Change collection aliases retroactively

Find information about changing an existing collection alias. Collection aliases are the unique identifier for the collection and the items contained therein.

CONTENTdm gives you the option to specify a custom collection alias when you create a collection. See Add a new collection for more information.

The collection alias is used throughout CONTENTdm and is part of the fundamental identifier for the collection and all items in the collection. The ability to specify a custom collection alias is only available for new collections at the time they are created.

To change an existing collection alias retroactively, follow the workaround steps below:

1. Create an empty collection with the desired alias (your destination collection) and set it to be un-published.
2. Let OCLC Support know that you would like to duplicate your source collection (existing collection with undesirably alias) to your destination collection.
3. CONTENTdm staff will copy all items from the source collection to the new destination collection. This duplication service is offered free of charge.
4. You will need to manually replicate all Website Configuration Settings from the source collection to the destination collection, including advanced customizations.
5. Publish the new destination collection, and un-publish or delete the source collection.
6. You may begin using the destination collection with the desired alias.

Even though it is possible to retroactively change a collection alias as indicated above, it must not be taken lightly. Collection aliases are the unique identifier for the collection and for all of the items in that collection. Changing the alias will break all references to that collection and its contents. Because the collection alias is so deeply baked into all parts of the CONTENTdm system, it is not possible to redirect the former collection alias to the new collection alias.

What follows is a checklist of everything we have identified that will be adversely affected if a collection alias is changed:

- All item reference URLs in the collection, e.g. https://sandbox.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p10010coll1/id/28
- Collection landing page URL, e.g. https://sandbox.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p10010coll1
- Local bookmarks to a collection landing page or item reference URL
- Custom search URLs or hyperlinks that include references to the collection (this includes Custom Queries & Reports forms)
- Project Client projects (all projects for that collection will need to be recreated)
- Website Configuration Tool settings and customizations (all settings for that collection will need to be replicated)
- Any custom CSS or JavaScript that references the collection
- Any custom pages that have been created for that collection (at the collection level in the Website Configuration Tool)
- Digital Collection Gateway harvests for that collection will need to be reestablished
- OAI-PMH harvesting settings (if that collection has been specified)
- User administrative rights if they have been specified for that collection
- All previous pageview usage reports for the collection will be lost
- Scheduled approve and/or index will need to be reestablished
- Public search engine links to the collection (these will naturally update as the sitemap.xml files are refreshed)
- Google Analytics reports will change because the collection URL changes, which could cause continuity problems when comparing across time periods
- Catcher scripts use the collection alias to identify the target collection and will need to be updated

Note: If you are using the CONTENTdm preservation archive or the Archival File Manager with a collection alias that you wish to change, please contact OCLC Support to discuss whether this will be possible and the extra steps that will be involved.

All adjustments and repairs needed as a result of the above list are to be handled by the CONTENTdm site owner.

If you would like to change the alias for a collection, please follow the workaround steps and contact OCLC Support to make the request.