WorldCat for genealogy research
The ultimate tool for your library’s users

You and your peers are building WorldCat—creating the ultimate tool for locating and accessing unique materials in your library. This is particularly important to genealogy researchers, who are among your library’s most active information searchers. Now you can make WorldCat’s genealogical information available to them through WorldCat Discovery Services, WorldCat.org™ and popular websites.

Unparalleled breadth and depth of information

WorldCat represents a “collective collection” of the world’s libraries, built through the contributions of librarians and expanded and enhanced through individual, regional and national programs. With more than 2 billion library holdings for more than 300 million cataloged library items in thousands of libraries, WorldCat continues to gain millions of records and holdings from international union catalogs and national libraries. These resources become an extension of your collection when you make WorldCat available to your users.

WorldCat has a breadth and depth of information that your genealogists won’t find in other databases. It makes WorldCat a unique tool for users to research their heritage, and it complements existing genealogy tools such as FamilySearch, LDS Family History Library, Ancestry.com and other research databases.

WorldCat Discovery for detailed genealogy research

If your library has online access to WorldCat through WorldCat Discovery, make sure your genealogy researchers know about it. WorldCat Discovery offers a wealth of intuitive functionality that helps researchers focus their searches and identify resources that help them pursue their genealogy interests.

WorldCat Discovery will replace the OCLC FirstSearch® service. Until then, your library may provide access through either service. WorldCat Discovery offers even more tools for genealogists, including year filters, mobile views and tablet support.

WorldCat is a cooperatively maintained catalog for libraries worldwide to share cataloging work and collections. This collaboration helps embed library information into modern research processes so people can discover resources of all formats in libraries nearby and worldwide.
Extend your collection with WorldCat

Through WorldCat Discovery, the genealogists in your library can identify more primary source materials in libraries than through any other service. They can also discover an increasing number of digitized items, such as the following:

- historic newspapers from the U.S. and other countries
- historic photographs
- family Bibles, church histories and records
- cemetery and burial records
- Civil War and other military records
- town histories and probate records
- general genealogical resources, such as directories, handbooks and magazines
- slavery and antislavery materials, including slave records
- indexes of births, marriages, deaths, wills and obituaries
- microfilmed genealogy and local history collections

Access FamilySearch data through WorldCat

FamilySearch is a nonprofit family history organization with the largest collection of genealogical and historic records in the world. Since developing a partnership with OCLC in 2013, FamilySearch has contributed more than one million records to WorldCat. These records lead your library users to openly accessible digitized documents on FamilySearch.org or to the WorldCat libraries that hold the items.

Visit oc.lc/genealogy to learn more.

Find answers to common questions, read success stories and get advice on how to use WorldCat in genealogical research. To learn more about WorldCat Discovery and adding your library’s materials to WorldCat, visit oc.lc/WorldCatDiscovery or contact libservices@oclc.org.