OCLC Data Sync: Processing rejected records

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Summary

The goal of the OCLC Data Sync project is to set Harvard's current holdings accurately in OCLC WorldCat. Some records are rejected during the matching process because of errors in the Alma records. Rejected records are considered unresolved due to a variety of data errors: incorrect coding, incompatible coding between data points, sparse data, etc. Those errors must be fixed before holdings can be set correctly. There may be cases where the error is unclear; rather than seeking out what caused the failure, focus instead on finding the best record. Individual libraries will be responsible for fixing errors for their units because they have the best understanding of their collections and cataloging practices. The first batches of rejected records may be high, but once the Data Sync Project is complete and holdings are set weekly, the number of records needing attention should decrease significantly.

WorldCat Staging

Rejected records are in Connexion. These records have unique OCLC numbers (OCNs), but are not fully indexed or published in OCLC; they are only discoverable with an OCN search. OCLC refers to these records as being in WorldCat Staging.

Rejected records also appear in Alma. There, the records contain a MARC field 913, which includes a standard error message and the OCN of the rejected record:

Retrieving rejected records in Alma

Search for your library's records:

1. Use Advanced Search
2. Search in: Physical titles
3. From Title index options choose Local field 913: OCLC Data Sync rejection >> Contains Keywords >> type 'data sync'
4. From Holdings index options choose Library (Holdings) >> Equals >> select your library from the drop-down menu.
   a. You can limit the search to specific locations within a library by choosing Permanent physical collection instead of Library (Holdings). The drop-down menu shows location options for specific libraries.
b. You can narrow your results by including additional search criteria: bib level, date-type status, genre/form, etc.

5. Click Search. Create an error report by saving the results. Export the records to Excel, or create an Alma set.
6. Follow the Processing Guidelines below to correct the errors.

Important points to remember

- Records can only be retrieved in OCLC by searching the OCN found in the 913 $b of the Alma bib record. (If the search fails go to the Search WorldCat form. Uncheck Apply Language of Cataloging delimiter.)
- Searching for duplicate records in OCLC is part of the error-resolution process.
- You must update the bib record in both Alma and OCLC. (Update Alma bibs with the copy & merge inventory process.)
- It may not be clear what caused the error(s). Don’t worry about why the record was rejected.
- Holdings for microforms can be attached to bibs for print; but the OCN in the holdings records for microform must be for a microform bib in OCLC.
- If you work on records for libraries that use different OCLC symbols be sure you are logged in with the OCLC profile for that symbol.

Processing guidelines

N.B. Do not begin to process rejected records without your manager’s knowledge and approval. Your manager can advise you on how much editing your unit requires.

The following guidelines cover only basic scenarios. There are numerous, complex library-specific situations that cannot be addressed here and will need to be handled on a case-by-case basis by staff in the individual unit/library.

N.B.: You may discover bibliographic problems that are not related to Data Sync processes.

Working from your error report:

1. Search by MMS ID in Alma.
2. Copy OCN from the 913 $b and paste into Connexion. (If the search fails to retrieve the record go to the Search WorldCat form. Uncheck Apply Language of Cataloging delimiter.)
   a. TIP: You can tell that the record is in staging, not production, by the presence of an asterisk next to “OCLC” in the upper-left corner of the window. Example: OCLC* 123456789.
3. Pin the record (Shift F4) so you can return to it easily.
4. Search in Connexion for duplicate records; by title, author, publisher, etc. You will not see the staged records in the results.

Stop, assess, and choose from the following option 1 or option 2:

Option 1: If a better record is not found in OCLC:

1. Validate the staging record (Edit – Validate; or Shift F5) to display record errors.
   a. It’s possible that validation will produce no errors.
2. Correct errors and replace (Action – Replace record; or Alt F10):
   a. If there aren’t any errors you must make a small edit – add and remove a period, for example – so that Replace record in the Action menu is activated.
   b. The record will be automatically indexed in OCLC. If indexing is not automatic – OCLC* is still present in the upper-left corner of the screen – don’t be concerned.
   c. Holdings are already set on records in staging.
   d. Very minimal editing is required to make staged records Data Sync compliant. Individual units can choose to do more editing, but re-cataloging is not required.
3. Return to Alma and follow the copy & merge inventory process described in Bringing in an Updated Copy for an Existing Record. The copy /merge process will automatically delete the 913 field.

Option 2: If a better record is found in OCLC use it instead of the staging record:

1. Edit the better record, if necessary, and replace (Action – Replace record; or Alt F10) to save edits. The record can then be copied/merged into Alma.
2. Delete your holdings from the staging record if step 2.a. does not apply.
   a. If your symbol is HUL do not delete holdings on the OCLC staging record if there is another holdings record on the Alma bib that also uses OCLC symbol HUL. (needs to be verified)
   b. No other action must be taken on the staging record. OCLC will delete it eventually.
3. Return to Alma and follow the copy & merge inventory process described in Bringing in an Updated Copy for an Existing Record. The copy /merge process will automatically delete the 913 field.

Report problems to LTS Alma Support Center

Questions related to problem resolution can be submitted to the LTS Alma Support Center. Please include:

- In the subject field of the form: “Data Sync error reports”
- Choose category “Metadata Corrections”
- Include MMS IDs and OCNs of any records referenced in the description of the problem

Resources

June 2, 2021 OCLC Data Sync Project Update open meeting:

- Presentation slides (section on processing error reports starts on slide 11)
- Zoom recording - includes transcript and chat