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# Curating Collective Collections — Reinventing Shared Print: A Dynamic Service Vision for Shared Print Monographs in a Digital World

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As scholars have shifted to preferred electronic access for journals, libraries have implemented shared print projects to consolidate backfiles. These projects share a vision of managing the decline of the print journal, while collectively ensuring long-term stewardship of fewer print copies. A key strategy has been to invest as little as possible in new service infrastructure for shared backfiles, making use of existing infrastructure as much as possible. Strategies for print monograph collaboration can employ some of the techniques developed for journals. However, there are significant differences in the use cases for print and digital monographs and libraries' abilities to serve them, which suggest an alternate vision for monographs.

In 2006, **Michael Stoller** exhorted the research library community to reinvent collection development to ensure that digital collections

were just "an interlibrary loan away" for users of large and small libraries.<sup>1</sup> Now, as print monograph inventories are reduced and redistributed and as digital access remains uncertain, we should reinvent print collection development and management to ensure that fewer retained copies can still be accessed by the majority of research library users. Fundamentally, we must ask, is our primary goal for collaboration around print monographs to reclaim space or to create a deeper level of partnership among research libraries? If a deeper partnership, is the solution to create ever-more complex resource sharing agreements or to fundamentally change the business model and architecture for sharing print and digital resources?

For monographs, libraries could adopt a longer-term, active service vision, a vision that facilitates greater access to retained print

collections and many-to-many relationships between libraries. New goals for shared print monograph projects might be to reaffirm access to retained collections as a core value, and *enhanced* access services could become the means for supporting long-term preservation.

A new vision for sharing print monographs would require a "cloud service layer" to federate digital and print repositories. The cloud service layer would readily display print and digital formats and provide one-click direct delivery of either format to a user's device or physical location. A new business model would be needed to ensure that library partnerships are intentionally set up to subsidize print retaining libraries. **HathiTrust**, **OCLC** and possibly the **DPLA** could be important development partners to support this service layer and the underlying business model.

## Print Journals, Print Monographs and Library Collaboration

To understand the rationale for a new vision, it might be useful to review some environmental differences between print journals and monographs. There are major differences between the two and libraries' abilities to provide digital versions of them, which affect our ability to collaborate.

Libraries are able to collaborate around print journals with little change to existing services because 1) the journal article (not the bound volume) is the desired unit of publication; 2) scholars use the print and digital forms in very similar ways; 3) scholars rarely prefer print over digital, when available; 4) libraries can legally and technically scan and provide digital copies of articles; and 5) most libraries have acquired access to full-text digital versions. Journal collections are also smaller; they yield more space per title-level decision; and collaboration affects disciplines uniformly. None of these conditions exist for print monographs.

We know little about the ways users want to interact with print and digital monographs. Initial studies suggest that scholars use print and digital monographs differently and want to have access to them for different purposes at different times.<sup>2</sup> There are legal and technical limitations to document delivery for monographs; to achieve scale libraries will need to fine tune delivery options (scanning vs. shipping print.) We need to know more about barriers in lending workflows (shipping logistics) that *cause* users to forgo access to print, resulting in underutilized collections. And we need to know more about the combined effects of fewer print copies and increased exposure through digitization on demand at retaining libraries.

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## News From the Field

◆ **Maine Shared Collections Cooperative** has joined the **HathiTrust** and developed a Memorandum of Understanding. They have contracted with **Sustainable Collection Services (SCS)** to provide collection analysis services for monographs.

◆ **AESRL (Association of Southeast Research Libraries)** and **WRLC (Washington Research Libraries Council)** have signed an agreement to create "Scholars Trust," combining their shared print collections under a single retention and access agreement. The combined title list exceeds 8,000 journal titles and more than 300,000 volumes, making it one of the largest shared print journal repositories in the U.S.

◆ **ReCAP (Research Collections Preservation Consortium)**, consisting of **NYPL**, **Columbia**, and **Princeton** is working with Planning Consultant **Lizanne Payne** on a shared collections planning project. They are specifying the architecture for a middleware discovery and delivery platform, dealing with the issue of duplication in the existing storage facility and in future deposits, and developing policies on retention, ownership, and "minimum acceptable condition".

◆ **Connect New York**, a consortium of 18 private colleges in N.Y. state has developed a Memorandum of Understanding for its **CNY Shared Print Trust** program, and is working with **SCS** in an initial project to identify monographic materials for retention and withdrawal.

◆ **University of California Libraries** have initiated a strategic planning effort to define a current vision for shared print collections and services. They hope to complete the strategic planning process in 2013.

◆ **HathiTrust** has announced the membership of its inaugural Program Steering Committee (see [http://www.hathitrust.org/updates\\_may2013](http://www.hathitrust.org/updates_may2013)). Among the responsibilities of this group will be coming up with a plan for a Distributed Print Monographs Archive.

◆ **Western Regional Storage Trust (WEST)** now has 109 members in 18 states, including 64 consortial members. Over the past three years WEST has processed for shared print archiving 10,053 journal families, comprising 349,500 volumes.

◆ The **United States Agricultural Information Network** and the **Center for Research Libraries** have initiated a process to update the National Preservation Plan for Agricultural Sciences Literature, which will include a shared print program for materials on agriculture and rural life. 🌱

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Fundamentally, books are at the core of library culture; substantive change will require sustained director-level involvement and the participation of many libraries.

### Experiments in Monograph Collaboration

Since the shared print workshop hosted by Ly-rasis in 2010 titled “Developing a North-American Strategy to Preserve & Manage Print Collections of Monographs,” important research has been conducted and several experimental projects have been launched. OCLC Research has published two valuable studies to outline the scope of monograph collections and suggest contexts for broader collaboration.<sup>3</sup> Shared monograph projects have been launched in Maine, Michigan, New York, California, and Iowa.<sup>4</sup> These projects are using infrastructure originally developed for journals (e.g., disclosure mechanisms in union catalogs and defined retention periods<sup>5</sup>), while also working through challenges unique to monographs.

Monograph projects are further refining our understanding of trust. Two key features of these partnerships — retention of shared titles in place (rather than in storage) and broad distribution of commitments across partners — suggest that trust is accomplished by ensuring each partner has some tangible responsibility to the shared collection. The environmental conditions in which the monographs are kept are important but secondary considerations. These projects are also extending the conversation about shared print collections beyond the library, engaging users and displaying retention commitments publicly.<sup>6</sup>

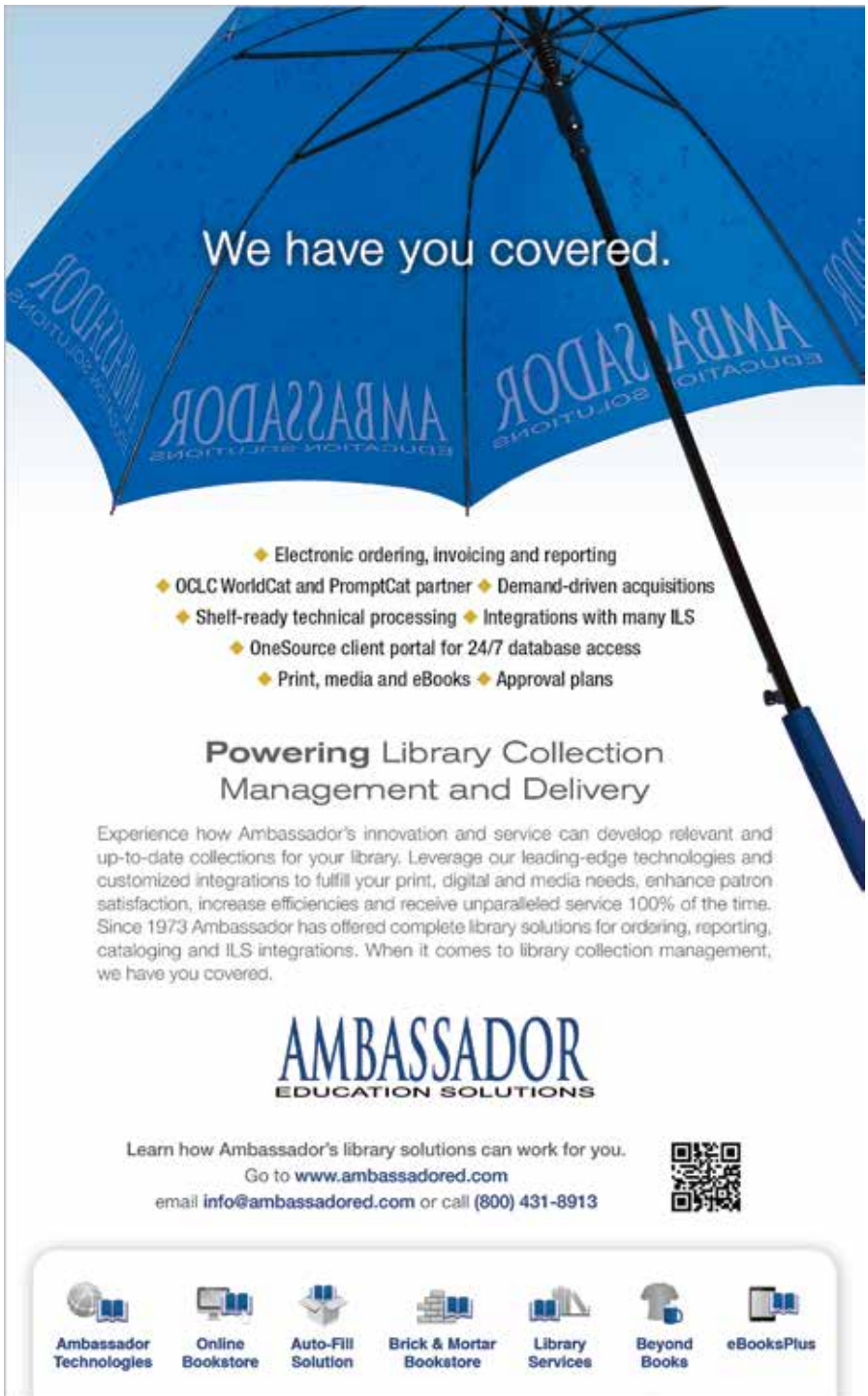
Journal and monograph projects are also extending the boundaries of existing trust networks.<sup>7</sup> Thus far, monograph projects have only been organized within states (in the U.S.) and within existing resource sharing groups. An important project planned in the northeastern U.S. may soon test a regional approach to sharing print monographs. It will likely reveal greater expectations for access (display and delivery) and limitations in resource sharing agreements. Certainly, resource sharing agreements could be harmonized, but that effort may not address the additional business needs to support shared collections.

### A Revised Vision for Sharing Print Monographs

For monographs, research libraries could adopt a longer-term, active service vision. While journal projects share a vision of managing the decline of the print journal, our mission for monographs could be to develop a collective collection and stimulate use of more diverse titles in shared collections through enhanced access services. We could foster more dynamic uses of print and digital formats from a collection of fewer copies. Retention and enhanced access could be the means for transforming collection development and management.

To advance this mission, our goals might be to

- maintain collection breadth (i.e. by explicitly retaining at least one copy of every title held in our aggregate collections)



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- ensure democratic access<sup>8</sup> to retained print collections
- improve or increase access to shared print collections

Reducing duplication may be an important secondary goal or byproduct of ongoing collaboration.

A new vision could leverage existing shared print infrastructure and also include a re-imagined, re-engineered discovery and delivery layer. This service layer would visually co-locate shared print and digital copies and provide one-click delivery of either format to authenticated users.

A new vision would also require a business model to balance the stewardship goals of many libraries with the near term goals of many other libraries to reduce inventories. The model could ensure a certain pace of archiving through annual archiving campaigns and secure deselection libraries' financial participation by implementing enhanced access services.

### Shared Print Monographs 2.0: Making it Happen, Achieving Scale

What might be the building blocks for sustained collaboration? What kind of infrastructure and business models will be needed?

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### **A Reinvented Discovery and Delivery Layer**

A key feature of this vision is a new discovery and delivery service layer (a “cloud service layer”) to federate retained collections and visually co-locate shared print and digital copies. This service layer would provide one-click direct delivery of either format to the user’s device or physical location. Imagine a book image with options such as “download it,” “scan it,” “reprint it,” and “ship it” from any digital or shared print repository. The user would not be concerned with the location from which the digital or print version is served, though branding options would be possible.

Participating libraries in the service would provide (and receive) a variety of *enhanced* or *additional* access services including digitization, scan-on-demand, print-on-demand, and direct shipping with unlimited checkout periods à la Netflix. Each service would have its appeal and affordances for different library users and could complement, not replace, interlibrary loan. Participating libraries would be encouraged financially to implement one or more of the enhanced access services for its shared collections. The cloud service layer would manage the additional financial exchanges necessary to support shared print and digital collections.

### **Collection Analysis and Retention: What to Archive Next?**

Currently, shared print monograph projects start by hiring a consulting and collection analysis service (e.g., **Sustainable Collection Services**). The service identifies a cohort of monographs around which a group can build its political “legs” for collaboration. The emphasis is initially on highly duplicated, low-use titles. The analyses are costly, difficult to repeat, and involve intense consulting. Once governance structures are in place, it will make sense for a group to externalize and routinize analyses.

To support a longer-term vision, collection analyses and coordination of retention commitments could be raised to the network level and reframed to support regular decisions about “what to retain next.” Regional groups could gradually outsource their analyses to gain efficiencies while continuing to coordinate group decisions with data and recommendations provided by the network. This may be an area where **HathiTrust** and **OCLC** can provide some leadership.

Ever more powerful tools will be needed to handle network-level analyses and decisions about “what to archive next.” To be effective, the tools must not only compare a group’s print collections against digital and print repositories but also against book publication indexes, book industry market data, and citation analyses. **Serials Solution’s** Intota, **WorldCat’s** Collection Evaluation System, and **Sustainable Collection Services’** GreenGlass may be options to monitor.

### **A Business Model to Support Shared Print at the Network Level**

A business model for shared print monograph collaboration would ensure that costs

for retention and access are shared among the widest group of libraries. While resource sharing agreements could be renegotiated for local groups, that approach is probably not scalable or sustainable. A new model would provide an avenue for research libraries of all sizes across North America to band together to support retained print collections, digital repositories, enhanced access services, and ongoing collection analyses.

Costs borne by retaining libraries might include costs of disclosure (metadata about a retention commitment,) enhanced access services, digitization, print replacements, and possibly prospective print acquisitions. Central costs would include program administration, collection analysis, digital curation, systems support, and outreach. The business model would support central services and subsidies for retaining libraries.

The business model would ensure growth in shared print collections by providing financial incentives to retain print and to implement enhanced access services. The model might also facilitate one-time depositing relationships with unaffiliated libraries to secure large, unique monograph collections at risk of deselection.

A governing group could set annual incentive rates to ensure a certain pace of archiving (number of titles retained) each year. The group could monitor growth in shared collections and develop annual selection guidelines to stimulate or discourage commitments in certain areas. Finally, the group could also issue best practices for enhanced access services and prioritize funding requests for one-time deposits to storage.

One mechanism for distributing support to retaining libraries might be to create a Shared Print Collections Fee Management feature in **WorldCat** similar to the Fee Management feature for **WorldCat** Resource Sharing. This system could be used to transact payments and credits across many participating libraries, based on annual pricing guidelines defined by a governing group.

Certainly, there will be substantial one-time costs to build the infrastructure to support this. One-time costs would include the development of the cloud service layer, a replacements registry, guidelines for incentives, copyright guidelines for scan-on-demand, logistics research to identify providers for direct delivery by mail, and training for pilot locations in scanning and direct delivery services. These may be areas for foundation support and development by **HathiTrust** and **OCLC**. Other one-time costs may be borne by retaining libraries (e.g., scanning equipment).

### **Next Steps and a Call for Research**

If, as a community, we want to explore a more dynamic service vision for sharing print monographs, additional research and experimentation will help. We need to know more about what users want to do with print monographs, particularly when digital versions exist.<sup>9</sup> We need to do some logistics modeling to forecast demand on retained print collections as inventories decline, digital surrogates become available, and enhanced access services are implemented. Finally, we need to monitor growth in collection breadth and develop network-level models to support group decisions about “what to archive next.”

### **Endnotes**

1. **Stoller, Michael**. 2006. “Collection development and survival in the ‘mostly digital’ library.” *Against the Grain*, 18:4.
2. Various studies, including the *Ithaka S+R US Faculty Survey 2012* and *UC Academic e-Book Usage Survey*, suggest that users in many domains value a mixed print and digital environment for monographs. Some users favor digital access for search and discovery and print for sustained reading. There are surprising additional differences in print preferences among user types. This suggests that print collections are likely to continue to attract use for some time. *Ithaka S+R UC Faculty Survey 2012*. <http://www.sr.ithaka.org/research-publications/us-faculty-survey-2012>. *UC Libraries Academic e-Book Usage Survey*, May, 2011. [http://www.cdlib.org/services/uxdesign/docs/2011/academic\\_ebook\\_usage\\_survey.pdf](http://www.cdlib.org/services/uxdesign/docs/2011/academic_ebook_usage_survey.pdf).
3. **Malpas, Constance**. 2011. *Cloud-sourcing Research Collections: Managing Print in the Mass-digitized Library Environment*. Dublin, Ohio: OCLC Research. <http://www.oclc.org/research/publications/library/2011/2011-01.pdf> and **Lavoie, Brian, Constance Malpas and JD Shipengrover**. 2012. *Print Management at “Mega-Scale”: A Regional Perspective on Print Book Collections in North America*. Dublin, OH: OCLC Research. <http://www.oclc.org/research/publications/library/2012/2012-05.pdf>
- OCLC’s** Cloud Sourcing Research Collections posited that fewer repositories of shared print monographs stitched together by shared virtual infrastructure could service the needs of many libraries with minimal preservation risk, while a subsequent mega-regions study suggested that the locus for effective collaboration around print monographs might be specific geographic regions of economic activity where established logistics infrastructure and cultures of collaboration could support efficient delivery of print resources. Whether federated repositories, mega-regional collaborations or a bit of both models are adopted, a new vision and infrastructure will be needed to support them.
- ARL** libraries will not be able to do it alone. The **OCLC** Mega-Regions report found that **ARL** inventory is insufficient to sustain aggregate demand. Collaboration among **ARL** libraries, non-**ARLs**, public and special libraries is called for in that report. The interdependence among collections found in this report is borne out by **University of California** resource sharing statistics, which show an increase in external borrowing of monographs over the past decade. This trend is likely to continue as acquisition rates decline.
4. For information about these shared print programs, visit **CRL’s** Print Archives Network: <http://www.crl.edu/archiving-preservation/print-archives/forum>.
5. The Maine Shared Collections Strategy is preparing to apply the **OCLC** Print Archive Metadata Guidelines originally developed for journals to shared print monographs. Other projects express retention commitments in statewide union catalogs or shared databases.
6. Some monograph projects display retained collections in union catalogs as part of a longer-term strategy for collaboration (e.g. Maine,) while others display commitments simply to overcome barriers in collection management infrastructure (i.e., when partners do not have the same ILS.)
7. Several journal and monograph projects span consortia and include libraries of many types and sizes, all interested in more efficient, effective stewardship of print (e.g., WEST, ASERL+WRLC, COPPUL, Maine, Michigan.)
8. *Ibid* **Stoller, Michael**.
9. *Ibid* *Ithaka S+R US Faculty Survey 2012* and *UC Academic e-Book Usage Survey*.