

**(Slide 1)** Today I would like to give you my vision of OCLC resource sharing globally and the power it can provide making libraries of all sizes more effective. I know that's hard to believe, but perhaps in the next few minutes I can help you to understand the unbelievable power of this cooperative for all libraries. My experiences with OCLC WorldCat are in a school library setting, but I think many of the examples I will give you can be extrapolated to other library types as well.

**(Slide 2)** First of all let me tell you a little about my library and how it was transformed by OCLC. My library is located in a rural farm community of Michigan. It's a very small

school library serving 900 students in grades 7-12 and district-wide about 1900. We're very rural, with most families farming or working in local factories.

We have a large number of dairy farms and one dairy farm has the largest herd of registered Holstein cattle in North America. Over 9,500 head of cattle. More cows on just one farm than people living in both villages.

We're not an affluent community, in fact, 40% of our students are living in poverty. We have a small print collection of about 25,000 titles district wide.

**(Slide 3)** Since we gained OCLC access we now have 3 new school libraries in the district.... I have two aides at the high school...one

specializes in ILL and the other does copy cataloging and our OCLC network Michigan Library Consortium trained both. Many other changes have occurred which I'll tell you about shortly.

**(Slide 4)** You'll notice many international flags in our library and they represent every country from which we have hosted foreign exchange students. 23 countries have sent students to our school including Brazil, Mexico, Japan, Indonesia, Hong Kong, South Korea, Germany, China, Columbia, Sweden, Finland, Spain, Uruguay, Norway, Russia, Netherlands, Italy, Vietnam, Ecuador, Bolivia, France, Venezuela and Serbia. I have talked to all these foreign exchange students about their school libraries in an effort to better understand school libraries

globally. When I show them OCLC WorldCat and ILL I hear comments like “Cool, very cool, awesome, and other similar expressions. They all find OCLC resource sharing very impressive. I still have yet to find one of our exchange student’s school libraries that has access to OCLC resource sharing ...but they’d like to.

**(Slide 5)** Today within our library we have a photocopy center with 24 hour turnaround and delivery to teachers, an FM radio station ...our format is polka and we stream on the web 24/7, a TV studio, an ITV classroom, a computer lab, 30 wireless laptops, 52 wired desktops, 19 television monitors, and wireless headsets for students.

**(Slide 6)** Our library automation system is Innovative Interfaces Millennium. We also have a 3M-security system, a 3M self-checkout system, Ariel document delivery to the desktop, many subscription databases and a current budget exceeding \$100,000.

**(Slide 7)** **None** of the things I just mentioned existed in 1991.... before I was introduced to the power of OCLC. In 1991 my total budget was \$4000 and we were not an effective library, in my opinion. My small school library has changed significantly over the last 16 years because of OCLC and I'd like to tell you how the change occurred with the hope that it will inspire each of us to promote OCLC resource sharing to non-OCLC libraries globally.

In 1991 my school library could be described as “ineffective”... perhaps I’m being too critical...but that was the way I felt. We had an inadequate budget, limited resources, a small dated collection, and I felt totally ineffective as a professional librarian. Students had access to only what we owned...and that was largely dated. But my library’s plight was similar to that of many small libraries even today...underfunded, lacking resources...and many librarians today are feeling as I did then...not relevant, under utilized and under funded.

**(Slide 8)** In 1991 my school library became part of an LSTA grant...that gave us Group Access Capability or (GAC) as OCLC calls it. We

started a small retrocon project and OCLC provided access to millions of items through the OCLC Union Catalog now WorldCat. All of our retrocon was done off-line since we didn't have a phone line in the library. In 1992 we acquired a telephone, a 300-baud modem and a dumb terminal.... **suddenly** I had online access to the world through OCLC...however at that time I didn't realize the power I really had.

**(Slide 9)** During the steep learning curve associated with the OCLC grant project I was still feeling that my library was desperately in need of help...even though my library was comparable to many small libraries in our area ... I was still dissatisfied. Many libraries were struggling for relevance, for funding, and looking for a better way ...a pathway. Even

greater numbers of school libraries are struggling today...because in 1991 school libraries were still a “given” in most schools. However, today with the introduction of the web in schools, administrators and others are questioning the **very existence** of school libraries.

In the spring of 1992, on a day I will **never** forget, I was sitting at my desk...feeling that I needed to do something to make my library more effective. I was thinking about OCLC and the power it provided ... but I didn't know how to harness that power, I was frustrated...I needed to do something bold...but I couldn't put the pieces together. I had OCLC access but I

knew marketing it would be the difficult part. I needed a memorable marketing strategy to sell OCLC to all of our teachers and students. The words “Everything you need or want delivered” came to mind. I kept thinking of how powerful those words are. The thought of providing everything was almost unimaginable to me...but I knew it **was** possible. In THAT moment I decided I would do it... I would make the boldest statement I’ve ever made in my professional career. I would offer the OCLC world of resources to my students, teachers, and board members publicly in the fall of 1992 at our most significant teacher day of the year. I thought about the quote from Steven Covey who said “the way to predict your future is to create

it”...and right then I decided **I** was going to create my school library future.

**(Slide 10)** I walked outside my office door and looked at my library. The library seemed transformed in that moment and so had I. **I** had decided. I had nothing to lose and everything to gain. My body felt different...unlike it has ever felt before or since. I was literally tingling....  
...my library even looked transformed in my mind ...and I didn't need to get approval from anyone... .I would just make it happen....and I was determined to make it happen. I had the funding through the grant, so I didn't need to convince anyone, no committees, no people to convert, nobody working against me. I would just do it. I felt empowered...all because of OCLC and the power I felt it was giving me.

From that moment on, my library would never be the same...but I was the only one who knew it....

**(Slide 11)** Before the fall of 1992 I asked our School Superintendent if I could have 5 minutes to address the entire faculty, staff, and school board about a new library service called OCLC. In my school district nobody other than the Superintendent speaks at that morning meeting ...it was presumptuous of me to ask for time...but I did and he said yes. Finally, at that meeting, I announced to over 100 teachers, administrators, school board members, and support staff that our school library would deliver "everything any student, teacher,

administrator or community member wanted....  
no if's and 's or but's". There was total  
disbelief. Teachers whispered their skepticism  
during the meeting. I had gone out on a limb  
that I couldn't retract.

Within two weeks, one second grade teacher  
requested 17 monographs from a bibliography  
on euthanasia. For the first time our library,  
using OCLC ILL, supplied ALL 17 items she  
requested with the exact editions and copyrights.  
Later, I discovered it was a test to see if the  
library could do what I had promised. We had  
passed her test! That teacher spread the word  
throughout the school district...and it spread  
rapidly.

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My library soon became a credible source for all information. I really wasn't prepared for the positive after effects that were ahead. You see...I thought I was simply offering OCLC ILL, but in small libraries with limited access it's more than just ILL, it's transformational.

**(Slide 13)** In the first year of implementing OCLC my library had literally been transformed into a credible and important part of the school. People were taking our small library seriously...for the first time ever. Nothing I could ever have done would have resulted in such a rapid turn-around. I was doing nothing differently than I had ever done before except I

was now offering everything to everyone through OCLC ILL.

**(Slide 14)** Suddenly, the School improvement team was doing extensive research from my library, students were using OCLC for research papers, and graduates started coming back to my library to do college work. Teachers were using our school library to do graduate-level research for college classes. The attitudes became positive, and my mission of supplying everything for everyone was being achieved through OCLC. The library climate in our school had changed...radically.

**(Slide 15)** The most significant example of the power of OCLC occurred in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of OCLC ILL. So... one day in 1995 our assistant

principal, now our curriculum director, Mr. Kirby appeared in my office doorway with a student I had never seen before. He said...Mr. Bishop, this is Jeremy and he just came down to my office to let me know that he's quitting school. He says he hates all his teachers and all his classes. I've had a long discussion with him and he tells me he'll stay in school if he can build a kayak in shop class. I just took him down to see Mr. Smith to see if he could build a kayak in his class...and Mr. Smith tells me it's impossible without kayak plans and he doesn't have access to plans for a kayak. Since you always say you will get us anything we need...I'm leaving Jeremy with you...and I'm sure you will be able to keep him in school by getting him plans to build his kayak. Mr. Kirby

left Jeremy in my office. I was nervous...this was a test I had never anticipated...and suddenly a student's high school diploma was in the balance. I took Jeremy to the OCLC green screen dumb terminal...and he watched as I searched the OCLC MARC records. He explained he had never been in the library before. Jeremy wasn't a reader. We watched as the MARC records scrolled onto the screen...and we could both read them as fast as they scrolled. I breathed a sigh of relief when 78 MARC records came up. This potential high school dropout started to read the records and his eyes told the whole story...he was elated... Can you imagine any potential high school dropout getting excited about MARC records... We identified 3 books that had the plans for

building a 2 person kayak. That day is a memory I will never forget. That young man built the kayak...and stayed in school...OCLC had come through for me and saved one student from dropping out of school. OCLC made me look good again...and I had done nothing that each and every one of us doesn't do every day in our libraries.

(Slide 16) By 1996 my library was a totally different organization.... one that was respected, utilized, effective and relevant. That year my library won an award for "Library media program of the year" for our State. However, the most significant change that occurred was in the funding area. Due to the increased visibility and performance of the library and our commitment of providing "everything for everyone," our

book budget had been increased from \$4,000 to almost \$16,000, a 400% increase in only four years. All other budget areas had significantly increased as well. The single factor that started the domino effect was our access to OCLC resource sharing...**and** promoting it within our school.

**(Slide 17)** In 1996 OCLC sponsored an essay contest called “What OCLC means to me”. I thought about what OCLC really meant to me. It meant everything...and I mean everything. I won the essay contest and that year my library budget was \$16,000. Today my library budget is just over \$100,000 and I have done nothing that each and every one of you don't do every

day...and that's supply patrons with what they need. Customer service is everything. You see, in many small libraries worldwide it's not normal to deliver everything anyone wants or needs. In fact, expectations of small school libraries are very low.

In schools a single administrator usually determines the library budget and the budget process can be very subjective. Programs that produce results are valued and are usually funded well. Schools have enough money to operate robust athletic programs, quality fine arts programs, and any other program they deem valuable. However, in some schools...libraries are not valued or well funded.... and I believe they're not valued because they are not serving

the needs of their school district or their patrons.  
It's all about customer service...

**(Slide 18)** OCLC has the power to make library programs valued. OCLC can put libraries in a high profile, customer service posture ... one that commands respect, delivers valuable services, and consequently results in increased funding. For everyone in this room having access to everything is business as usual. However, schoolteachers, administrators and students think this is miraculous. They don't understand how it works, and consequently every time they get something they need or want it makes the library look more essential and more relevant.

Our tiny library loans all our materials to all of you as well, CIC libraries, ARL libraries, libraries of all sizes. Last year we loaned materials to major universities, large publics, libraries in Hong Kong, Australia, Canada, the UK and others worldwide. On OCLC my school library looks like every other library...a three-letter symbol...DR5. So we get requests from all types and sizes of libraries. When small libraries contribute their holdings to the cooperative they add value to our cooperative and we all benefit.

**(Slide 19)** When small libraries begin to deliver “everything” their patrons want or need they are empowered in a way that is difficult for me to

express. OCLC has the killer application for small libraries and that's OCLC WorldCat with delivery. Library budgets do expand in schools to fund OCLC when it becomes part of the infrastructure and it quickly becomes part of the infrastructure when it's properly promoted.

OCLC services **must** be effectively promoted to affect change. However, school librarians typically are not good at PR. They really do need help in marketing OCLC to their patrons.

Here are a few examples of the typical types of requests we get in my library:

(Slide 20) An at-risk student who was helping his dad do a remodel project and received books through OCLC ILL...

He was repeating the 8<sup>th</sup> grade...and became a hero to his father because he supplied the books his dad needed to do the project. That boy learned that books are his gateway to knowledge...and it made such a difference in his relationship with his father, his success in school and his attitude toward libraries in general. He will use libraries for the rest of his life. OCLC created a lifelong learner.

The Foreign exchange student wanting to read “The Count of Monte Cristo” in German...OCLC supplied, and he couldn’t

believe we could get it for him...OCLC  
deserved the credit.

The student dealing with a death in her family  
who got a book entitled “Helping the grieving  
student”. OCLC helped her deal with her loss.

**(Slide 21)** The middle school teacher who got a  
textbook for a master’s class he was taking. Now  
he praises OCLC all the time in the middle  
school. He is now one of our libraries leading  
advocates.

OCLC provided an essential book on the  
Mexican Revolution for an elementary school  
classroom teacher who used it for an entire unit.

Today that elementary teacher is an OCLC advocate and an advocate of libraries in general.

Our cross-country coach who got books on coaching to help coach his team members and one of his students won the state championship...OCLC contributed to that win.

The Elementary building principal who got a book on using writing to help elementary students write more effectively which resulted in improved writing scores in his building on our state standardized test.

**(Slide 22)** The Art teacher who is our biggest OCLC user says quote..." OCLC? I don't know what I would do without it! This has been a

priceless resource for me, both personally and in my classroom. Ultimately, I guess you could say that OCLC has made me a more successful student and a better-prepared teacher.” ...and she means every word...She has become an OCLC cheerleader.

Our Superintendent who needed a book by Steven Covey to help motivate administrators to help Ovid-Elsie become a world class school district...and he now believes in the power of OCLC and the power of libraries.

**(Slide 23)** These examples and many more are typical, ...now that OCLC WorldCat is part of our infrastructure. Not only do these patrons support our library program, but they have

become advocates for all libraries. School librarians will say there is no demand for ILL in their schools. Of course not...it's a chicken and egg problem...patrons don't ask for materials they know they can't get and the library can't deliver. Until OCLC ILL is in place and promoted these kinds of requests will never occur and will never be filled.

OCLC is most valuable when a patron needs a specific title. This is only a small percentage of our total requests, but in many respects they are the most significant requests. In many cases these specific requests come from decision makers or patrons who can influence funding decisions. Serving all the diverse and

specific material needs of our patrons is a key to affecting systemic change. It's all about customer service...and OCLC can be that change agent.

School libraries help shape the attitudes that many patrons have regarding libraries. A successful school library experience can result in positive attitudes toward all libraries. We all win. The results my library achieved using OCLC can be replicated in many libraries anywhere in the world. I know it.

**(Slide 24)** Unfortunately, OCLC products and services are not available in many school libraries. When you look at the composition of our OCLC member libraries only 793 school libraries are OCLC members....yet there are

approximately 200,000 school libraries worldwide. If we market affordable OCLC resource sharing to small libraries and increase that number to a critical mass ...small libraries win...our cooperative wins...all libraries win.

Delivering everything to everybody is a compelling concept. Small libraries don't see OCLC as relevant to them...they don't understand the leverage and credibility it provides. They don't understand that it has more relevance than almost anything else they are currently doing. I believe we must provide compelling reasons for small libraries to become an active part of this cooperative...for the sake of all libraries globally.

(Slide 25) As I said before OCLC is transformational for small libraries.” If **small libraries** fail to make this paradigm shift, they are going to lose relevancy in the global **world** of information...and if that happens all libraries suffer.

I’m not just talking about offering traditional ILL services to small libraries:

I’m talking about integrating OCLC into the fabric of the school or community

I’m talking about raising the expectations of the small library

I’m talking about increasing funding for small libraries by increasing their relevancy

I'm talking about making small libraries essential through increased customer service

I'm talking about providing every library patron with the essential materials they need to realize their ambitions, their dreams, and their desire for a better life.

I'm talking about offering affordable OCLC resource sharing in small libraries globally

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In 2005 there was a special education teacher in my district who was working on her doctorate at Central Michigan University. All of her doctoral work she did at our school library using OCLC. We supplied everything she needed...as we do for everybody. One Friday afternoon in

May she came into my office and said..”George I have a question...my doctoral group is meeting tomorrow morning and we have to bring something that represents our school...either a picture or an item. I’ve been asking all our students, teachers and administrators what the symbol is for Ovid-Elsie.... my advisor gave the example of the Statue of Sparty that represents Michigan State University.... My mind was racing...I knew she was going to ask me what I thought the symbol of our school was and I really didn’t have a clue...She went on to say the sports program wasn’t that great...and school spirit was lacking...and she said there seemed to be consensus...but instead of asking me my opinion on what the symbol was, she said.. George...Do you have a picture of the

library...everyone agrees that our library is the icon of our school. I couldn't believe I was hearing those words! If it's true, then OCLC made my library the icon of our school. And, I believe OCLC can make every library the icon of their school.

(Slide 27) The reality is that I haven't done anything out of the ordinary...all I did was to offer and promote OCLC resource sharing. The type of success I experienced **can** be replicated in most small libraries anywhere in the world. Most administrators are willing to fund programs that provide a significant and visible bang for their dollar. They don't want more of what they've been getting. OCLC has the most incredible application for small libraries...right

out of the box and it's called OCLC resource sharing.

We, in this room, have the answer that small libraries need...should have...must have...and most school librarians don't know it because they have never been exposed to OCLC.

Most school librarians believe OCLC is not essential...I believe OCLC must be a part of core school library services ...many school librarians believe that OCLC is for large libraries ...I believe OCLC is for all libraries regardless of size... ..many school librarians believe that OCLC resource sharing is not relevant to school libraries...I believe OCLC resource sharing **makes** school libraries

relevant...The smaller your library, the more you need OCLC.

**(Slide 28)** School librarians need to change their attitudes toward OCLC. We need to see OCLC as one of the most powerful resources we have.

We also need to change our priorities in spending and allocating limited funds. OCLC provides a huge bang for little money and, can actually result in increased funding for school libraries.

School librarians need to learn the power of providing access to everything and understand the transformational nature of that concept.

School librarians need to teach and promote OCLC WorldCat and ILL to students and teachers.

School librarians need to integrate OCLC into the school curriculum.

School librarians need to make OCLC part of core services in school libraries worldwide.

**(Slide 29)** In addition to being a lifelong school librarian in Michigan I also teach in the library and information science program at Wayne State University...and I believe that library schools can play an important role in creating this shift in how small libraries do business ...and the services they believe are core services. Since

OCLC today is not part of the fabric of many small libraries it must be taught....and it's up to library schools to create a new breed of librarian. Library schools must teach all librarians that OCLC resource sharing must be a core service.

**(Slide 30)** OCLC can also help school libraries discover the richness of our cooperative...

My vision for OCLC resource sharing is to market to small libraries, keeping OCLC resource sharing affordable for even the smallest libraries globally.

**(Slide 31)** OCLC should educate librarians about the “power” of WorldCat and OCLC resource sharing.

And we need to welcome small libraries into our cooperative knowing that successful small libraries foster successful libraries globally.

**(Slide 32)** We need to take small libraries to the tipping point where OCLC becomes ubiquitous. To do that small libraries must become an integral part of the cooperative. With all libraries worldwide as a part of our cooperative OCLC gains web-scale ubiquity. With all libraries as members, regardless of size, type, or location, the OCLC web scale flywheel doesn't just turn...it spins. With **ALL** types and sizes of libraries in OCLC our cooperative is stronger and **all** libraries worldwide are more relevant. The small library in Asia Pacific, the small library in South Africa, the small library in Germany, or the small library in Michigan.

Large libraries become more vital when their smaller counterparts thrive. Together we can accomplish this.

As we change our governance structure, as we restructure for global expansion, as we assess our cooperative's strengths and weaknesses, we also need to examine new potential markets and the small library market is ready. They need us...and we need them. Let's not let them fail, because when they fail we all fail.

Let us transform more libraries in the same way mine was transformed. Let us create a bright future for all sizes of libraries by

offering and promoting affordable OCLC resource sharing globally. Let us connect all the world's libraries sustaining OCLC as the world's preeminent library cooperative.

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