

Cataloging pace never slows at nation's oldest public university

OCLC helps UNC library system with new cataloging and retrospective conversion projects for more than six years



Situation

The University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill is the first state university in the nation, receiving its charter in 1789. Anyone who received a degree from a public university in the 18th century earned it at UNC. With a history dating back to the days of George Washington's presidency, you'd probably expect the university to have an impressive library collection—and you'd be right. Its 22 libraries include unique materials and some of the largest collections in the state, region and the nation. And **the collections keep growing.**

"We added 72,344 titles in 2006," says Margaretta Yarborough, Head of Cataloging, and that's on par with any given year. Getting those new items and existing materials accessible through the online catalog keeps 40 staffers busy at the university library year-round. But there are still plenty of projects left to do, and it's been that way for years. Take 2000, for example. That year, Yarborough had **more needs than staff resources** so she looked to outside services to help her cataloging team.

Solution

Yarborough believes in the high standards at UNC and wanted a third-party cataloging service that could live up to those expectations. "We purchased South Asian vernacular materials as part of a grant-funded project to strengthen our collections in that area, but the terms of the grant required prompt cataloging," she says. **Her review of available solutions led her to OCLC® Contract Cataloging services in 2000.** "They offered the language expertise we didn't have at the time and they could customize the files to our cataloging specifications."

AT A GLANCE

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- 75,000 visits weekly
- 5.7 million volumes and 53,000 serial subscriptions
- Ranked No. 16 among 113 research libraries in North America
- Adds more than 70,000 titles annually to its collection

"It was great to get them online. There was a lot of life left in them."

"We sent them the materials and they returned them cataloged and processed," she adds. **"It made all the difference in establishing this new area of collection growth."**

Results

That project was among the first of several that have helped make a difference at the library. "In 2001, we needed to **convert more than 88,000 paper records for our old Dewey® materials to an online format.** These materials were in storage in another building and users couldn't freely access them." OCLC Contract Cataloging™ services handled the conversion and **circulation rose dramatically** once those titles showed up in the catalog. "It was great to get them online. It's obvious there was a lot of life left in them."

Other projects have involved various collections at UNC, including its renowned music collection. "This is a current project that involves **retrospective conversion primarily of sound recordings and music scores,**" says Yarborough.

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Continued



“OCLC is also doing original work for us.” One project just beginning involves cataloging 12,000 Chinese and Japanese titles. “We have a heavy use of these materials so it’s important to get them online as soon as we can.”

And the work doesn’t stop there—reflecting the busy pace at one of the nation’s leading university libraries for years now. “We’re talking to OCLC about even more projects and expect to get started on them soon.”

For more information about Contract Cataloging, visit www.oclc.org/contractcataloging/, call 1-800-848-5878 or send e-mail to libservices@oclc.org.