



WorldCat Principles of Cooperation

From its inception, WorldCat has been used both as a foundation for shared cataloging and as a de facto international merged catalog. OCLC's development of Interlibrary Loan and reference services has capitalized on and added value to this core bibliographic resource.

WorldCat and related files, and the OCLC systems and services based upon them, have become vitally important to the operations and services of many libraries in the United States and an increasing number of libraries worldwide.

WorldCat's relevance depends upon four factors:

- Its scope, the extent to which it accurately reflects the full holdings of libraries
- Its timeliness
- The accuracy and completeness of the records which make up WorldCat and related files
- The functionality and flexibility of OCLC systems and software which support access to and use of records and services

Recognizing the importance of these factors, member libraries, regional networks and other partners, and OCLC work together to build and maintain WorldCat and to promote the responsible use of OCLC records, systems and services.

Governing member libraries make a commitment to:

- Contribute to OCLC all current bibliographic and holdings information which represents cataloged items in their collections
- Create bibliographic records and related data at the fullest possible level, consistent with the standards and [guidelines](#) adopted by OCLC
- Support prompt contribution of bibliographic records and related data to promote shared use of records and library resources
- Cooperate with OCLC, regional networks and other partners, and participating libraries to identify and correct errors in contributed information and to avoid introducing duplicate records
- Limit use of OCLC records, systems and services to OCLC authorized users

To assist member libraries in meeting these commitments, regional networks and other partners make a commitment to:

- Encourage participation in OCLC
- Strengthen WorldCat by promoting the full and timely contribution of records by member libraries
- Facilitate communication between member libraries and OCLC to promote effective planning and rapid resolution of issues of mutual concern
- Provide high quality, cost-effective training, consultation, and support to encourage the efficient use of OCLC records, systems and services and the timely adoption of OCLC system enhancements

To enable libraries to meet these expectations of membership, OCLC makes a commitment to:

- Facilitate the participation of libraries as authorized users of OCLC records, systems and services
- Respond to changes in technology and in the goals, organization, and cooperative agreements of participating libraries, consistent with OCLC's public purpose
- Provide cost-effective methods which enable libraries promptly and efficiently to contribute information to WorldCat and related databases and to report changes or corrections to OCLC
- Facilitate ease-of-use and cost-effective access to OCLC systems and services to benefit all participating libraries and their users
- Disseminate clear and timely documentation of the standards and guidelines for contributing cataloging and other data to WorldCat and related files

Member libraries, the regional networks and other partners, and OCLC share a commitment to:

- Ensure the continuing viability of WorldCat and related services to the library and information community
- Promote effective education and training in uses of OCLC systems and services
- Disseminate this statement and related information to current and potential users of OCLC records, systems and services

Unanimously adopted by the OCLC Members Council on May 21, 1996.