



# Smart Libraries™

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## OCLC Partners with EBSCO to Expand Access to Articles in WorldCat Local

In order to be more successful as a discovery interface, OCLC has been working on expanding the reach of WorldCat Local to include ever-larger collections of articles and other resources.

In the world of next-generation discovery interfaces, competitors battle to deliver more and more content through a single search box. OCLC positions WorldCat Local as a next generation library interface, using its massive WorldCat database to provide a novel model of access to library collections rather than Web-based online catalogs tied to the contents of a single library or consortium. WorldCat Local embodies the approach of presenting users with the ability to search against an expansive universe of resources, sorting results so that items available locally appear more prominently than those from more distant locations. This model allows library users to easily discover materials even when they are not held by their local library, with a built-in streamlined approach for requesting materials held in other libraries.

WorldCat Local leverages the massive WorldCat.org database of bibliographic records, which currently represents the holdings of thousands of libraries worldwide and includes over 135 million bibliographic records. Many libraries may hold an item described by a bibliographic record. The total number of holdings represented in WorldCat.org totals over 1.4 billion. The WorldCat.org database includes records for monographs, serials, audiovisual materials, and many other formats.

WorldCat.org represents serials—primarily journals and periodicals—at the title level and does not include records for the individual articles published within each issue. The work of describing, indexing and providing access to articles within journal collections fuels a large industry of publishers, abstracting and indexing (A&I) firms and aggregators. In order to gain access to the individual articles within their massive collections of e-journals, libraries license from a vast array of information products. These article-level information products have reached a high level of maturity and provide access to ever-larger bodies of articles within specific disciplines or general areas of interest.

The segregation of article-level indexing into these separate products poses a challenge as libraries seek to provide interfaces to their users that include all aspects of their collections. Even though WorldCat.org contains a near-comprehensive representation of library materials at a higher level, it does not include records for the vast number of individual articles which libraries provide to their users.

OCLC is no newcomer when it comes to article-oriented products. It has offered the FirstSearch service since about 1991. FirstSearch provides access to a variety of article collections. Libraries can subscribe to FirstSearch collections as one of the many competitors in the arena of article databases. OCLC offers several packages of resources within FirstSearch, including ArticleFirst, a broad collection of over 23 million citation records covering 16,000 sources in the humanities, social science, business, technology, and popular culture.

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WorldCat Local aims to provide access to the entire range of a library's collection, not just its books. From its inception, WorldCat Local has included some article-level content. The WorldCat Local pilot projects have included access to collections such as ArticleFirst, ERIC, GPO and PubMed, enabling search results that include books, articles, and other specialized materials. Yet OCLC's own ArticleFirst collections represent only a fraction of the articles that many libraries offer to their users.

In April 2009 OCLC announced a new partnership with EBSCO that would incorporate the vast body of articles available in EBSCOhost through WorldCat Local. Through this agreement, EBSCOhost data will significantly expand the amount of full-text material made available through WorldCat Local. The citation records will be loaded into the WorldCat index and made available to the WorldCat Local interface integrated in search results. The addition of the EBSCOhost material into WorldCat Local vastly increases the volume of article material available through WorldCat Local. The EBSCO material will be the first article database made available through WorldCat Local outside of its own FirstSearch products.

WorldCat Local will provide a consolidated search with EBSCOhost content to those libraries that subscribe to both WorldCat Local and to EBSCOhost. For libraries that subscribe to both resources, the ability to consolidate them into a single search provides a powerful discovery environment to library users that includes immense collections of both books and articles. If a library that subscribes to WorldCat Local also subscribes to EBSCOhost, the appropriate search features will appear automatically.

This agreement between OCLC and EBSCO does not automatically give EBSCO content to WorldCat Local sub-

scribers who are not also EBSCOhost customers. Nor are there any additional costs to take advantage of the WorldCat Local interface and search capabilities to gain the ability to offer consolidated searching to those libraries that do subscribe to EBSCOhost.

The agreement with EBSCO marks the most recent and the largest partnership formed to bring article-level content into the WorldCat Local search environment. The agreement between OCLC and EBSCO is not exclusive. OCLC intends to pursue similar agreements with other content providers to continue to expand the capacity of WorldCat Local. To the extent that OCLC is able to forge agreements with additional publishers, it will be able to expand WorldCat Local's ability to provide access to larger portions of a library's e-journal collections.

While it's helpful to have even a small portion of articles in a discovery interface, it does not save the user from having to search multiple resources until it spans a critical mass of content that can be considered reasonably complete. The

partnership with EBSCO is one of many tactics that OCLC is pursuing to allow WorldCat Local to serve as a single point of search for library content.

This partnership also includes significant benefits to EBSCO. Through this reciprocal agreement, EBSCOhost content will be made available through WorldCat Local and the WorldCat database will also be made available through the EBSCOhost search engine. OCLC will provide EBSCO with a copy of the WorldCat database so that subscribers of EBSCOhost will also gain the ability to perform a consolidated search of articles and books. This approach also helps EBSCO deal with the same need to provide more comprehensive access to library collections through its search interface.

The key strategy of WorldCat Local involves placing collections of content directly into the WorldCat index and providing rapid search capability that can be ranked by relevancy. Metasearch technology can be used to supplement this strategy by bringing in content from

external resources not indexed in WorldCat. OCLC has been working with Index Data since June 2008 to use its metasearch technology to extend WorldCat Local to include resources not directly indexed in Worldcat.org.

In recent years, the technique of harvesting metadata or full text into a consolidated index that can be searched instantly has gained favor over the distributed query model of metasearch. Searching a centralized consolidated index yields significant functional advantages over metasearch, especially in terms of the search speed, the depth of results, and the ability to sort by relevance. From the publisher's perspective, distributed query of metasearch can be problematic in that their servers must respond to a high percentage of queries for which none of their content is selected and viewed by an end user. The problem until now with the consolidated index approach has been the inability to populate them with sufficient content, due to the reluctance of publishers to provide copies of their citation data and the full text of articles to those involved in creating discovery products. The recent announcements involving Summon and WorldCat

Local signify a sea change where publishers now see the value and practical benefits of cooperating with this model of content discovery.

Trials of WorldCat Local have been underway since April 2007. Some of the early libraries that have been engaged in testing WorldCat Local include the University of Washington, the University of California, and Northeastern Illinois University. OCLC expects to launch the version of WorldCat Local with the EBSCO content in July 2009.

OCLC's WorldCat Local competes with other discovery products such as AquaBrowser, Primo, Encore, and VUfind. The products in this latter group are installed locally by individual libraries or consortia. WorldCat Local is a subscription service that doesn't require installation local software.

The recently-announced Summon product from Serials Solutions [See the March Issue of SLN] also competes directly with WorldCat Local. Offered only through the Software as a Service (SaaS) model, Summon presents a number of interesting similarities and differences with WorldCat Local. Summon works on a similar model of acquir-

ing content from publishers of article-level data as the basis of a central index that powers their search interface. Serials Solutions has access to a great deal of content through the content products within the CIG organization that includes ProQuest and R.R. Bowker, and has also formed arrangements with Gale and other companies. A major portion of the indexing of the content for Summon is based on the full text of the articles and not citations. While WorldCat Local has been designed to accommodate full-text indexing, the agreement with EBSCOhost involves indexing citations. Summon integrates a library's monograph collection into its search scope through harvesting the bibliographic records from the local ILS, which contrasts with WorldCat Local use of the massive WorldCat.org.

With the advent of products such as WorldCat Local and Summon, the competitive battlefield shifts to the quantity and quality of the content enabled through pre-populated indexes versus the merits of the interface features and technology.

—Marshall Breeding

## Kindling a Clarification and Expansion of Reader Rights

The new Kindle 2 portable e-book reading device, which was released in February, is generating lots of litigation and threats of litigation. The Authors Guild is not happy about the text-to-speech feature embedded in the Kindle 2, which originally was capable of turning any e-book into a passable digital audio book on the fly.

The Authors Guild argued that the text-to-speech feature created an audio book, a product that Amazon was not licensed to create. Evidently the price to distribute an electronic book version of a work usually is less expensive than the price to create and distribute an audiobook version. In other recent legal maneuvering, Amazon has threatened a lawsuit against efforts

to circumvent the DRM scheme. Then the folks behind the Discovery Channel discovered that both the Kindle 1 and Kindle 2 may be violating a patent they hold. This article will focus on the text-to-speech struggle and how it may be pointing the way to a clarification and expansion of reader rights in the digital era.

Blind and low-vision readers have taken an active leadership role on this issue. They generally denounced the Authors Guild for its stance on the text-to-speech feature of the Kindle 2. The idea of concurrent access to TTS versions of hundreds of thousands of frontlist works is very appealing to blind and low-vision readers. The Reading Rights Coalition, a cohort of organizations representing blind and low-vision readers, is

chagrined that Random House has decided to take Amazon up on its offer to disable the text-to-speech functionality of its new Kindle 2 portable reader. They oppose Amazon's decision to allow individual authors, publishers, and rights holders to decide whether to keep the TTS function turned on or off for each e-book.

On April 7th about 200 members of the Reading Rights Coalition held an informational protest outside the headquarters of the Authors Guild in New York City, chanting slogans like "Stop the greed, we want to read" and carrying placards with statements like "Give Kindle the Freedom of Speech." The National Federation of the Blind estimates that 15 million Americans have print disabilities that make it difficult or impossible for them to read print on paper or electronically. Representatives from the Authors Guild called the protest "unfortunate and unnecessary."

On March 31, 2009 Cory Doctorow, a Canadian author, journalist, blogger, and activist, published an essay in *The Guardian* about the flap over the text-to-speech feature of the Kindle 2. He argues that the primary issue here is reader rights, not the rights of authors, publishers, and other copyright holders. As Doctorow notes, "It's not an infringement for a Kindle owner to use technology pri-

vately to modify a copyrighted work. If you own a painting, you can take a photo of it to carry around in your wallet—...without paying the painter any extra."

Doctorow also is aghast that Amazon, bowing to pressure from the Authors Guild, would implement a technological solution to the perceived problem in a way that alters the feature set of the Kindle 2 as originally advertised and upon which early adopters made purchasing decisions. Doctorow argues by analogy that such retrofitting of the feature set is ludicrous, is bad for business, and undermines the long-term relationship between authors and readers. "Would you buy a car if it was known that your air-conditioner and stereo system could be remotely disabled?" he asks, "Or if we suddenly discovered that the manufacturer could remotely lock you out of your boot [trunk] in order to assuage some pressure group who'd rather you no longer be allowed to carry parcels around?"

Various groups continue to argue about what copyright may come to mean in the digital era, when the making of copies is both endemic and an epidemic. They continue to debate the future of the right of first sale\* as the relationship between texts and text-bearing-devices becomes much more fluid than it was during the print era. Perhaps we should begin a draft document outlining

what could or should become the natural rights and responsibilities of readers in the digital era.

- **Readers come first, because they come last.** Although authors, publishers, content aggregators, bookstores, libraries, and other vested interests have their own sets of rights and responsibilities, the needs of readers should come first. This does not mean that the reader always is right. A lemma to this right states that sometimes professions like librarianship that support readers need to support the needs and opportunities of readers even when such needs and opportunities may not seem advantageous or even deleterious to those professions and the institutions they have created. The same professional call for effacement should occur in other professions. For instance, if something benefits the health and well-being of patients without benefiting healthcare professionals and healthcare institutions, the needs and opportunities of patients should come first. In the same vein, learners come first, compared to the needs and opportunities of educators and educational institutions. This is the "tough row to hoe" that professionals need to accept and embrace. So, if, for example, the Kindle 2 proves to be generally good for readers and reading but not very promising for libraries and librarianship, so be it.
- **Readers should be able to control the appearance of words on their reader.** The size of the font, the font type, the font color and background color, the page orientation (landscape or portrait), and other visual features should all be adjustable. Although the sale of



large-print printed books has been a revenue stream (or at least a revenue rivulet) for publishers and authors during the predominantly print era, the right to control the presentation of the text should be passed to readers in the predominantly digital era.

- **Readers should be free to mark up the text.** Readers should be able to add annotations, tags, reviews, and essays to any electronic text, and other readers should be able to use, hide, or ignore the “added value” that other readers add.
- **Readers should be able to modify any electronic text as long as they clearly indicate the modifications made.** Although most ancient, medieval, and renaissance authors and readers may have accepted this right as a “natural” right of readers-qua-content-creators, during the modern era, most reader rights to modify a text were prohibited or curtailed. Parody is an exception that proves the general rule. Two supporting anecdotes come to mind. First, Dr. Johnson was reciting someone else’s poem from memory to a group of his friends. As he dredged the poem from his memory, he inadvertently changed one of the lines. Boswell notes with approval that Johnson’s ver-

sion was an improvement on the original verse. Secondly and more recently, Mike Nichols, a film editor, modified and edited a digital version of the Star Wars movie *The Phantom Menace* in which, in the theatrical release, Jar Jar Binks played a significant, silly role. The edited film, the *Phantom Edit*, was widely regarded to be a much better version of the film than was the theatrical release.

- **Readers should be able to make audio and tactile (e.g., Braille) reading copies of any electronic book for personal use.** In other words, the choice of a visual, audio, or tactile reading experience should be left to and controlled by individual readers. If they purchase one version of a digital text, they should be able to “flip” to either or both of the other versions easily and without additional out-of-pocket expense, and without receiving permission from the copyright holder to the work. If a person has purchased or leased access to an electronic book, he or she should be able to convert that book to a text-to-speech or Braille tactile book on the fly, assuming that the technology of the hardware and software providing access to the e-book supports this.

—Tom Peters

\*Defined by Wikipedia thusly: “...allows the purchaser to transfer (*i.e.*, sell or give away) a particular lawfully made copy of the copyrighted work without permission once it has been obtained. That means that copyright holder’s rights to control the change of ownership of a particular copy end once that copy is sold, as long as no additional copies are made.”

#### More Info. @:

Reading Rights Coalition:

<http://www.readingrights.org/>

Photos and videos of the Reading Rights Coalition protest:

<http://i.gizmodo.com/5202554/photos-and-video-from-the-national-federation-of-the-blinds-kindle-2-protest>

Publishers Weekly article about the protest:

[http://www.publishersweekly.com/index.asp?layout=talkbackCommentsFull&talk\\_back\\_header\\_id=6594444&articleid=CA6650055](http://www.publishersweekly.com/index.asp?layout=talkbackCommentsFull&talk_back_header_id=6594444&articleid=CA6650055)

Cory Doctorow’s Guardian article:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2009/mar/31/cory-doctorow-kindle>

The Phantom Edit:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Phantom\\_Edit](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Phantom_Edit)

## Phone It In

Delivering library systems, content, and services to mobile phones is a hot trend. For example, in January the Orange County Library System in Florida began experimenting with an application that would enable iPhone users to search their online catalog. A test group there is using the AirPAC product from Innovative Interfaces to search the catalog, request items, and renew checked-out materials with their iPhones. The new AirPAC product is a collaborative effort involving library staff members and Innovative staffers. *Library Success: A Best Practices Wiki* provides a listing of the various types of initiatives and services currently underway.

The stakes here are quite high—personal portable appliances for communicating, sharing and using information, as well as viewing and engaging in entertainments are everywhere, with more popping up every day. Mobile or cell phones are the current darlings of this pack of gadgets—any organization, business, or industry involved in communications, information transfer, and/or entertainment should be working actively to deliver content and services to these devices.

A 2009 report, “Measuring the Information Society,” from the International Telecommunication Union, based in Switzerland, notes that the diffusion of cell phones throughout the population in developed nations is almost complete, and that developing nations are not far behind. The introduction to the report notes that, “In the developing world, mobile phones have revolutionized telecommunication and have reached an estimated average 49.5 per cent penetration rate at the end of 2008 – from close to zero only ten years ago.” This far outpaces the diffusion of Internet access in the developing world, which

was estimated at only 13 percent at the end of 2007.

In July the InfoQuest collaborative reference service will kick off a six-month trial period. This service, designed to field questions posed by users via their cell phones, was spearheaded by the Alliance Library System in Illinois. The participating libraries will be using the mobile phone reference service platform developed by Altarama to offer what they hope will be a 24/7 text messaging service that users can use from any cell phone anywhere. Partner libraries in the U.S., Canada, Europe, and Australasia are being sought. Each partner library will provide a minimum of two-hours of mobile phone text chat reference service per week.

The Altarama website provides a basic description of how their system works:

“The “SMSreference” service provides a mobile/cell phone number, unique to your library that you can advertise as the number for SMSing your library. SMS’s received by that number are automatically delivered to an email address that your library specifies. The librarian monitoring that email address creates responses in email using their usual “Reply” facility. Your responses are automatically delivered to the client’s mobile phone by SMS.”

Reference service is a combination of communication and information-sharing, so it seems like a natural beneficiary of the current wide diffusion and use of mobile devices. A reference service geared toward SMS mobile phones radically redefines the service point concept of library services. Now users can access the library service from just about anywhere.

24/7 service is becoming increasingly important and a general user expectation in certain service sectors like healthcare, financial services, and information. One advantage of collaborating on a pilot project like this is that it makes the 24/7 service ideal more easily attainable and sustainable.

Another common user expectation for this type of service is nearly instantaneous turnaround time. The group of librarians working to develop the InfoQuest pilot project hope to achieve an average turnaround time expressed in minutes, not hours or days.

Some commercial (or at least not library-centered) SMS-based reference services also have cropped up. A privately held New York-based company called KGB has become active in this service space. In January 2009 ChaCha Research, Inc. launched a service designed to draw upon the wisdom and collective knowledge of their crowd of users. Drawing on the collective wisdom of the librarian crowd is another aspect of this new twist on reference service that the InfoQuest team is exploring.

—Tom Peters

### More Info. @:

Measuring the Information Society Report:

[http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/publications/idi/2009/material/IDI2009\\_w5.pdf](http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/publications/idi/2009/material/IDI2009_w5.pdf)

Innovative Press Release:

[http://www.iii.com/news/pr\\_display.php?id=420](http://www.iii.com/news/pr_display.php?id=420)

Altarama:

<http://www.altarama.com/refxsms.htm>

KGB: <http://www.kgb.com/>

ChaCha explanation:

<http://answers.chacha.com/about-chacha/how-it-works/>

## The Affordances of Information Technologies

I think the concept of “affordances” is one of the key concepts of our time, yet when I mention the word in talks, it almost invariably prompts questions. “What do you mean by affordances? Stuff we can afford?” Similarly, whenever I invoke the concept of affordances in writing, editors often question the term and its use, usually suggesting that I choose an alternative term that will be more understandable to more people. So, perhaps the concept of affordances, especially applied to information technologies, requires a little explication and defense.

The idea of an affordance is used in several disciplines, with different and evolving meanings. The basic Wikipedia definition states, “An **affordance** is a quality of an object, or an environment, that allows an individual to perform an action.” Sometimes the scope of affordances is meant to include all “action possibilities” inherent in any object or environment. Other times it may mean only those “action possibilities” which can be easily perceived, understood, and implemented by a user. When I speak and write about the affordances of any information technology, I generally envision those uses of the technology that always are inherent in any technology, but which may take users some time and trial and error to discover and use.

The affordances of any information technology, then, are those uses which eventually emerge (in the sense that is generally understood and practiced by the users of that technology) as those

that the technology seems to encourage or privilege. Collectively, it often takes us awhile to “catch on” to the affordances of any new technology. For example, in the early days when Twitter was being discussed at library conferences, presenters and attendees often agreed that while Twitter seemed interesting, its natural affordances and applications to library services and librarianship seemed murky. As time passed and usage increased, our collective understanding of the natural affordances of Twitter began to emerge. We began to understand what Twitter was good for, and, by extension, its limitations.

Here’s another example from the transportation field. An affordance of the automobile and the network of roads supporting automobile travel is the ability to make frequent, unscheduled stops. QuickTrip has built an entire business around this affordance. Compared to travel by train and plane, for instance, the ability to make frequent, unscheduled stops in a car is privileged – encouraged by the design and deployment of the technology. The next time you’re on a commercial flight, trying summoning the flight attendant and announcing with glee, “Hey, there’s a fruit stand down there. Let’s stop and buy some nectarines,” watch how the flight crew reacts to your idea. Clearly, frequent, unscheduled stops are not an affordance of air travel.

Understanding the affordances of any information technology almost always will serve you better than merely under-

standing how the technology works (that is, the feature set and the core functions), but to be able to comprehend the affordances, you usually need to understand how the technology works, including its limitations and how it is being used by the early adopters.

—Tom Peters

### More Info. @:

Wikipedia article about affordances:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Affordances>



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#### **Editor**

Dan Freeman  
312-280-5413  
dfreeman@ala.org

#### **Contributing Editors**

Tom Peters  
816-616-6746  
tpeters@tapinformation.com

Marshall Breeding  
615-343-6094  
marshall@breeding.com

#### **Administrative Assistant**

Judy Foley  
800-545-2433, ext. 4272  
312-280-4272  
jfoley@ala.org

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