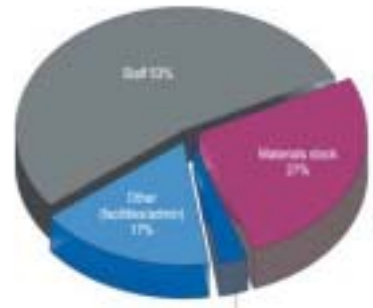
You can view the online version of the scan at <http://www.oclc.org/membership/escan/>. The scan is also available in print and may be ordered from the same Web page for a charge of \$15 per copy, to cover shipping and production expenses.



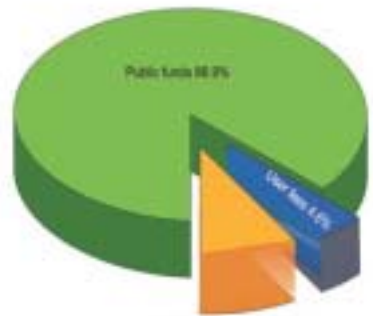
## Countries included in the Environmental Scan

A worldwide lens was used to construct this scan. Detailed education, library and technology spend data was collected for a subset of countries. This subset was constructed based on data available and geographic representation. The sample size chosen represents approximately 60 percent of the world's population and 85 percent of the world's gross domestic product. The following countries comprise the sample:

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|-----------|--------------|----------------------|
| Australia | India        | South Africa         |
| Brazil    | Italy        | South Korea          |
| Canada    | Japan        | Spain                |
| Chile     | Malaysia     | Sri Lanka            |
| China     | Mexico       | Trinidad & Tobago    |
| Colombia  | Netherlands  | Uganda               |
| Croatia   | Norway       | United Arab Emirates |
| France    | Saudi Arabia | United Kingdom       |
| Germany   | Singapore    | United States        |
| Hungary   | Slovenia     |                      |



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Uses of library funds worldwide



Other (grants, donations) 8.5%  
Sources of library funds