

Migration milestones

ON JUNE 30, THE OCLC COOPERATIVE PASSED A major milestone with the migration of all OCLC Connexion cataloging users and OCLC resource sharing users to the new technological platform.

OCLC's new technological platform has been under construction since 2001, when we began the switch from our legacy technological environment to hardware and licensed software with widespread industry adoption. In the past four years, we have moved from a mainframe, big-iron system architecture to a modular one that allows better interoperability within OCLC services and also with external services.

In 2002, we launched the new Connexion cataloging service. In 2003, we released the Windows-based Connexion client interface. Throughout the migration, we have also continuously enhanced Connexion by adding functionality from our legacy systems—Passport, CatME, CatExpress, CJK and Arabic—as well as many new features.

We have also redesigned our reference and resource sharing services and implemented them on the new platform. In 2004, we migrated the FirstSearch service, and in 2005, interlibrary loan. Later this year, we will complete the migration with a redesigned local holdings maintenance service, previously known as the Union List service.

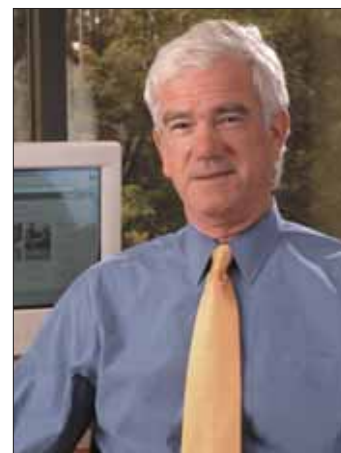
As the migration has progressed, we at OCLC have continued to gain experience in operating in the new environment of modular architecture and Web services—a major change from our legacy mainframe systems. We can now deliver new features that take full advantage of current Web technologies at a much more rapid pace.

For example, in July, thanks to the Unicode capabilities of the new platform, WorldCat will start supporting the Cyrillic, Greek and Hebrew character sets, in addition to the current Arabic, CJK and Latin capabilities. This sets the stage for WorldCat and the OCLC cooperative to become a globally networked, Web-based information resource accessible by many peoples of the world.

The new platform also supports services that were not possible on the old legacy system. For example, in 2004, we introduced Group Services, which provides an integrated solution for searching, cataloging and resource sharing for consortia and other groups of

libraries. A library consortium can have its own union catalog in WorldCat that offers a single unified view of the group's collections. In March 2005, we introduced the WorldCat Collection Analysis service, also made possible by the new platform.

The new platform also supports additional standards, such as Dublin Core and IFLA's Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR). Indeed, we will soon have a FRBRized version of WorldCat operating later in 2005. The FRBR metadata model makes it easier for information seekers to deal with large numbers of records related to a work. For example, FRBR can shrink the more than 400 different forms of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* in WorldCat into a single work, making it easier for people to identify the most appropriate items for their needs.



The migration has been a continuous and complex process. U.S. regional networks, our international regional service partners and OCLC have worked closely with users to ensure as smooth a transition as possible. While there have been some rough spots in terms of system availability and performance, overall, the migration continues to go well.

I would like to thank our users for their patience and understanding during the migration. This has been a massive joint undertaking for libraries, networks and OCLC. I believe that you will agree that it has been worth the effort. The new features and capabilities that I mentioned above are just a start. The OCLC cooperative will benefit from this new platform for years to come!

Jay Jordan
OCLC President and Chief Executive Officer