Provider-Neutral E-Monograph Records

Task Force Frequently Asked Questions

December 16, 2008

1. What is a Provider-Neutral E-Monograph Record?

A provider-neutral e-monograph record is a single bibliographic record that covers all equivalent manifestations of an online monograph. Manifestations are considered equivalent if their format and their content are essentially the same, based on clues from the author, title, edition, publishing, and physical description. A separate record is needed only if the cataloger determines that another online version, because of substantial differences (e.g., in content or subject), really represents a different manifestation. There will also be some cases where the resources are considered equivalent even though the titles that appear on each resource differ.

2. What are the types of online monographs for which it will be used?

The provider-neutral e-monograph record has been defined for monographs that have the same content available by one or more providers. The monographs may be issued as born-digital resources, current simultaneously-issued-with-print editions, or scanned reproductions of previous existing materials. A provider-neutral record should be created for online monographs even if no equivalent manifestations exist at the point of cataloging. Records for DLF Registry of Digital Masters materials will use the same criteria and may be combined both with other Registry records and other records for equivalent manifestations.

3. Why do we need it?

Current monographic cataloging practice in the Anglo-American world requires the creation of a new record each time a new publisher, aggregator, or distributor provides online access to the same electronic resource. As a result, many duplicative MARC records for online resources are created in shared cataloging systems such as OCLC. Catalog users often have difficulty understanding the rationale or the subtle differences between multiple records when searching through a cluster of very similar electronic resource records. The creation of one record that can be used for as many aggregations as possible will improve search and retrieval in online catalogs**. Moving to the Provider-Neutral Model puts the emphasis on the content of the resource, and not the provider.**

4. What is the relationship to FRBR?

Provider-neutral records cover multiple manifestations, but not all physical manifestations; so they are neither at the expression nor exactly at the manifestation level. What we are proposing is collapsing multiple manifestations for online monographic resources.

5. What is the Provider-Neutral mindset?

This mindset is a fundamental approach to cataloging online resources that emphasizes recording only fields that

apply to all electronic manifestations of the resource. Other information such as individual database names, individual e-package names, publishers or third party aggregators that are currently entered into the bibliographic records to distinguish different versions would, in this mindset, be considered local information. Some resources may only have one provider at the time of cataloging, but may become available through other providers in various packages afterwards. Thus it is important to keep the records as "neutral" as possible from the very outset of cataloging.

6. How will these new provider-neutral records be identified? How will they differ from other e-monograph records?

Only fields applying to all online versions of the resource will be retained in the master OCLC record. Although there is no single byte, subfield, or field that specifically states that the record is provider-neutral, the records will look different from current practices:

- There will not be notes or added entries for ***specific*** packages or aggregations. This information will now reside in local fields, which may be added as needed by aggregators and publishers using the same source record.
- Multiple URLs may be included in the record for packages that contain the complete text but only if the URL can be used by all licensed users.
- 533 fields will no longer be used except for DLF Registry of Digital Masters materials. When they are used they will always be followed by a Subfield 5 for the institution represented.
- Variant provider specific titles will be used, but the *specific* provider will not be named in the title field, e.g. 246 1 $i Available from some providers with title: $a
- The note phrase "***Description based on print version record***" is used whenever the source of the description in not from the e-resource itself, but a MARC record that contains the same source as the resource. This will be a frequent occurrence when the e-resource lacks a title page (or when the description on the other format record is more complete than what the e-resource offers for description).
- The publisher and dates will be that of the original monograph, as found on the copy being described, as opposed to the digitizer and dates of digitization. This information is much more useful and is more readily available.
- There will be fewer notes. The version (and format, if there are multiple formats) upon which the description is based will be cited in a Description based on or Title from note. The 538 will be rarely used for system requirements. It will also not usually be used for Mode of access notes, except for DLF Registry of Digital Masters records. These have special requirements for this field and will end with a Subfield 5 for the institution represented.
- The 300 field will start with "1 online resource (or rarely, "1 online atlas")

7. If the Provider-Neutral model is adopted, will catalogers still apply LCRI 1.11A and the 533 field?

LCRI 1.11A would no longer be applied to electronic reproductions available from multiple providers when creating a provider-neutral master record in OCLC. Similarly, with the exception of DLF Registry of Digital Masters records, individual 533 fields to describe publishers/aggregators will not be used for electronic resource

records. The Rule interpretation for 1.11A will still hold for other types of reproductions, so it will be redone to exclude electronic reproductions.

8. How will series access points in multiple formats be affected by the Provider-Neutral model?

Basing our decision on practical reasons, we are advocating not adding the qualifier (Online) to any series access point to distinguish it from its original source format. We believe that creating multiple authority records for all (online)-qualified series would be an onerous, expensive undertaking, and that the split original and qualified series files would result in unwieldy displays that would be more confusing than helpful to our users.

The following series statements should be included in the Provider-Neutral record:

1. Digitized version of print monograph. The series statement of print version (original format) should be represented in the Provider-Neutral record.
2. Born-digital e-monograph that is issued simultaneously with the print version. If the series is the same for both print and digital versions, that series should be represented in the Provider-Neutral record. If digital version is issued as part of a series different than the print, both series should be represented in the Provider-Neutral record. We are recommending that the print series should be included in the Provider-Neutral record to collocate existing/future e-reproductions of the print.
3. Born-digital e monograph--with no known print counterpart--originally issued as part of one or more series. The original series, if known, should be represented in the Provider-Neutral record.

9. How will existing records in OCLC be affected?

Elimination of provider-specific fields is unlikely to become a part of duplicate detection itself, but the ongoing conversion of records into “neutral” ones will substantially improve record matching. While most 533, provider 710 and provider 8XX fields will need to be deleted, others will remain if they contain preservation data predating use of Subfield 5. Provider-specific fields will need to be specifically identified and removed set-by-set to accomplish that. Since it will be difficult to accomplish this when the specifics of record set contents may be unknown, duplicates will decline over the years, but are unlikely to disappear completely. All records batch loaded into OCLC will go through the same duplicate detection and resolution (DDR) process.

10. How will DLF Registry of Digital Masters records in OCLC be affected?

MARC bibliographic records for DLF Registry of Digital Masters materials will contain the same fields that they currently have—533, 538, 583, 856, but if they are cataloged using the separate record approach, they will follow the same Provider-Neutral record criteria which may result in the use of one separate record. In the rare instances where there are multiple institutions providing Digital Masters, the same provider-neutral record will be used. Each institution will provide its specific information in the 533, 538, 583, and 856 fields followed by a specific subfield 5 to indicating the institution providing the information.

11. How will we maintain Provider-Neutral records in our local catalogs?

Libraries will have the choice of relying on their own de-duplicating processes to add package information on a

single merged record or keep separate records, each with their own individual package names, etc. Libraries subscribing to WorldCatLocal in the future may want to use the provider-neutral bibliographic record without modification and use separate OCLC local holdings records (LHRs) to record provider-specific information (e.g., 856 links, package names, restriction notes, etc.). For newly purchased electronic record packages, it is very likely that libraries, vendors, and OCLC will work together to provide the URLs, OCLC numbers, and vendor specific information on MARC records using the Provider-Neutral OCLC record as the base record.

12. Where can I learn more?

A summary of the presentation on this topic at the Joint CONSER/BIBCO Operations Meeting held on May 1-2, 2008, is available at: **http://www.loc.gov/catdir/pcc//archive/BIBCOOpCo2008Summary.html**

The complete charge of the task group is available at: http://www.loc.gov/catdir/pcc/bibco/PN-Mono-charge.pdf

Further documents will be posted as the work of the Task Group progresses.

Please contact either Becky Culbertson (rculbertson@ucsd.edu) or George Prager (pragerg@exchange.law.nyu.edu), the group's co-chairs, for further information.

13. Can I See an Example of a Provider-Neutral E-Monograph Record?

Examples will be given in Appendix C of this report.