

**Members Council February 2003  
Library Group  
Discussion Summary Report**

Name of Group: **Private Academic Libraries Interest Group**  
Recorder: **Debbie Hysell**

## **1. Summary of topics & discussions**

### **a. Non-member Access to OCLC-Derived Records**

Members expressed a range of reactions to the use of records by non-members—from little concern if it is a case of a few records taken by needy libraries to great concern if the volume of records is high. Members noted that this practice poses a threat to resource sharing since these libraries are not contributing their holdings. That this potential source of revenue was going elsewhere (to BookWhere, EZCat, etc.) and not supporting the cooperative is also a concern.

*The group wants OCLC to do the following:*

- **Gather and share more information about the practice**--who is doing it and what member libraries are targeted. Tell members how to learn, on an ongoing basis, who is coming into their systems and any technological solutions that may be used to prevent the theft of records.
- **Encourage members to contact vendors** that are listing them as a source of cataloging records. Provide a model letter to make it easier for libraries to request that they be de-listed.
- **Investigate whether libraries that are taking records are aware of alternatives** like CatExpress. Determine if other services and/or pricing models are needed for school and small public libraries.
- **Assess the impact** of low-cost service alternatives and statewide consortia **on networks**--membership and training revenue and expenses. Consider ways to reduce the negative impact on networks (perhaps a mentoring credit for networks and libraries providing training).

The group felt that a Members Council Resolution is not needed at this time.

### **b. How Can OCLC Better Serve Private Academic Libraries**

- **Digital Preservation:** OCLC should provide education, toolkits, schemas, and information on issues, archiving, display, and best practices. OCLC needs to get information out fast about services and any changes in pricing. Libraries need to be able to use digitized materials as a marketing tool to get more funding. OCLC needs to market well and provide good toolsets; make it easy to get prices and make the cost alternatives clear. Libraries need to have OCLC provide schema for digital objects.
- **Ease of use:** OCLC should provide means for libraries to make it easier for their patrons to access and use library resources (access to known items and to a mediated space environment). Rights management software will help. Libraries need toolsets that will manage mediated space (provide catalog of databases, web sites and other resources). It would be good to know what OCLC is doing in this area—particularly related to rights management—so that libraries do not sign with alternative service providers not knowing that OCLC will soon have solutions for them. OCLC could also help with the process of doing usability studies.
- **Gates Portal Project:** Is there something similar for academics? Will toolsets be port-able to academic sectors?
- **Training.** OCLC should continue the OCLC Institute. OCLC should leverage training opportunities provided by all network and libraries. OCLC should also share more information about best HR practices.

- Negotiating agent: OCLC should use its market clout to obtain consortial pricing for particular databases (e.g., Elsevier). OCLC should also work as a lobbying agent—for example, working for libraries for fair use.
  - Collection analysis tool: OCLC should provide a collection analysis tool that is robust and capable of handling cooperative collection development (perhaps mining WorldCat as a consortial collection development tool).
2. List **3-4 significant issues** that the group wants to communicate to Members Council and OCLC.
- Related to non-member use of OCLC records, the group wants OCLC to gather and share more information and encourage libraries to de-list (see 1 a).
  - Related to meeting the needs of private academic libraries, the group wants OCLC to focus on digital preservation resources and ease of use of library materials (see first two bullet items in 2b).
  - Related to digital preservation and ease of use of library materials, the group would like OCLC to do it well, soon, and cheaply.
3. Remembering that OCLC's role is to be the leading global library cooperative, which of the issues in #2 are most urgent and why?
- Providing/marketing services for digital preservation and ease of use is the most urgent issue because libraries are struggling with problems in these areas and are likely to look for solutions from other vendors if OCLC does not provide affordable alternatives and communicate clearly about these alternatives soon.
4. Please indicate if the group feels that an issue or presentation should be presented to the full Council.
- The group would like to have a presentation on what's happening with WorldCat and circulation (the ability to seamlessly determine shelf availability through WorldCat, without having to log out and go to the OPAC of the particular institution).