Manage broken link reports from WorldCat Discovery

Last updated: Thu, 24 Jan 2019 15:47:58 GMT

See how to manage emails generated from the “Report a broken link” form regarding errant knowledge base links. See how to troubleshoot and report the issue to OCLC. Learn about cooperative management options. Note: Find instructions to Enable "Report a broken link" and receive emails.

Receive broken link emails

About the emails

Email messages generated by use of the "Report a broken link" form come from no-reply@e.worldcat.org. When you receive a "broken link" email, a patron or library staff member was unable to access a full-text resource.

Expand for examples of errant link behavior

A link resolves to:

- An error page; It fails to load
- The wrong resource. For example, to:
  - An incorrect item with a similar title
  - An item from a different year
  - A print book instead of an eBook
- A journal landing page instead of to an article
- An item you do not own

Finding configuration errors is one of the primary benefits of enabling the "Report a broken link" form in WorldCat Discovery.

Plan to follow-up with your patron

The subject line of the email generated from the "Report a broken link" form will be one of the following:

- Follow-Up Requested: Broken Link Report from [Name]
- No Follow-Up Requested: Broken Link Report from [Name]

If the person who completed the form left "Request librarian assistance" selected as it is by default, the subject line will include "Follow-Up Requested." You can use the contact information to follow-up with the person after you address the issue causing an errant link.
OCLC will not receive broken link emails and will not automatically provide feedback or fix errant links. Once you review your library's configuration, if you need assistance, report the broken link to OCLC. OCLC will work with your library and does not need patron information.

Review your library's configuration

Check your institution settings

Verify settings in the WorldShare interface, Metadata > Collection Manager > Institution Settings.

Open access settings

1. Navigate to Proxy and Authentication > Open Access in Resolver.
2. Check to see if any of the settings are selected and if so, consider deselecting them.

These selections enable links for all open access collections in the knowledge base. The settings do not set holdings on the titles so the titles will not show as held by your library. However, because of the data quality in open access collections, enabling the options can cause numerous titles with errant links to surface in WorldCat Discovery.

For greater control and granular maintenance of open access content, we recommend that you select individual open access collections in the knowledge base. For instructions, see Add open access content.

Proxy settings

Review the Proxy settings checklist. Note that if the title with the errant link is from an open access collection, you might need to disable the proxy setting within the collection's settings in Collection Manager.

Check your proxy settings for off-campus access

Proxy Type

1. Navigate to Institution Settings > Proxy and authentication > Proxy.
2. Select Proxy:
   - None (default)
   - EZproxy
   - Ili WAM Proxy

Base URL

- EZproxy users:
  - Enter your Base URL. Example of a EZproxy base URL: http://ezproxy.oclc.org/login?url=
- Ili WAM Proxy users:
  - Enter the Hostname. Example of a Ili WAM Proxy hostname: sys.lib.proxy.edu

Caution: Do not include a space after the Base URL.
Username and Password

(Optional) Enter your Username and Password. Providing username and password information is used by OCLC for de-bugging purposes only.

Provider settings

See if a provider-specific identifier is needed for links to resolve

1. First, see the table below to see if you have a collection from a provider that requires a linking ID. If your provider is listed, continue with the steps below. If you do not know your ID, contact your provider before you proceed:

2. Navigate to Institution Settings > Provider Settings.
3. Select your provider from the drop-down list.
4. Enter the identifier from your provider.

Note: In special situations, you might need to override a linking ID for a particular collection. For help, see Collection-level settings in knowledge base collections, Use Proxy.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROVIDERS THAT REQUIRE AN ID</th>
<th>SETTING IS ALWAYS REQUIRED</th>
<th>SETTING IS ONLY REQUIRED WHEN CUSTOM LINKING HAS BEEN SET UP WITH THE PROVIDER</th>
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Make sure the correct collection is selected

1. Examine the email and collect the data you need to search for the knowledge base collection and title in Collection Manager.
2. Search in Collection Manager. See Tips for using the search field.
3. Verify that the correct collection and title is selected in the knowledge base.
Report the broken link to OCLC

If an errant link is not caused by a configuration error, you can report the errant link so that OCLC can correct the issue.

Contact OCLC Support with the following information, if you have it:

- Your institution’s name
- OCLC symbol or Registry ID
- URL to the item
- OCLC number of the item, if available
- (Optional) Proxy credentials to access your resources*

*If you are unable to provide test proxy credentials, OCLC might need to conduct a screen-sharing session with your library to troubleshoot.

Cooperative options for fixing errant links

Many errant link issues need to be reported to OCLC in order for a correction to benefit all knowledge base users. However, you might have the option to edit knowledge base title data in Collection Manager and submit the enhancements to the global cooperative. If interested in exploring cooperative options, follow the recommendations below.

Edit URLs in cooperative collections

A "broken link" in WorldCat Discovery is only sometimes caused by an erroneous URL or Linking Key. When there is a problem with a title-level URL or Linking Key in an provider-supplied collection, the best practice is to report the issue to OCLC. However, you can make edits to URLs in cooperative collections and submit them to the cooperative.

Cooperative (global) collections

- It is likely that you will be able to edit errant Title URLs and Linking Keys in a cooperative collection.

Cooperative collections are collections created by libraries that have been submitted to the cooperative. You can identify a cooperative collection by its collection ID. When a library creates a collection locally, the collection has customer. at the beginning of its collection ID. When the library submits the collection to the cooperative, it becomes a cooperative collection and has global. at the beginning of its collection ID.

Provider-supplied collections

- Typically, you will not be able edit an errant Title URL in an provider-supplied collection for the global cooperative without breaking the link for other libraries. Errant URLs should be reported to OCLC so that OCLC can correct the issue in a way that is relevant for all libraries.

Provider-supplied collections are knowledge base collections that are loaded and updated by OCLC with data from providers. A provider-supplied collection can be identified by expanding the collection’s History accordion and looking
Focus on other title-level data

A "broken link" in WorldCat Discovery is only sometimes caused by an erroneous URL or Linking Key. Often, missing or incorrect title-level data in the knowledge base causes erroneous associations with WorldCat records as items are surfaced in WorldCat Discovery. Therefore, we recommend that you focus on enhancing title-level knowledge base data.

For more information, see Best practices for cooperative edits.

Additional information

See How to update title information for instructions on submitting edits to the global cooperative.

Before making cooperative edits, see if your collection is listed. If it is, proceed with your edits. If your collection is not listed, cooperative edits will not be retained (for fields other than OCN and Grouped OCNs) when OCLC loads provider-supplied data updates. Contact OCLC to fix the issue.

- List of collections for which cooperative changes are retained (Updated: Monthly)

After you save edits made in knowledge base title fields, any due changes in WorldCat Discovery will be visible after processing. Processing time varies but is not instant. Changes are often visible by the following day.

Once you submit your edits to the cooperative, your edits will be loaded to the global knowledge base within 5 days and visible after processing.