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WorldCat Record Use Policy

Frequently Asked Questions

The permanent link to this FAQ is: <http://purl.org/oclc/wcrup-faq>.

All instances of "Policy" in this document refer to the *Policy for Use and Transfer of WorldCat Records*.

Implementation period

1. When will the updated *Policy for Use and Transfer of WorldCat Records* go into effect?

The *Policy for Use and Transfer of WorldCat Records* is scheduled to become effective mid-February 2009. During the implementation period between November 2, 2008 and the date the *Policy* goes into effect, the *Guidelines for the Use and Transfer of OCLC-Derived Records* will remain in force.

What is changing?

1. What are the differences between the *Guidelines for the Use and Transfer of OCLC-Derived Records* and the *Policy for Use and Transfer of WorldCat Records*?

In brief, besides modernizing the language of the *Guidelines*, the updated *Policy*

- Broadens the definition of 'non-OCLC member' and increases their access to WorldCat records
- Liberalizes provisions for non-commercial use and transfer
- Clarifies restrictions on use and transfer
- Adds methods for attribution of WorldCat as the source of derived records
- Provides a clear method for proposals not covered by the *Policy* ([WorldCat Record Use Form](#))

Obtaining WorldCat records

1. I am not a member of OCLC, but I have an idea for innovative use of some WorldCat records that is non-commercial, complements what OCLC is already doing, and will support scholarship and private study in my community. How can I get the WorldCat records I need to get started?

Please submit a [WorldCat Record Use Form](#) to OCLC and we will reply within five business days.

2. My library is not an OCLC member but we would like to use WorldCat records for non-commercial purposes including research the library is conducting. How can my library obtain WorldCat records?

Non-OCLC members interested in obtaining WorldCat records for non-commercial use that meets the conditions outlined in [the Policy](#) should complete and submit a [WorldCat Record Use Form](#) to OCLC and we will reply within five business days.

3. I have an idea for a new commercial service that will benefit libraries and would require use of WorldCat records. Can I use WorldCat for this purpose?

Please submit a [WorldCat Record Use Form](#) to OCLC and we will reply within five business days.

4. My commercial company offers an option for users to search the catalogs of libraries and use or download records that originally came from WorldCat. Is this OK under [the Policy](#)?

You will need to establish an agreement with OCLC first. To start the process, please submit a [WorldCat Record Use Form](#) to OCLC and we will reply within five business days.

5. Why aren't all WorldCat records available freely to anyone wanting to use them?

OCLC member libraries have spent nearly 40 years supporting and contributing to WorldCat and the OCLC cooperative. With over 100 million records and over one billion holdings, WorldCat is the backbone of the cooperative and the services used by the membership. It is not economically feasible to maintain and expand WorldCat, its surrounding services and the cooperative on a completely open model. [The Policy](#) was developed to bridge the gap between an open and a closed model by permitting use and transfer of WorldCat records for non-commercial, Reasonable uses. See [the Policy](#) for definitions of these terms.

Sharing WorldCat records

1. Is my library allowed to share our WorldCat records with other libraries in our group?

Yes.

2. May our library share our WorldCat records with a library even if they are not a member of OCLC?

Yes, your library may share records of your own holdings with a member or non-OCLC member in accordance with the terms of [the Policy](#) under "D. Transfer of WorldCat Records."

3. A researcher has contacted my library to request a copy of our catalog to do some bibliographic analysis. Are we allowed to grant her access to the WorldCat records in our catalog?

Yes, within the terms of [the Policy](#), OCLC supports this type of transfer for non-commercial research purposes.

4. My library has been asked by a non-commercial/non-profit company to share our WorldCat records with them. Does [the Policy](#) allow for this?

Yes, your library may share records of your own holdings with a non-commercial/non-profit company in accordance with the terms of [the Policy](#) under “D. Transfer of WorldCat Records.” If you share or transfer WorldCat records that do not contain a link to [the Policy](#), [the Policy](#) requires that you provide the non-commercial/non-profit company receiving the records with a copy of or link to [the Policy](#) by another means and indicate to the company that use and transfer of the WorldCat records received are subject to [the Policy](#).

5. My library has been asked by a commercial company to send our WorldCat records to them. Does [the Policy](#) allow for this?

Yes, provided there is an agreement in place between OCLC and the commercial company. Please check with OCLC or the company to see if such an agreement exists before you share WorldCat records with them.

6. What if I'm not sure if my proposed use or transfer of WorldCat Records is within the scope of [the Policy](#)?

Please submit a [WorldCat Record Use Form](#) to OCLC and we will reply within five business days.

7. My library has WorldCat records that describe items not held by us. May we share these records with others?

Please submit a [WorldCat Record Use Form](#) to OCLC and we will reply within five business days.

8. I've received WorldCat-derived records, transferred to me from another source. Is there anything I need to know about using these records or transferring them to others?

Yes, recipients of transferred records need to abide by the terms of [the Policy](#) for subsequent use and transfer of the records.

9. Does [the Policy](#) apply to [Institution Records](#) (IRs) as well as Master Records?

Yes. See more information about [Institution Records](#).

10. Does [the Policy](#) cover article level metadata available through WorldCat.org?

These records are not available for use outside of WorldCat.org.

11. Does [the Policy](#) cover the Use and Transfer of WorldCat records and holdings data through the WorldCat API?

[The Policy](#) covers the Use and Transfer of WorldCat Records as defined in Section B. 3 of [the Policy](#). There are also [additional terms and conditions](#) that apply to [WorldCat Search API](#) usage that should be consulted.

Library online catalogs

1. Does display of records in an end-user system constitute Transfer under [the Policy](#)?

No, it does not. "Transfer" means conveyance to another OCLC member or non-OCLC member by exchange, merger, sharing, gift, providing the capability to download or otherwise electronically copy or any other means.

2. My library system has the functionality to enable the public to export WorldCat-derived bibliographic records (meaning downloading of selected displayed records). Is this OK under [the Policy](#)?

Yes, export as defined above is OK under [the Policy](#). Recipients of transferred records need to abide by the terms of [the Policy](#) for subsequent use and transfer of the records.

3. I want to download WorldCat records into my personal bibliographic software. Is this OK, and are there any restrictions to this use?

Personal use of WorldCat records such as for creating and maintaining personal bibliographies, is completely fine and does not carry any usage restrictions.

4. My library has been contacted by a commercial search engine about contributing our catalog for use in their system. Does [the Policy](#) permit the Transfer of WorldCat-derived records from our catalog to the search engine company?

Since the search engine company is a commercial organization, there must be an agreement in place between OCLC and the search engine company prior to the transfer of WorldCat-derived records. OCLC can let you know if it has an agreement with the search engine company in question. Please submit a [WorldCat Record Use Form](#) to OCLC or ask the search engine company to submit a [WorldCat Record Use Form](#) to OCLC and we will reply within five business days.

Z39.50

1. My library has a catalog created with WorldCat records of our own holdings and we offer Z39.50 access to others. Is this OK under [the Policy](#)?

Yes, in accordance with the terms of the Policy under “D. Transfer of WorldCat Records.” We understand that initially, members may not have the means to fully comply with the terms for WorldCat-derived

records in this section of the Policy, particularly the terms for attribution of WorldCat in transferred records. Therefore, although we urge members offering Z39.50 access to their catalogs to implement these aspects of [the Policy](#) as soon as possible, we understand that compliance should not exert an unreasonable burden on members and therefore, the transition may take some time. If you provide Z39.50 access to WorldCat records that do not contain a link to [the Policy](#), [the Policy](#) requires that you provide the recipients of the records with a

copy of or link to [the Policy](#) by another means and indicate to the recipients that use and transfer of the WorldCat records accessed are subject to [the Policy](#). If you require assistance or have questions, please contact your OCLC regional service provider or OCLC.

2. I've learned that a person or organization is using the records they are obtaining from my library (via Z39.50 or other method) for commercial purposes, or are otherwise violating the terms of [the Policy](#), what should I do about it?

Please send an email message to recorduse@oclc.org describing the situation.

3. I would like to build a cataloging service based upon a freely-available database of bibliographic records that my organization has gathered from libraries. I am not an OCLC member. The records will be made available to subscribers and non-subscribers via Z39.50, OAI, and direct download. Is this permissible under [the Policy](#)?

For those records in the database you are compiling that are derived from WorldCat, this is not permissible without a separate agreement with OCLC. [The Policy](#) does not permit uses that discourage contribution to WorldCat or replicate existing functions or purposes of WorldCat. To start the process of establishing an agreement, please fill out the [WorldCat Record Use Form](#).

4. My library purchases records from other sources and the records include the OCLC number. Are these records governed by [the Policy](#)?

Records purchased from other sources that are not WorldCat Records are not governed by [the Policy](#).

Linking, attribution, and the OCLC number

1. What is the method for identifying WorldCat as the source of transferred records?

There are two methods:

1. a. **Prospectively.** As of the effective date of [the Policy](#), every record downloaded from WorldCat will automatically contain field 996 populated with the following:

MARC:

996 \$aOCLCWCRUP \$iUse and transfer of this record is governed by the OCLC® Policy for Use and Transfer of WorldCat® Records.
\$u<http://purl.org/oclc/wcrup>

There is no need to add the 996 field to records by hand. OCLC systems will do this for you.

1. b. **Retrospectively.** For records that already exist in your local system, we encourage you to use the 996 field, which should have an explicit note like the examples below:

MARC:

996 \$aOCLCWCRUP \$iUse and transfer of this record is governed by the OCLC® Policy for Use and Transfer of WorldCat® Records.
\$u<http://purl.org/oclc/wcrup>

MARCXML:

```
<datafield tag="996" ind1="" ind2=""> <subfield code="a">OCLCWCRUP</subfield> <subfield code="i">Use and transfer of this record is governed by the OCLC® Policy for Use and Transfer of
```

WorldCat® Records</subfield> <subfield
code="u">http://purl.org/oclc/wcrup</subfield> </datafield>

OCLC Dublin Core Qualified & Simple:

<oclcterms:recordUsePolicy>OCLCWCRUP Use and transfer of this record is governed by the OCLC® Policy for Use and Transfer of WorldCat® Records.http://purl.org/oclc/wcrup</oclcterms:recordUsePolicy>

Dublin Core Qualified & Simple:

<dc:description>OCLCWCRUP Use and transfer of this record is governed by the OCLC® Policy for Use and Transfer of WorldCat® Records.http://purl.org/oclc/wcrup</dc:description>

2. Where can my library find information about the structure and content of the 996 field?

The 996 field will be incorporated into OCLC documentation as part of a MARC Update project planned for installation in mid-February 2009. An advance look at how the field is structured and what it contains is available [here](#) to help you prepare your local system to support the field.

3. Why is there a requirement for me to maintain the link to [the Policy](#) and the OCLC number in my WorldCat records?

Attribution will allow downstream users to easily identify WorldCat records and to link to [the Policy](#). These provisions in the updated policy reflect a modernization of practice which is needed in a Web 2.0 world, where metadata is re-used, exchanged, and mashed up. WorldCat records now flow through many paths, and the identifier

(OCLC number) and link to [the Policy](#) will provide downstream parties (who may be many steps away from the original receipt of the record)

a convenient way to identify provenance, assure unambiguous linking (through the OCLC number), and understand their metadata rights and conditions. On the Web, consistent, predictable forms of attribution and the presence of identifiers (e.g., the OCLC number) actually facilitate and lower the costs of data use and transfer. With the updated policy, OCLC is following widely-adopted practices that require copies of documents to carry or link to licenses. Examples include the *GNU Free Documentation License* <http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html> (Section 2) and the *Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 3.0 Unported* <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/legalcode> (Section 4a).

4. My organization wants to use or transfer records in compliance with [the Policy](#). Must we add the link to [the Policy](#) into our existing records before we transfer or share them?

As of the effective date of [the Policy](#), all newly downloaded records obtained from WorldCat will contain the link. OCLC is requesting that you add the link to your existing records that are already in your system whenever possible. We understand that initially, members may not have the means to fully comply with the terms for attribution of WorldCat in transferred records. Therefore, although we urge organizations transferring WorldCat-derived records to others to implement these aspects of [the Policy](#) as soon as possible, we understand that compliance should not exert an unreasonable burden on members and therefore, the transition may take some time. If you share or transfer WorldCat records that do not contain a link to [the Policy](#), [the Policy](#) requires that you provide the recipient of the records with a copy of or link to [the Policy](#) by another means and indicate to the recipient that use and transfer of the WorldCat records received are subject to [the Policy](#). If you require assistance or

have questions, please contact your OCLC regional service provider or OCLC.

5. My library wants to share records of our own holdings, either as a batch or via Z39.50 searching, how do we indicate that users of this data must comply with [the Policy](#)?

Please see the answer to the previous question. Whenever possible, include a link to [the Policy](#) in all of the shared records (see instructions above on the use of the 996 field for this purpose). Otherwise, make a copy of [the Policy](#) available to the recipient of your records.

6. My library is having difficulty adding the 996 field to our records. What should we do?

For assistance, please contact your OCLC regional service provider or OCLC.

7. Will CONSER records include the 996 field and the link to [the Policy](#)?

When OCLC provides the CONSER records to Library of Congress and Library and Archives Canada, the 996 field and the link to [the Policy](#) will be removed.

8. My organization only plans to use a few data elements from WorldCat records (for example, by means of the WorldCat API). Do we need to include attribution and a link to [the Policy](#) in our work?

No.

9. How do I know if any given bibliographic record comes from WorldCat?

Check for any of the following data elements in the bibliographic record:

- an OCLC Number
- the 001 field which includes value characters "ocm" or "ocn"
- the 035 field which includes the value "(OCoLC)"
- the 994 field (see [more information](#) on how we use this field)