1972: Expand OCLC Cataloging Operations

In 1972, CLR awarded the Ohio College Library Center (OCLC) $75,000 to expand its cataloging operations. At the time, OCLC offered online cataloging service to some 50 member libraries in Ohio. Its success had attracted wide interest, and other library groups sought its help in replicating the system for use elsewhere. OCLC was also developing plans to launch modules for serials control, technical processing, remote catalog access and circulation control, and bibliographic information and subject access retrieval.

The following year, CLR awarded an additional $194,000 toward further development of its computerized regional system.

CLR 's support for OCLC had started with a small grant in 1970, just three years after OCLC's founding (see below).

From CLR Annual Report for the period ending June 30, 1970, pp. 25-26.

Ohio College Library Center (OCLC)

The Ohio College Library Center in Columbus is developing a comprehensive computer-based bibliographic system to support the technical processes of participating libraries of the region. The Council has made a small grant to assist the project; principal support has come from the Office of Education. The OCLC cataloging system uses data taken from MARC tapes to produce card sets tailored to the requirements of the requesting library. The system has been debugged and is now operational off-line. Future plans include the merging of locally-produced catalog data with those from MARC so that more complete services may be rendered. On-line support to catalogers is also planned. In addition, OCLC intends to build an on-line circulation control system and a technical processing system. Discussions have been held with librarians outside Ohio to explore the possibility of extending this growing library system into an interstate network.

From CLR Annual Report for the period ending June 30, 1972, p. 18

Ohio College Library Center

The Ohio College Library Center (OCLC), a promising computerized regional library system which received a small Council grant in 1970, has been given an additional $75,000 to expand its cataloging operations.[11] The U. S. Office of Education has also made a substantial grant for the same purpose. Although by no means perfected, OCLC's relatively successful on-line cataloging service to its approximately 50 member libraries in Ohio (plus the University of Pittsburgh and the Atlanta Cooperative College Library Center) has aroused the interest of hard-pressed librarians throughout the country, resulting in many requests for assistance in replicating the system. The operational shared cataloging function is only the first phase of the planned total service. Complete plans call for modules in the areas of serials control, technical processing, remote catalog access and circulation control, and bibliographic information and subject access retrieval. It has been estimated by OCLC officials that $400,000 a year can now be saved by the member libraries in cataloging costs if appropriate personnel shifts or reductions are made.

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[11] XV:28.

From CLR Annual Report for the period ending June 30, 1973 pp. 16–17

Ohio College Library Center

The Ohio College Library Center (OCLC), which has been quite successful in putting the computer to work for libraries not only in Ohio but in other sections of the country, received a new CLR grant in 1973. Now a regional consortium of approximately sixty Ohio library members and approximately that number of affiliates, OCLC was funded in its early developmental phase by the U. S. Office of Education (OE) and by the Center's original membership of 49 academic libraries. Last year the Council and OE shared the developmental cost; in calendar year 1973 the Council alone provides this support.[9] Operational aspects of the OCLC system have been financed thus far by fees received from user institutions and by State of Ohio funds on behalf of its academic libraries.

Among OCLC's accomplishments to date are:

- A method to provide bibliographic data in the catalog card format required by each of its member libraries.
- Efficient search keys for bibliographic searches.
- The first successful use of cathode-ray terminals designed specifically for library work.

Its on-line union catalog and shared cataloging systems have been operational since August 1971, and OCLC is well along in its developmental work toward implementing two of the other five subsystems planned: serials control and the acquisitions module of the technical processing system. The other scheduled subsystems are for interlibrary loan communication, remote catalog access and circulation control, and retrieval by subject.

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[9] XVI:18.