

Resource Sharing Notes: Get to Know Peter Collins, Director of Resource Sharing

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One brisk morning in late February, I walked through the doors here at OCLC's global headquarters in Dublin, Ohio to start my new position as Director of Resource Sharing. It was an exciting time for me—meeting my team, talking about our goals for the months ahead (more on this topic in my next post), and learning how to navigate the building. Needless to say, a lot has changed in a short period of time. I'm still meeting with my team, just through video calls instead of around a table. We're still discussing strategy and goals but have had to shift some priorities. And I'm still navigating a building, only a tiny (albeit temporary) apartment rather than a corporate office.

While I wish I could have connected with everyone in person at our Resource Sharing Conference, I'm grateful for your participation and engagement through email, the ILL-L listserv, and events like our recent session, [Managing your library's ILL services during the COVID-19 crisis](#). Since joining OCLC, I have received a lot of great questions from the community. I thought I'd take some time to share several of my responses for you to get to know me better.



[Peter Collins](#) is the Director of Resource Sharing at OCLC and is committed to connecting the resource sharing community, sharing best practices, and developing services and systems to meet the evolving needs of libraries. [Connect with him on LinkedIn](#), and [follow him on Twitter](#).

Why OCLC?

When I think resource sharing, I think OCLC. OCLC is the super-highway on which resource sharing has been built. From the Library of Congress to your local public library, from the R1 academic research library to your local community college, OCLC is the connection that facilitates sharing, research, and discovery. I was first exposed to interlibrary loan as a student worker in the mid-1990s, and the power of OCLC discovery blew me away. I could find and request books and articles from libraries near and far. It truly opened my mind to new possibilities for research and changed my perception of what libraries are capable of. My library shared with the world and had access to the world's information through OCLC. From that moment on, resource sharing has been my passion, and the foundation of resource sharing is OCLC. The opportunity to follow in the footsteps of great innovators at OCLC is both invigorating and humbling. I am so excited to join the team and together we will take resource sharing to the next level.

Why now?

Revolutionary development is cyclical. This is especially true for technology-based services and systems. OCLC has always been a leader in resource sharing technology, and I believe we are entering a new cycle of revolutionary change. This is such an exciting time for libraries to realize the efficiencies and service improvements of modern technology. How do we integrate smart fulfillment and the latest inventory management solutions to facilitate predictable delivery and efficient sharing? How do we create a seamless user experience across all of our research tools and library systems? How do we give users the library on-demand? OCLC is already working on answers to these questions, and I am thrilled to be part of this next wave of development.

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How is resource sharing evolving?

Today we are constantly connected; we walk around with a computer in our pocket. The perception is that "everything is on demand" from ride sharing to entertainment to meal delivery, but in truth there are many important services in our communities and society that have not kept up. For-profit companies thrive or fail based on whether their app is trending, and they work hard to be on your phone and in your face. Libraries are mission-driven organizations with different incentives and smaller budgets, but libraries are leaders in service delivery. OCLC is a member-driven library cooperative that works with and for libraries to help them keep up in this fast-paced, technology-driven world. The partnership of libraries and OCLC is what will drive this revolution in resource sharing. Library users will see seamless discovery and delivery of information, entertainment, and research on demand through their library. No library can own everything, but through resource sharing we can connect libraries to users and researchers worldwide. Resource sharing delivers the latest scientific publications to students in rural schools, it delivers the latest medical journals to general practitioners in your community, and it delivers historically significant publications to researchers at your local college. Resource sharing delivers.

Where do I see myself helping to drive these changes?

As Director of Resource Sharing for OCLC, I will draw on my experiences and connections in the library community to shape resource sharing systems. Over the last 25 years, I have had the opportunity to work in a wide variety of library types—large and small academic, special, public, as well as a cooperative. This exposure to unique settings and needs is important, but it is the people that I have met and will meet that will truly create the future of resource sharing. I want to be the conduit that gathers great ideas from the community and helps mold them into tangible solutions. I want to be the catalyst for partnerships between OCLC and libraries to develop solutions that meet user needs. I want to connect libraries and librarians to create the future. I am proud to be a part of this movement, but it is not about me, it is about how we can work together to improve the world through resource sharing.

What experiences am I most proud of?

In 2009 I was hired by the Ivy Plus Libraries to help lead the development of a new unmediated resource sharing system they call BorrowDirect. Ivy Plus contracted with Relais to develop what we now know of as OCLC's D2D product. In my first year I worked closely with product developers and operational specialists at the seven member libraries to design, develop, and test the new system. This was a formative experience as I learned to translate developer-speak to library practitioners and learned to articulate user needs to programmers and designers. Once D2D went live, I spent the next six years building the partnership of libraries running D2D, providing software support to libraries, leading the D2D Users Group, and getting out in the community to talk about why BorrowDirect was growing when many of our other services had reached a plateau. This work with BorrowDirect was so gratifying because it combined my two greatest passions: resource sharing system development and working with dedicated librarians on the front lines of user service.

Thank you for taking the time to get to know me and for being part of our resource sharing community. I invite you to [connect with me on LinkedIn](#), [follow me on Twitter](#), and [email me](#) with any thoughts or additional questions. I look forward to being on this journey with you.

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