



Center for Research Libraries

Cooperative Print Management in North America

Discussion document for participants in Boston meeting

January 15, 2010

The ongoing costs of acquiring, storing and maintaining extensive physical collections are impeding library/university investment in new technologies and services. Physical collections consume scarce university resources such as funding, space, and personnel which could be redirected to improve support for teaching and research.

The research library community can significantly reduce the costs of managing print and improve its stewardship of legacy collections through national-level cooperative action on three fronts:

- 1) Coordinating retrospective and prospective print archiving
- 2) Expanding digital access to archived materials, and
- 3) Increasing confidence in, and support for, digital preservation and delivery.

CRL proposes to work with partner consortia to support emergence of a cooperative system for archiving print journals, newspapers, and government documents in North America, building on existing regional and domain-based initiatives. The goal of the project is to foster long-term preservation and accessibility of research materials important to the scholarly community, while systematically and significantly reducing costs.

A number of library consortia and systems have built long-term trust and service relationships among member libraries which facilitate implementation of shared print arrangements. With its 250+ members throughout North America, many of which are also members of other consortia, CRL is well-positioned to support cooperation among these initiatives at the network level, including broad-scale service deployment, administration, and financial and resource management.

This proposal assumes that such consortia would continue to serve as the primary implementation organizations for academic and research library print archives. CRL could provide an integrative framework among them by performing these roles:

- Promote consensus among consortia on the terms of archiving and the levels of service to participating libraries, and frame and administer cooperative agreements to provide those services
- Provide communication, logistical, and fiscal agency and support for cooperative print archiving activities and services among participating libraries and consortia
- Facilitate development of common holdings analysis tools and delivery system(s) necessary to support print archiving
- Disseminate best practices and data-driven rationales for preservation and, where appropriate, deaccessioning

Background

On July 10, 2009, the Center for Research Libraries (CRL) convened a meeting on “The Role of Regional Consortia in a National Strategy for Legacy Print Collections” with participants representing more than a dozen North American consortia, as well as other interested organizations including JSTOR, Ithaka, and OCLC Research. Attendees described current archiving efforts and identified the challenges that affect those efforts.

It was clear that a unifying strategy could make these efforts more effective and could multiply the return on the energy and resources invested at the local and regional levels. CRL President Bernard F. Reilly offered to outline such a strategy and to bring together the appropriate organizations to implement it.

Project Phases

CRL suggests a three-phase implementation over the next three years (2010 – 2012):

- Phase 1: Planning and partnership development (January – September 2010)
- Phase 2: Pilot implementation with focus on archiving print serial materials that are also available in electronic form (October 2010 – June 2011)
- Phase 3: Expansion to additional partners, content, and services (July 2011 – September 2012)

CRL proposes to bring together two parallel streams of existing activity:

- Regional journal archiving projects organized around publisher content or library-selected titles
- Domain-based archiving and digitization programs organized around materials serving broad fields of study

Regional journal archiving projects

Most existing and planned print archive initiatives are regional journal projects in which participants select content by publisher (e.g. JSTOR, American Chemical Society) and/or as individual titles with significant overlap among participating libraries. In most cases, these initiatives reflect existing relationships and support access and delivery services among existing consortium members. Linking these projects would create the conditions for significant near-term space- and cost-savings across a broader universe of participating libraries by sharing information about and access to journals already archived and, in turn, would provide a broader base of support for the archiving institutions.

Domain-based archiving projects

A number of existing and planned print archives take a different approach, digitizing and preserving content in particular fields of study such as law (Law Libraries Microform Consortium (LLMC)) or agriculture (Cornell University under the US Agriculture Information Network). CRL's World Newspaper Archive (WNA) serves a similar role. These initiatives have been built to serve a national rather than a regional constituency.

In this track, CRL and individual partners would work to expand the reach of these domain-based archives and support coordination between their activities and those of the regional journal archives. Expansion of the program to a domain-based approach would imbue the print archiving effort with a positive identity, centering not on divestiture or removal of collections but on adding value to support research and teaching. This approach could also incorporate systematic digital conversion to build additional electronic resources for the scholarly community.

For both approaches, focusing the selection initially on materials already available in electronic form would reduce the effort and cost of physical delivery and could facilitate near-term space savings among libraries.

Phase 1: Planning and Partnership Development (January – September 2010)

A number of major consortia are actively developing shared print serial projects which are recently operational or are expected to culminate in specific plans or operations within the next 6 to 12 months:

- Orbis-Cascade Alliance Distributed Print Repository Program
- Triangle Research Libraries Network (TRLN) Shared Copy Program
- OhioLINK
- Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL) Thunder Bay Agreement
- Western Regional Storage Trust (WEST), a Mellon-funded project led by the University of California system with planning participants including Orbis-Cascade Alliance and Greater Western Library Alliance (GWLA)
- Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) libraries distributed shared print program

- Pennsylvania Academic Library Consortium, Inc (PALCI) distributed shared print program
- Greater Western Library Alliance (GWLA) distributed shared print program
- Association of Southeastern Academic and Research Libraries (ASERL), IMLS grant to initiate “centers of excellence” for preserving government documents and “virtual storage” distributed journal archive

Thus a critical mass of shared print activity is recently-operational or in planning, which will have a profound effect on the shape of future networked efforts. The next several months will create an important opportunity for coordinating these efforts to the future benefit of all.

By working together during the next six to nine months as these plans coalesce, CRL and these organizations can promote synergies and cross-fertilization among the regional initiatives. This period will lay the foundation for cooperative action and begin to create the social framework and working practice among U.S. and Canadian consortia around cooperative print collection management on the national and international levels.

Planning activities

Activities during this phase will include:

- Convene and engage CRL, consortia, and library partners to explore joint efforts with a goal of implementing a formal, multi-regional cooperative print archiving effort beginning in fall 2010
- Create mechanisms for making key program decisions and implement technologies for sharing practices, analytical and anecdotal information about costs, collections, and services
- Aggregate information about print archiving projects. CRL is developing a project registry on its website. As of January 15, a preliminary version including a narrative description of known print archive projects will be available at <http://www.crl.edu/archiving-preservation/print-archives/>
- Identify the content to be archived initially during the multi-regional effort, building on individual projects’ selection criteria, strengths and assets
- Develop MOUs to specify service agreements and commitments (selection criteria, archival conditions, promised retention period, access and delivery services, financial support)
- Specify common requirements for systems and tools needed to support holdings disclosure and decision support, and encourage coordination of data definition
- Estimate costs to develop and support network-level tools and systems

- Develop business model(s) which recognize both regional and national relationships
- Identify opportunities and begin to advocate for external funding to support implementation of a national-level agreement and services

CRL recommends engaging a number of other organizations at this stage in planning, which could potentially lend support to the effort. These organizations include digital publishers JSTOR, Readex, and ProQuest, which are digitizing and in some instances archiving journals and newspaper literature. Their activities will have a bearing upon the service-level requirements and thus costs of the cooperative print archives. These organizations also include digital repositories Portico, LOCKSS/CLOCKSS, HathiTrust, and Scholars Portal. These repositories archive digital versions of growing numbers of journals, government documents, and other serials materials, and thus could eventually supercede the print archives.

Accelerating the reduction of print holdings will require broad support from university faculty, university administrators, and major funding agencies. CRL will continue its current initiatives to broaden acceptance among faculty of digital-only access to serials content through its Global Resources forums and discipline-specific webinars. To garner support from university administrators, critical assessments and cost-benefit analyses of digital preservation services and digital collections will be needed, in order to support library requests for new university investment in those services and resources. The assessments must detail the economic and practical benefits of Portico, LOCKSS, HathiTrust and other repository services, versus the costs and limitations of print and microfilm. The resulting knowledge base will support demonstrable due diligence by libraries in managing the print-to-digital transition and will build confidence in digital resources and preservation where justifiable.

Funding

The business models developed during the planning phase should identify meaningful actions toward a collaborative print repository system which can be taken beginning in fall 2010 with a) the combined resources of CRL and consortial partners, and b) if new grant funds are available.

CRL proposes to seek support for the national-level print archiving program in its upcoming submission to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in 2010. CRL would like to collaborate with other consortial partners to develop a joint submission in this area, as a single collaborative proposal representing multiple consortia demonstrates more clearly the broad scope and support for the project and is likely to be more compelling to funders.

CRL also plans to submit a proposal under the IMLS National Leadership Grant program (due February 1, 2010) to support development and testing of some basic infrastructure for the proposed national print repository network for domain-based archives, using a limited test bed of archived legal materials and possibly others.

The rest of this document outlines a preliminary draft plan as a basis for our discussion at the January 15 meeting.

Phase 2: Pilot Implementation (October 2010 – June 2011)

In the pilot phase, CRL and partners would implement mechanisms and agreements to link North American print archives of dual-format materials (print titles which are also available electronically) through a common national infrastructure covering both journals and other formats or domains.

Participation Agreements (MOUs)

Current shared print initiatives usually involve explicit participation and service agreements embodied in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). These agreements generally specify what materials are selected for the archive, archiving conditions (security, environmental), duration of the archiving commitment (a defined period or “permanent”), how archived materials are disclosed to the community, and access/delivery services to be provided to other participants. It would be desirable to build on existing MOUs to the extent possible in order to incorporate additional participants under common service standards. It will be important to disseminate information about service commitments so that participants can make informed decisions about materials to retain, deaccession, or borrow.

Information Base

Implementation of a North American print archiving system will require an information base to support informed planning and decisions.

Project registry

The information base should include a project registry containing information about print archiving projects worldwide, including scope, storage conditions, retention agreement, nature of contents (format, selection criteria), level of validation, delivery services provided.

CRL offers to maintain a project registry on its website. As of January 15, a preliminary version including a narrative description of known print archive projects will be available at <http://www.crl.edu/archiving-preservation/print-archives/>

Later in the planning and early implementation phase, a more structured database will be developed, to include specific searchable fields describing these projects as listed above, e.g. storage conditions, type of contents, level of validation.

Holdings disclosure and decision support system

Even more critical, the information base must include a holdings disclosure and decision support system: an aggregated database of bibliographic data identifying archived materials across all participating archives, with processes to enable participating libraries to compare and identify which local holdings can be contributed and which can be deaccessioned in reliance on the archived holdings. Most current print archive projects make do with manual manipulation of spreadsheets, but a distributed North American print archive system requires a scalable network-level system for this purpose.

While there is no single system which meets all of the requirements currently, the following systems or datasets provide baseline capabilities which should be explored for further development:

- OCLC WorldCat (583 tag) and Collection Analysis System
- Serials Solutions Ulrich's Serials Analysis system (data on more than 300,000 serial titles)
- Metadata derived from digitization projects such as LLMC Digital, Google Books, CRL's World Newspaper Archive, and commercial aggregators such as Readex and ProQuest
- Local systems developed for individual archiving initiatives

Access and delivery system

A common or interoperable system will be necessary to process requests and delivery of archived materials. Existing ILL systems should be evaluated for best suitability to the print archiving community, such as

- RAPID ILL
- Relais
- OCLC ILL/VDX

Developing or deploying robust system(s) to support collection analysis and delivery is one of the most complicated and potentially costly aspects of a large-scale distributed print archive network. The cost may vary widely depending on technology decisions and the number of participating institutions. A major goal of the planning process will be to define system requirements and technology options and to estimate costs accordingly. The specialized collection analysis and decision support tools required for print archives also may be an area which could attract external funding.

Phase 3: Expansion to Additional Partners, Content, and Services (July 2011 – September 2012)

After the pilot phase to implement and test the necessary systems and agreements, participation would be opened to additional consortia and libraries. The agreements and business model will be defined so that the system will be self-sustaining by the end of Phase 3. This phase could also expand services to include consolidating not-yet digitized materials with robust on-request digital delivery and ILL services. In this phase, domain archives could also take advantage of systematic digital conversion to build additional electronic resources for the scholarly community.

Summary of Proposed Action Plan and Timetable

Phase 1: Planning and partnership development (January – September 2010)

1. Identify initial project partners (January 15, 2010)
 - Discuss the initial project proposal within the consortial print archiving community

- Identify consortia interested in participating with CRL in Phase 1: Planning and Partnership Development, who are willing to contribute staff time and travel funds (see #3).
 - Identify subcommittees or working teams to explore and define specific aspects of the plan such as system requirements and financial models (and more)
2. Submit IMLS grant proposal to support basic infrastructure and development and testing by CRL, LLMC, others (February 1, 2010)
 3. Conduct planning group web forums and one in-person meeting (possibly in conjunction with the ICOLC meeting in Chicago in April) to achieve consensus on business model(s) and baseline funding plan for CRL and consortium-supported activities (February through June 2010)
 4. Develop proposal to other funding agencies (e.g. Mellon Foundation) for implementation support (spring/summer 2010)
 5. Vet and adopt resulting business model and baseline funding plan (ALA Annual meeting, June 2010)
 6. Receive IMLS grant notification (possible award) (August 2010)

Phase 2: Pilot Implementation (October 2010 – June 2011)

1. Finalize and execute MOU's and participation agreements (October 2010)
2. Implement holdings disclosure system and access/delivery systems (December 2010)
3. Issue calls for content (as applicable) (January 2011 and ongoing)
4. Prepare report on pilot project (6 months activity) (June 2011)
 - a. materials archived and delivered
 - b. expenses and revenues

Phase 3: Expansion to Additional Partners (July 2011 – September 2012)

1. Enroll additional participants (July 2011 and ongoing)
2. Issue quarterly activity and business reports (September, December, March, June)
3. Report on conditions at participating archive locations (June 2012)
4. Prepare final report on 3-year project (September 2012)