Mismatched records and best practices for cooperative edits

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Find options for what to do when data in the knowledge base matches incorrectly to a record in WorldCat.

About

When data in the knowledge base and records in WorldCat are unable to match via Standard Number and OCLC number, a match is sometimes made by exact title match. This sometimes causes mismatches between the data in the knowledge base and a WorldCat record which results in an incorrect or broken link displaying on an item showing in Discovery.

Cooperative management is encouraged for improving title-level data in cases where doing so can benefit many libraries. Likewise, you can report errors to OCLC.

Focus on title-level edits

Best practices for cooperative edits

See the Best practices for cooperative edits section of the Grouped OCNs and cooperative management page.

How to update title 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)

Report errors to OCLC

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.

Additional information

When patrons report broken links

If a library patron has clicked on the "Report a broken link" form in the Discovery interface and you are wondering how to address the issue, see how to Manage broken link reports from WorldCat Discovery.

Knowledge base "dummy" collections

Note: More mismatches occurred prior to March 2018 when we refined material type requirements for matching. For example, it used to happen more often that an Ebook link would appear on a DVD record or an Audio link would appear on an Ebook record. Libraries sometimes fixed those mismatches by creating dummy collections and adding titles to force a correct match or to break a mismatch to remove a link. There is less need for dummy collections today, although they are still needed at times.

A dummy collection forces an exact match with the title and identifier in your knowledge base and that happens before and prevents the errant title match.

In some cases, libraries might prefer to make a dummy collection rather than attempt cooperative edits. Although they are not an ideal solution, they can be used to fix an issue only relevant to your library, an issue caused by errors in or missing WorldCat records, for testing, or for another reason. If you are new to your library and find a historical dummy collection, you might wonder how it works or why it was created.

Currently, dummy collections don't meet the guidelines for adding new collections to the cooperative. If your library is interested in submitting a dummy collection to the cooperative, contact us.

How to create a dummy collection

In the collection that contains the problem title:

1. Leave the problem title selected.

Create a single collection:

1. Create a knowledge base collection.
2. Add a Collection Name such as "Dummy collection" or other descriptive title.
3. (Optional) Change the last digits of the Collection ID to something such as: customer.[YourRegistryID].dummy
4. (Optional) Include a description such as "Collection to correct mismatched records."
5. Leave the other settings blank or set to default.
6. In the Holdings and MARC Records accordion, disable Maintain WorldCat Holdings if desired.

7. Click Create.

Add a title/titles as needed:

1. Search for your collection and click on it to open it.

2. Expand the Titles accordion.

3. From the Add a Local Title drop-down menu, select Create a Title or Create Using OCLC Number to Pre-Fill.
   1. Refer to Title-Level settings in knowledge base collections, Title-level fields for more information.
      • If the item is listed as Print in the item citation, select e-Book as the Coverage Depth.

4. (Optional) Enter a Staff Note such as "Created to suppress an incorrect link from surfacing."

5. Leave linking fields blank.

6. Click Save.