

V-Cat Bibliographic and Interface Committee Sky River Testing Summary

Summary

Due to the rising cost of OCLC, the Bibliographic / Interface Committee was tasked with investigating the cataloging utility SkyRiver, supported by Innovative, as an alternative to OCLC.

To assess this resource, the Committee searched both databases for titles to evaluate the appropriateness of the records for the V-Cat database. Records needed to meet these [minimum standards](#) to be usable for the V-Cat database.

It was found that, overall, SkyRiver offers fewer records than OCLC. Additionally, many of the records found in SkyRiver require further editing that is not currently part of the V-Cat cataloging workflow.

During our trial, library staff and WVLS staff checked 515 titles.

OCLC offered:

447 (87%) titles had records that were usable.

68 (13%) titles had records that did not meet current standards, or no record was available.

OCLC presented 1,488 record options and 770 were opened by staff for assessment.

SkyRiver offered:

321 (62%) titles had records that were usable.

194 (38%) titles had records that did not meet current standards, or no record was available.

SkyRiver presented 770 record options and 587 were opened by staff for assessment.

[Could we edit the physical description field to be able to use more SkyRiver records?](#)

It was asked if catalogers would be comfortable editing the physical description field (300 field) to increase the number of usable records from SkyRiver.

Of the 194 records that did not meet current standards, 75 titles had notes that indicated an edit was needed to the SkyRiver record's physical description field to meet our standards. Following this logic:

396 (77%) titles had records that were usable with new cataloging workflow edits.

37 (7%) titles had records that did not meet current standards, or no record was available.

82 (16%) records that were marked as unsuitable did not have notes.

There is potential that some of the records without notes may also be acceptable with an edit to the physical description field.

[Other considerations](#)

WVLS staff reached out OWLS Catalog Librarian, John Wisneski, for feedback on why OWLS choose to switch from SkyRiver to OCLC. John noted that they observed a trend that SkyRiver records included incorrect coding in the leader, 006, 007, and 008 fields or had those fields missing entirely. The ILS they

use, CARL, depends on those fields for correct material type identification. The switch to OCLC provided more consistently accurate coding in those fields without requiring added work on their catalogers.

While the V-Cat ILS, Sierra, does not depend on the leader, 006, 007, and 008 fields for material type identification, our Aspen discovery layer currently uses those fields to assign formats. Aspen has recently developed format designation by Sierra Material Type or Sierra Item Type. It would be possible to change our setup in Aspen.

Without a setup change, an increase in editing of the leader, 006, 007, and 008 fields can be assumed if V-Cat chooses SkyRiver.

Additionally, Northern Waters Library Network (NWLN) uses SkyRiver. We are considering a shared ILS with NWLN as part of the NICE project. It is worth considering SkyRiver as part of the potential partnership.

Conclusion/Recommendation

The Bibliographic / Interface Committee recommends continuing with OCLC as V-Cat's cataloging utility for 2024. During 2024, the Bibliographic / Interface Committee and WVLS staff will discuss potential training of additional bibliographic edits in the physical description field (300) in preparation of a utility change in the future.