

2014

Publisher Profile: OCLC

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

(2014) "Publisher Profile: OCLC," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 26: Iss. 3, Article 20.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.6760>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

ATG: On your LinkedIn summary page it says that OCLC's "goals include furthering access to the world's information and reducing library costs." Exactly how are you doing that now? What can we expect in the future, particularly in terms of reducing library costs?

SP: OCLC has a long history of providing services that further access to information and save libraries money by working together. For example, libraries that copy catalog using WorldCat enjoy a hit rate of 95 percent, which increases their efficiency and means they don't have to spend as much on original cataloging. Libraries use our ILL Fee Management to eliminate costs associated with invoice processing and payments between libraries. Libraries that use WorldCat Cataloging Partners last year added some 6.5 million records to their catalogs through machine-to-machine interactions that required minimal staff involvement. Our new WorldShare Management Services are designed to help libraries reduce their hardware and software costs and modify workflows to gain new efficiencies. We take our objective of reducing library costs seriously.

Furthering access to information is really interesting in today's electronic communications environment. One of the more unique ways OCLC is furthering access to information in libraries today is through syndication of WorldCat data. This data is used to help connect users to the unique, authoritative information collected and maintained by libraries in new ways. Through partnerships with Web services such as Google, Yahoo!, EasyBib, Goodreads and others, library users can find library materials through the sources they use for research, reading, homework and socializing. We will work to expand this type of access to help member libraries gain more visibility and discoverability on the Web.

ATG: OCLC's cloud-based WorldShare Management Services is a major initiative, and you are incrementally moving new and existing OCLC services to the WorldShare Platform. Can you give us a progress report? With any major new venture like this there are glitches. What have been the most serious for the WorldShare effort? How has OCLC overcome them?

SP: In March (2013), staff of the Criss Library at the University of Nebraska Omaha celebrated the launch of its OCLC WorldShare Management Services—the 100th implementation of WMS since the services went into production in 2011, a significant milestone. We have many more libraries in process, so we are seeing strong interest in this new approach to library management services.

Development of WorldShare Management Services is the result of careful long-term planning, and steady technological innovation. For example, last June, OCLC took a bold step into the cloud by converting the underlying technology for WorldCat to Apache HBase/Hadoop. This new structure is used by many

against the grain

publisher profile

OCLC Online Computer Library Center


6565 Kilgour Place, Dublin, OH 43017
Phone: (614) 764-6000 • Fax: (614) 764-6096
Website: www.oclc.org

KEY PRODUCTS AND SERVICES: WorldCat is a set of databases that together comprise the most comprehensive global network of data about library collections and services. WorldCat data is contributed, maintained and shared by libraries around the world. It is managed and enhanced by OCLC. WorldCat data supports a range of OCLC and partner services, driving efficiency in library management, improving discovery of library collections and increasing the visibility of libraries on the Web.

WorldShare Management Services provide cloud-based library management and discovery applications in an integrated suite, offering librarians a comprehensive and cost-effective way to manage library workflows efficiently, and improve access to library collections and services.

CORE MARKETS/CLIENTELE: OCLC is a nonprofit, membership organization serving libraries worldwide.

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 1,200 worldwide

HISTORY AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF YOUR COMPANY/PUBLISHING PROGRAM: Founded in 1967, OCLC is a nonprofit, membership, computer library service and research organization dedicated to the public purposes of furthering access to the world's information and reducing library costs. More than 74,000 libraries in 170 countries have used OCLC services to locate, acquire, catalog, lend, preserve and manage library materials. Researchers, students, faculty, scholars, professional librarians and other information seekers use OCLC services to obtain bibliographic, abstract and full-text information when and where they need it. OCLC and its member libraries cooperatively produce and maintain WorldCat, the world's largest online database for discovery of library resources. Search www.worldcat.org on the Web. For more information, visit the OCLC Website at www.oclc.org. 

organizations such as Facebook, Adobe and Salesforce.com. There are always glitches with these types of generational shifts in technology, but given our staged approach and library development partners, these moves have been very manageable. It has been an exciting endeavor.

Long term, the WorldShare platform will support cataloging, resource sharing and discovery as well as traditional ILS functions like circulation. Libraries can pick and choose from services on this new platform. It's a more flexible environment, which is what libraries tell us they need.

ATG: As you mentioned above, OCLC partners with Web services such as Google, Yahoo!, EasyBib, Goodreads and others to help serve the library community. What do those partnerships entail? How do libraries benefit specifically?

SP: OCLC has more than 300 development and commercial partners. Each partner brings its unique resources and strengths to the table for the benefit of the membership. Last year, some of these partners supplied over 450 million records that were used by OCLC members. They generated over 227 million Web referrals to libraries. These partners include EBSCO, Gale, ProQuest, Atlas Systems,

EasyBib, Ex Libris, Google Books, HathiTrust, and Sustainable Collection Services, among hundreds more.

Content providers contribute data, and in return they get exposure via OCLC services. They can also buy services from OCLC if they want. We continue to offer APIs through the WorldShare platform that make it possible for libraries to use data in new and different ways. Most important, OCLC members get the data they need at a low cost. Their collections are syndicated for broad exposure. And libraries get the benefit of improved applications.

In addition to content partners, we have service provider partners that fall into two categories: consumer Websites relating to education and research, and library/institutional service providers. Among the former are the world's largest social network for books (Goodreads), Google Books, Wikipedia, EasyBib (the world's most heavily used citation management site) and many others. Among the latter: all major ILS and resource sharing software vendors, of course; but also a number of Analytics providers (such as SCS and Plum Analytics); Blackboard, and many others. These partnerships focus on integrating library services into the services

continued on page 39