Authority Control in a Multi-Institution Environment

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There are three basic approaches to authority control in a multi-institution environment:

1) A separate and autonomous approach: each member library maintains its own bibliographic and authority files. These files are not shared but can be accessed by the other member libraries.

2) A decentralized approach: each member library is a separate Processing Unit that contributes records directly to shared bibliographic and authority files.

3) A centralized approach: each member library is a separate Processing Unit that contributes records directly to a shared bibliographic file and indirectly to a shared authority file. One member library is responsible for the management and maintenance of the shared authority file.

Libraries must consider and answer several broad questions before choosing which of these approaches best meets their needs. Will all member libraries share the same files? If so, will they be "equal" partners, sharing fully in all aspects of authority control including decision-making, conflict resolution, and authority and bibliographic corrections? If not, which member library will be responsible for the overall management and maintenance of the authority file?

This article discusses a centralized multi-institution approach to authority control. Indiana State University (ISU) shares its online database with two private colleges: Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology (RHIT) and St. Mary-of-the-Woods College (SMWC). This ISU NOTIS cluster came about as a result of a grant awarded to ISU in early 1986 from Public-Private Partnership Funds established by the Indiana legislature for the purpose of fostering joint instruction and research efforts between public and private institutions. This grant made possible the addition of the library holdings of RHIT and SMWC to ISU's online catalog and, conversely, the extension of the ISU libraries' online system to these two nearby colleges.

Background of the Participants

Indiana State University is a public co-educational university in downtown Terre Haute, with an enrollment of 11,300 students. The

ISU libraries house over a million volumes. Library staffing includes 29 librarians, 48 support personnel, and 130 student assistants.

Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, a private all-male college enrolling 1300 students, is located on the east side of Terre Haute. Its library houses 70,000 volumes and is supervised by one professional librarian assisted by two support staff and eight student assistants.

St. Mary-of-the-Woods is a private women's college operated by the Sisters of Providence in St. Mary-of-the-Woods Village, just west of Terre Haute. It has an enrollment of 890 students. The library houses 140,000 volumes and is staffed by five librarians (two full-time and three part-time), and 25 student assistants.

ISU entered into a contract with RHIT and SMWC on July 1, 1986, creating a union database among the three institutions. The union evolved over two years of careful planning, selection, and preparation.

History of the ISU Online Catalogs

Public Access Catalog

Indiana State University selected NOTIS in 1984; loaded bibliographic tapes and introduced LUIS (the public access catalog) in the spring of 1985; and began cataloging online in late summer, 1985. Over 395,000 bibliographic records were loaded. Included were: OCLC records from archive tapes, Carrollton Press Remarc records, and brief records created from circulation tapes.

Authority File

At the time we loaded these bibliographic records we had no machine-readable authority records and, hence, no online authority file even though ISU had practiced authority control for many years and had an extensive manual authority file. With this tradition, we did not consider NOT having an online authority file. In fact, the future availability of authority control was one of the reasons we selected NOTIS. The next question involved the acquisition of an online authority file. Would it be more practical to build our own file, record by record, or to buy an authority file?

To build or to buy? The catalogers' inclination was "to build," to convert the carefully-constructed card authority file into machine-readable authority records. That way we would know just what was in those authority records as our local information would be included. This was unrealistic and would have been expensive (in terms of both time and labor), and it would have been slow. We optimistically thought that authority control would be available in a relatively short time. From a practical standpoint, we needed authority records rather quickly. "To buy" seemed the answer. From whom do we buy? The obvious choice was to send our bibliographic file to a vendor who would build an authority file based on our own headings. This, however, was not economically feasible at that time. We learned that Northwestern University was willing to sell us a copy of its NOTIS authority file as it existed then, spring 1985. We purchased this file and loaded it.

Using Northwestern's Authority File as a Resource File

We began looking at the online records, studying manuals, and formulating procedures for our authority workflow. As we began to work with this online file, we found certain

advantages and disadvantages. Advantages included having a reference on which to base our authority records; we saw the fields included and studied various records with the manuals to better understand the meaning of certain fields, etc. In some cases, a Northwestern record yielded information which helped solve a problem. In addition to many local authority records, the Northwestern authority file contained many Library of Congress records from an earlier time. Many of these LC records contained information that is no longer on the same authority records now in OCLC (e.g., an earlier heading, old historical note). They often included an "n" number which enabled us to get to an OCLC authority that we hadn't been able to access under usual search strategies, usually because the search retrieved too many items. There were some disadvantages, too. They included: records being outdated by the time we began actively using the online file late in 1985; all had to be updated or revised to provide local information. If a record needed only a few revisions to be updated and claimed as an ISU authority, these were done by the head of the catalog management unit. (See Figure 1.)

The ISU symbol was added to the 040 field, name and cross-references were corrected; historical or local notes were added; the "used" date from OCLC was added in a 670 field; and initials of operator and date were added in a 690 field. We would overlay Northwestern records needing extensive revision with a newer authority record from OCLC, adding ISU symbol, local notes, the OCLC "used" date, initials and date.

Preparation for the Merger

In preparation for the merger,

the OCLC archive tapes from RHIT and SMWC were sent to SOLINET for the name headings "flip" to AACR2 forms. RHIT's tapes were loaded in July, 1987; SMWC's tapes were loaded in August, 1988. Microcon tapes from the two schools came straight from OCLC to ISU and were loaded beginning in July 1987 and continuing into 1988. Because there were several tape loads over a period of almost two years, many name headings had to be cleaned up online several times, causing some degree of confusion and frustration.

Early Authority Procedures

Procedures for online authority work were refined during the early part of 1986. When the union database became a reality, the catalog management unit expanded its workflow to incorporate authority work contributed by the other two libraries. Due to a lack of sufficient personnel and other library considerations, neither Rose-Hulman nor St. Mary-of-the-Woods libraries had been able to do much authority work in the past. SMWC had kept a manual authority file but found it difficult to keep headings in its card catalog updated. Since ISU had an existing authorities unit (Catalog Management Unit or CMU), this unit took on the responsibility for inputting/updating all name authorities from the three libraries. In addition, CMU would make corrections on headings in all three libraries' online records, thus ensuring the consistency of name access points in the union catalog.

Training sessions were held with the catalogers from each library in January, 1987. Procedures for authority work were outlined, discussed, and refined. Catalogers from each institution would do preliminary searching of name headings, recording

search results on authority request forms devised by CMU. (See Figure 2).

Preliminary searching included: first checking the ISU online authority file for the ISU symbol or tag in the 040 field of the authority record. If there was a record with our local symbol, catalogers used this name form. If the record did not have the ISU symbol, they included the authority record number on the authority request workform, asking for this name to be updated and claimed as an ISU authority.

If there was no record in the ISU authority file, the catalogers searched the OCLC name authority file. If a record was found, they printed it, sent it to CMU to be incorporated into the online authority file, and used that form of heading in cataloging the record. If nothing was found in the OCLC authority file, the catalogers searched the OCLC bibliographic file, with the hope of finding a DLC-DLC record on which to base a name decision. If a record was found, the cataloger included the OCLC bibliographic record number on the request form on line 4 and sent the form to CMU to be entered online as a provisional authority: a brief record including the name heading (line 1), 040 field with ISU symbol, a note field with the cataloger's initials and date of input (line 8), and often a 670 note citing the work in which the name appeared. The cataloger may also have included x-references (line 5), xx-references (line 6), historical or personal information notes, or other citation notes on the authority request form. (Figure 3 illustrates a provisional name authority record.)

The request forms and/or OCLC authority printouts from RHIT and SMWC were received via the

SHALSA van biweekly. The head of CMU reviewed the OCLC printouts to catch and correct problems with tagging, spelling, and coding. The new OCLC name authorities were then downloaded via black box interface into the ISU authority file. Names were then searched in the ISU manual authority file and the card catalog for old forms of the heading. The next step in the workflow was to search these new and updated name headings in the online author/title and subject indexes and make corrections to bibliographic records for all three institutions. This additional searching helped with the recon of the ISU manual authority file and with the clean-up of the online bibliographic database. The final step in the flow was to claim the authority record by adding the ISU symbol to the 040 field. (See Figure 4).

Current Authority Procedures

The Northwestern authority file had served as a basis for building the ISU authority file, but in February 1990, ISU ceased claiming the older Northwestern authorities in the online file. The records had become so dated it was necessary to make extensive revisions to each one claimed. It seemed more efficient to transfer new OCLC records into the file. The remaining unclaimed Northwestern authority records were removed from the file, resulting in the simplification of our earlier authority procedures in some respects. We no longer have to update or adapt Northwestern records. Catalogers no longer have to check the 040 field to see if the ISU symbol is there; if there is a record in the authority file, it is an ISU record.

Customizing the Online Authority File

As procedures have evolved,

we have made decisions about personalizing our online authority file. We have customized our records by adding extra cross references, local notes, literary call numbers, etc.

1. In cases where updated OCLC records have dropped the pre-AACR2 form but we have found usage of the old form in our card catalogs, we have added it as a cross reference to the authority record in our online file.

2. Specialized cross references are added when necessary. For example, we use references with "surname, sir" (omitting ic) because we have found old catalog and online records in this form. Also, we include New York (City) as well as New York, N.Y. as cross references because both forms have been used at different times.

3. Online access problems involving spaces in names have been addressed by adding cross references covering variant forms not found on OCLC records. Examples include Van der meer, Vander meer, Vandermeer; co-ordinate vs. coordinate, etc.

4. The most unique method of customizing was done to bridge the gap until the authority file is interactive with LUIS. In extreme cases we have created provisional bibliographic (information) records, instructing the user to search under a different name form. Example: If a patron calls up Vincent van Gogh under: Van Gogh, Vincent, the "pseudo-bib" record instructs him to search under Gogh, Vincent van, the actual name authority form. (See Figure 5). We also have such a record for Thomas Aquinas. The authority form is Thomas ic Aquinas, Saint; the ic does not index in LUIS. Therefore, the patron would retrieve no records if he searched under Thomas Aquinas.

5. In the online environment records are more complete and detailed than in their manual counterparts. Because they were typed on cards, the manual authorities lacked the extra information we are able to include, such as extra source citations, cross references, historical and local notes.

The Merged Heading Index

Our biggest handicap has been the inability to see how the authority file would interact with LUIS as it actually guided the user to the correct name forms. With the arrival of NOTIS 4.6.1 and the Merged Heading Index (MHI, formerly known as Index Redesign), we have a preview of this interaction. The "OPAC-like view" in staff mode provides information to answer some of our questions concerning interaction of the authority file with the bibliographic database. For instance, we can see how the cross reference forms will display to the user. Some of our customizations may turn out to be unnecessary now; some may even be confusing and need to be undone. For instance, MHI provides for the indexing of additional subfields in name headings, eliminating the need for many of the special cross references we have provided to ensure access to the correct name forms. Entries for Vincent van Gogh and Thomas Aquinas can now be found without our special "pseudo-bib" records.

MHI has also shown additional problem areas. There will be more clean-up projects before we reap the full benefits of MHI; system-generated conflict and error detection reports will point out headings needing attention.

We continue to learn more about the expanding capabilities of the online system to improve the public's access to our collective holdings. Two new participants in the ISU NOTIS Cluster will not be using the central-

ized authority procedures at this time. The libraries of the University of Southern Indiana (USI) and Vincennes University (VU) are separate institutions in the cluster; each will maintain its own bibliographic and authority files, using the ISU authority file as a resource file only. Authority procedures will continue to be revised and refined as the NOTIS Cluster members' needs are addressed.

Conclusion

The decision to use a centralized approach to authority control for the libraries of Indiana State University, Rose-Hulman, and St. Mary-of-the-Woods was a good one and has

worked well. John Robson of RHIT's Logan Library feels the online system is working well and that the combined catalog has helped all of us to conform to a higher standard of cataloging. He also remarked that the continual "clean-up" of the online catalog by CMU has significantly helped to minimize user problems. Sister Leona Walsh, catalog librarian at St. Mary of-the-Woods, agreed that the shared online system is a great improvement in accessing the three libraries' holdings.

NOTIS 5.0 will provide the long-awaited authority control in the online public access catalog. This will further improve access to the holdings of all of the libraries in the ISU NOTIS Cluster.

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LTIS DONE                                              CAL7494
                              NOTIS CATALOGING              DOB1
IS# CAL7494 FMT A RT z DT 09/14/84 R/DT 05/03/89 STAT nn E/L n
SRC    LANG eng ROM n MOD    UNIQUE n GOVT ? S/SYS n D/I n SUBD    NUM n S/TYP n
NAME c SUBJ a SER ? KIND a H/ESTAB a T/EVAL a IP a RULES c

010:  :  |a n  79103773
040:  :  |a IEN  |d ISU
110:20:  |a Hospital Research and Educational Trust.
410/1:20: |a American Hospital Association.  |b Hospital Research and
Educational Trust
410/2:20:  |w d  |a HRET
410/3:20:  |w d  |a H.R.E.T.
510/1:20:  |a American Hospital Association.  |b Educational Trust
670/1:  :  |a LC/AF 8/30/84
690/1:  :  |a PF:5/3/89
```

Figure 1. Updated Northwestern Record

1.   NAME (1XX)_____G/S

     Search results (use + or o)   Attach reference bib. or OCLC

     records. Supply record numbers if found.

2.   NOTIS/ISU online authority file_____

3.   NOTIS bib. record no. of above entry _____

4.   OCLC bib. file (DLC-DLC rec. no.)_____

5.   x-ref. (4xx)_____

6.   xx-ref. (5xx)_____

7.   Pre-AACR2 form if known (4xx)_____

                          8. Date & initials (690)_____

                Figure 2. Name Authority Request Form

LTIS DONE   DAC0547

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                                  NOTIS CATALOGING              DOB3
IS# DAC0547 FMT A RT z DT 10/31/88 R/DT none      STAT nn E/L n
SRC d LANG ??? ROM n MOD   UNIQUE a GOVT ? S/SYS n D/I n SUBD   NUM n S/TYP n
NAME c SUBJ a SER ? KIND a H/ESTAB c T/EVAL a IP a RULES c


040:   :   |a ISU
053/1:  :   |a A211 (Faculty Coll.)
100:10:   |a Adams, Carrie B. |q (Carrie Belle), |d 1859-
400/1:10:  |a Adams, Carrie Belle Wilson, |d 1859-
400/2:10:  |a Wilson, Carrie Belle, |d 1859-
665:  :   |a ISU faculty member
675:  :   |a Indiana authors, 1816-1916
690/1:  :   |a Sp.C-Fac.
690/2:  :   |a KSW:10/31/88
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LTIS DONE   Figure 3.   ISU Provisional Record   DAC6237

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                                  NOTIS CATALOGING              DOB3
IS# DAC6237 FMT A RT z DT 04/25/89 R/DT 05/01/89 STAT nc E/L n
SRC   LANG eng ROM n MOD   UNIQUE a GOVT   S/SYS a D/I n SUBD   NUM n S/TYP n
NAME c SUBJ a SER b KIND a H/ESTAB a T/EVAL a IP a RULES c


010:  :   |a n  50018373
035/1:  :   |a (OCoLC)00053815
040:  :   |a DLC |c DLC |d DLC |d ISU
100:10:   |a Cronbach, Lee J. |q (Lee Joseph), |d 1916-
400/1:10:  |a Cronbach, L. J. |q (Lee Joseph), |d 1916-
400/2:10:  |w nna |a Cronbach, Lee Joseph, |d 1916-
670/1:  :   |a His Individual differences in learning to reproduce forms ...
1941.
670/2:  :   |a His Designing evaluations of educational and social programs,
1982: |b CIP t.p. (Lee J. Cronbach)
670/3:  :   |a NLM files, 9/27/85 |b (hdg.: Cronbach, Lee J. (Lee Joseph), 1916-
; usage: L.J. Cronbach, Lee J. Cronbach).
670/4:  :   |a LC/AF 11/22/85
690/1:  :   |a PF:5/1/89
```

Figure 4.   Transferred OCLC Record


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   LUIS SEARCH REQUEST:   A=VAN GOGH

   BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD -- NO. 1 OF 1 ENTRIES FOUND

Van Gogh, Vincent, 1853-1890.
   ************ To search this author's name in either the author or subject
file, use a=Gogh Vincent van or s=Gogh Vincent van. Circulation information
appears on each title.

LOCATION: Main Library (Cunningham Mem Lib)
CALL NUMBER:  see specific titles for call number




TYPE r TO REVISE, h FOR HELP, e FOR LUIS INTRODUCTION.
TYPE COMMAND AND PRESS ENTER==>
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Figure 5.   Bibliographic Information Record