

Press Releases

Development of UK public library catalogue progresses to next stage

Birmingham, UK, 15 April 2011:— OCLC has today announced that its project to develop a Web-based, national public library catalogue has now been made available to a selection of pilot institutions. Over the next two months a small group of libraries will have the opportunity to review the catalogue, and feedback on things such as data quality and overall user experience.

Developed in conjunction with The Combined Regions (TCR) and based on holdings indexed in WorldCat, the world's largest database of bibliographic information, the customised union catalogue provides a view of the 9 million holdings contributed by the 149 local authorities that currently subscribe to UnityUK, the UK's only nationwide network for resource sharing.

As part of this initial roll-out, pilot institutions will help refine the catalogue by providing input in areas including user experience and completeness of holdings data. Currently around 80percent of British public libraries participate in UnityUK. By

subscribing these libraries contribute details of items they wish to make available for inter-lending. Therefore, one of the main objectives of the pilot is to establish what additional data will be needed in order to improve holdings coverage and provide a credible national catalogue experience for the public.

"Offering a complete view of the UK's public libraries, online, in a user friendly way is our ultimate goal. Our pilot participants will be integral to the success of the project, and entering this phase is a significant step toward accomplishing our objectives," says Elisabeth Robinson, Product Manager at OCLC.

"We are relying on our users' experiences and feedback to ensure the group catalogue meets their needs, before we move to the next step. The initial announcement, made back in January of our intention to develop the catalogue has been really well received and we want to make sure that the catalogue is going to meet community expectations. More importantly, in the short term, we want to ensure that we maximise the return on investment already made by our existing UnityUK customers," concludes Robinson.

Rob Froud, Chair, The Combined Regions, continues: "I think it's great to have reached this stage so soon. It's important that we ensure that the national catalogue meets all our user requirements, and these pilots are important in that respect. The Combined Regions is working very closely with OCLC to ensure that this exciting development helps provide a much needed boost to the public library offer."

This announcement coincides with a number of UnityUK user group meetings happening across the country in April and May, where attendees will learn more about the national catalogue and what it means to them. For details of these meetings and to register please go to <https://www3.oclc.org/app/emea/unityuk/>

Alternatively, if your library would like to be involved in the testing of the catalogue please contact elisabeth.robinson@oclc.org

Advice for universities on student plagiarism

31 March 2011: The Academic Integrity Service (AIS), managed by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) with JISC, has today published a report to enable higher education institutions to review and develop their policies relating to student plagiarism.

"Policy works: recommendations for reviewing policy to manage unacceptable academic practice in higher education", includes an overview of previous guidance and research work on this topic.

The report then focuses on 12 recommendations that can be used by staff to aid the review and continued development of institutional policy including:

- establishing a cross-institutional group;
- making explicit the responsibilities of the institution, staff and students;
- considering terminology and definitions;
- providing detailed procedures for reporting and managing cases;
- establishing a set of penalties and associated guidance.

Dr Erica Morris, senior adviser at the HEA and lead author of the report, said: "There are many challenges facing higher education and students may well have higher expectations about their experience at university in the future.

More than ever before it's vital that HEIs have up-to-date policies in place for managing issues including student plagiarism, collusion and data fabrication.

"The recommendations in this report can be used or adapted by universities and colleges to suit their

own particular academic integrity needs. Each of the recommendations is illustrated with examples and case studies so lecturers and policy makers across the sector can benefit from the experiences of others.

“All institutions take academic integrity seriously, and this report will provide practical information on how they can continue to review and develop their policies for managing unacceptable academic practice.”

Read the report at <<http://bit.ly/dH7alm>>

University of Oxford and OCLC collaborate to study digital ‘residents’ and ‘visitors’ in the transition to higher education

Birmingham, UK, 31 March 2011: University of Oxford and OCLC Research are collaborating in a six-month, JISC-funded study, which is part of a larger three-year longitudinal project, to investigate the theory of digital residents and visitors with students in the transitional educational stage between late-stage secondary and the first year of university.

Titled “Visitors and Residents: What Motivates Engagement with the Digital Information Environment?” this international project began in January

and will continue through to the middle of 2011. Project directors are Mr. David White, Co-Manager (Development), Technology-Assisted Lifelong Learning (TALL) part of the University of Oxford, and Dr. Lynn Silipigni Connaway, Senior Research Scientist at OCLC. Dr. Donna Lanclos, Library Ethnographer at the J. Murrey Atkins Library, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, will conduct data collection and analysis efforts in the United States.

“This is timely research which will move forward our understanding of how learners engage with the Web,” said Mr. White. “It is especially exciting to be part of a trans-Atlantic partnership which allows us to compare students’ digital learning strategies in different cultural contexts.”

Digital residents spend a portion of their lives online, using the Web to develop an identity and maintain relationships. They tend to use the Web in many aspects of their lives, including as a venue for conducting their social life. In contrast, digital visitors use the Web as a tool for achieving specific goals as needs arise. They do not develop an online identity nor participate in online culture in the same way, or to the same extent, that digital residents do.

“We are very excited about collaborating with Oxford University and JISC, with support from UNC Charlotte’s J. Murrey Atkins Library, to learn more about beginning researchers’ motivations for engagement with both the physical and online information environments,” said Dr. Connaway. “This is a great opportunity to identify how

educational services and systems can attract and sustain a possible new group of lifelong learners.”

Commenting on his organisation’s decision to support this project, JISC program manager Ben Showers said: “Students and researchers are changing how they use technology at a tremendous pace, but at the moment we don’t fully understand their expectations and motivations for using specific technologies and online spaces. We’ve funded this pilot phase of a larger study to help demystify the picture, building on previous JISC investment in this area. By looking at a group in transition—those students who are between school or college and university—we’ll be able to help universities understand how their freshers [i.e., first-year students] were working when they started their courses and what the university can do to support their digital literacy during their studies. Universities can then use this information to make sure they are delivering the right digital learning resources and strategies to help retain and attract students.”

The Web page for Visitors and Residents: What Motivates Engagement with the Digital Information Environment? is available at www.oclc.org/research/activities/vandr/default.htm.

The concepts of digital residents and digital visitors used in this study are described in more detail on the TALL blog: <http://tallblog.conted.ox.ac.uk/index.php/2008/07/23/not-natives-immigrants-but-visitors-residents/>.

Technology-Assisted Lifelong Learning (TALL) is an e-learning research and development team based at the University of Oxford’s Department for

Continuing Education. Established in 1996, TALL specializes in developing high quality online courses for the Higher Education sector

“The first practical guide to e-books in libraries” now available

Facet Publishing has announced the release of *E-books in Libraries: A practical guide*, edited by Kate Price and Virginia Havergal, the first practical appraisal of e-books for library and information professionals.

CILIP Vice President Phil Bradley said “Given the current controversies surrounding e-books – the formats, costs, availability and e-readers – this is a timely publication that considers their role within a library service. E-books are already proving very popular with all readers, but within a library environment they give the library service a perfect opportunity for outreach to their members. E-books provide access to reading materials for those people in society who are, for whatever reason, unable to visit a local library.”

Despite the fact that e-books have been in existence for decades in various guises and added to library collections for several years now, there has been a lack of published manuals on the subject. This is doubtless owing to the rapidly evolving nature of the market. There are now many different types of e-books and a bewildering number of business and access models to match.

The pace of change shows no sign of abating and there is an increasing amount of interest in e-books. What is needed is practical information to assist library and information professionals managing collections of e-books and doing their best to inform their users right now.

This book, the first of its kind to provide a practical appraisal of e-books, fills that need by addressing the key questions: Where do e-books come from and what are the key business models that support them? What needs to change before e-books become universally and easily used? What will the e-book landscape look like in ten years' time? How can you be sure you are building a good collection that your users can access easily? What about money and budgets?

Phil Bradley continued, "*E-Books in Libraries: A practical guide* provides vital background information on their use as well as updating information professionals on those aspects of provision that must be taken into account. E-books really do need to be viewed in an entirely different way, since they are a new and increasingly important type of publication."

This book is a ready-reference source for any library and information professional with an interest in e-books and their development. It will also be of interest to publishers, who need to be aware of the issues faced by libraries managing e-book collections, and will be of great value to students of

librarianship and information studies, and those on publishing related courses.

[*E-books in Libraries: A practical guide*](#) is available in hard copy and will be one of the first Facet Publishing e-books when their e-book programme is launched in April 2011.

Outstanding indexes wanted: Wheatley Medal 2011

Anyone searching for information knows that a good index enhances the value of any publication, and the very best are deserving of wider recognition. Winning the Wheatley Medal confers prestige on both indexer and publisher and, like any award, can help in marketing the publication.

If you're an editor or publisher, why not consult your colleagues and consider nominating some of the best indexes from among your recent publications? Nominations are also welcome from academics and librarians, who are well placed to judge the usefulness of an index. Visit the Society of Indexers' website to check the criteria the judges are looking for, see a list of previous winners and download a nomination form: www.indexers.org.uk/index.php?id=61.

Established by the Library Association (now CILIP) and the Society of Indexers, this prestigious medal was first awarded in 1963. It has since been presented for indexes to a wide range of publications, from encyclopedias to journals, with subjects ranging from law and medicine to biography, literature and history.

- All indexes published in the EU (not just in the UK) between 1 January 2010 and 30 April 2011 are eligible for nomination (provided both text and index are in English)
- Judging panel includes indexers, academics and library/information professionals
- Publishers should remember to send a copy of the publication with the nomination form.

Don't miss the deadline – 3 May 2011.

Public libraries' legal protection under threat

14 March 2011: Crucial legal requirements that require local authorities to provide a comprehensive and efficient public library service have been put under review.

The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has launched a review of the statutory duties placed on local government. The DCLG are "inviting you to comment on the duties

and challenge government on those which you feel are burdensome or no longer needed."

The DCLG have identified 1,294 statutory duties that central government places on local authorities. Three of these duties apply to public library services in England. All three are held by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport under the Public Libraries & Museums Act (1964).

"We are calling on everyone who cares about public libraries to explain to the Department of Communities and Local Government, loud and clear, why these statutory duties are so vital," said Brian Hall, CILIP President, "These duties mean that local authorities have a legal obligation to provide comprehensive and efficient library services, and they allow the Secretary of state to monitor and inspect library services. Without them, it will be incredibly difficult to hold local authorities to account and local people will be much less likely to receive a quality public library service that is consistent across the country. I urge you to [submit your views](#) by 25 April 2011."

The Public Libraries and Museums Act requires local authorities to provide a public library service that is comprehensive and efficient, and available to all who wish to use it. The Act also gives the Secretary of State the right to gather information and inspect library services.

At an MPs' debate on 28th February, Libraries Minister Ed Vaizey stated there are no plans to repeal the statutory provision of libraries under the Act, saying, "The statutory duty remains a very important safety net for the provision of libraries." CILIP Chief Executive Annie Mauger has sent an [open letter to Mr Vaizey](#); urging him to make it clear to the DCLG that there is a continuing need for these duties, and reminding him how much public concern there is about the future of public libraries.

Find out more about the [DCLG's review](#) and submit your views via a [web form](#).

Enfield Library Service increases use of digital reference sources by over 300 percent

26 Nov 2010: Enfield Library Service now has 7,500-12,000 users a month of its online resources, a massive increase from just 2,500 per month a year ago. The higher usage comes after a thorough review of the Library's reference services by Peter Brown, Information and Digital Citizenship Manager for Enfield Libraries.

Peter explains, "The review also involved a mystery shopping exercise to test staff knowledge of online resources, revealing that only 50 percent

of library staff knew that we had them and prompting a retraining exercise. We also decided to utilise technical and licensing opportunities to make our information resources available via a PC at any library or directly from home, replacing our previous 'Central library/large branch' model." This was a considerable saving, reducing eight staff to two.

Enfield is now extending the review to cover virtual library resources on behalf of the other 12 members of the London Libraries Consortium and to carry out a benchmarking exercise on use of different digital resources across the UK. Peter adds, "This performance-based approach is a long shout from the rather vague annual budget review comment from a financially pushed Reference Librarian of: 'it's well used' to 'last year Britannica averaged 2000 customers a month at a cost of 25p a search!'"

Most popular resources available via <http://www.enfield.gov.uk/24hourlibrary> are:

- Ancestry.com
- *Encyclopaedia Britannica online*
- Theory test online

Peter explains, "Library users prefer to find reference information online in a more self-service, 'anytime' fashion. However, they tend to be quite discerning and prefer to use quality sources rather

than turning first to search engines. Our digital resources are heavily relied upon so that if they 'go down' customers, including journalists, call us wanting to know when services will be up again."

Library staff are trained in different ways of accessing information online, so that they can pass this information onto library users. The training is split into four modules, covering legal and business; online newspapers; study support; and local and community information. Trainees then cascade the information into bitesize learning for other members of their teams. Peter adds, "The specialist training I and my colleague, Paolo Zanelli, now deliver throughout the year, has paid dividends and was the key factor in increasing usage."

Prior to the review Enfield was spending annually £80k on standing orders, and £20k on other hard copy reference materials, excluding periodicals. In the current financial year (10/11) the standing

order budget has been reduced to £5k and other hard copy materials to £10k and the budget for online subscriptions is £55k – in total a total spend of £70k representing a saving of £30k.

Benchmarking performance is now needed across the Consortium – but all participating authorities must invest in training if they are going to see usage of resources increase by 250 to 400 percent. Further savings will be achieved across the consortium as the project is rolled out.