

The LLMC-Digital Newsletter

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Newsletter Is Now Solely Digital

As announced in our previous issue, to realize significant savings in these lean times, and also just to “get with it,” this and future issues of the *LLMC-Digital Newsletter* will be issued solely in digital format and distributed solely online. To accommodate those who wish to maintain the “look and feel” of a paper copy, the electronic version is being distributed in PDF format; allowing for a local printout that maintains the traditional paper formatting.¹

We also asked subscribers to send us lists of the e-mail addresses of their staff members and any others to whom they wanted newsletter distribution via listserv. About 75% of our subscribers have sent us lists of the addresses for their institution, but a still significant number have not. Anyone reading this who suspects that members of their staff who formerly relied on the paper version, but are not getting electronic distribution, is earnestly requested to get us their E-addresses. Please send them to llmc@llmc.com, while putting the words “newsletter distribution” in the subject line.

OnLine Tutorial Now in Place

An online tutorial providing instruction on the use of the new *LLMC-Digital* interface is now in place on the site's home page. Check out the “Help” icon in the upper right hand corner. These tutorials are available in printed and video format. We urge you to take the time to do a quick review. You may find features explained that you didn't even know were

¹ Just for the record: LLMC waives any copyrights it has in the *Newsletter* for subscribers who may wish to distribute internally a given issue, or even all issues. Feel free to print off as many copies as needed for such purposes.

offered. Some of them are only made available because the interface was consciously designed to be supported by Adobe Reader, and thus will automatically incorporate any enhancements added to that widely used application.²

These tutorials were developed in collaboration with our new technical partner, National Business Systems (NBS), in response to requests from patrons and from professors of legal research. We are assuming that many of the latter will be using the tutorials right on the site. However, anyone wishing to should feel free to download portions they may want to incorporate into other teaching tools. We also ask our colleagues “on the firing line” to let us know areas in which these tutorials can be improved and made more effective as teaching aids. Please be assured that your suggestions will be read most attentively and implemented whenever feasible.

OCLC's URL Changes Are Now Complete

As described in our previous issue, OCLC has been swapping out the URLs for all of the *LLMC-Digital* titles cataloged into its World Cat Collection Sets prior to September 2008. That conversion process is now completed.

These changes were essential because all of LLMC's document images that were online prior to September 2008 have now been moved from the University of Michigan's Scholarly Publishing Office (UofM) servers to the servers of our new technical partner, NBS.³

² One fun thing to check out is the “Read Out Loud” feature. It lets one opt among three possible voices. Our local favorite is Michelle, who easily beat out both Michael and Microsoft Sam.

³ The URLs that were assigned to the LLMC document images during our five and a half years with the University of Michigan (UofM) were of two styles, both of which reflected the UofM's server and file structure. Initially, the URLs read <http://name.umdl.edu/#####>. Later records had a new URL styled <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/llmc.#####>. In both cases the final “#####” represented the unique LLMC control number for the referenced LLMC title. The new NBS URLs will utilize the following standard rubric: <http://www.llmcdigital.org/default.aspx?rredir=#####>. As with the former UofM URL's, the final five digits, “#####”, represent the unique

Therefore the old UofM URL's had to be changed to ensure that future queries go to the new server. Titles cataloged after September 2008 were provided with the new NBS URL format in their 856 field and were sent directly to the NBS server.

This change in the URLs for the older titles at OCLC requires transition action from those subscribing libraries that already have the pre-September 2008 *LLMC-Digital* MARC records mounted in their local systems. For several more months, when an old URL is used, the UofM will maintain a "redirect" from their server in Ann Arbor to the NBS server in Eagan, MN. Within that window, those institutions with old MARC records in their local systems will need to change the old URLs. They can do that in several ways. If their local system supports the option, they can run a "find and replace" to update the URLs. As a perhaps easier and more economical alternative, now that OCLC has changed the old URLs in its WorldCat sets, a library could purchase⁴ the full corpus of bibliographic records for LLMC titles (currently about 1,600 records) and reload them. However they accomplish the task, we apologize for the inconvenience and hope that everybody will be consoled by the news that they will never have to do this again, because from now on the URLs will be permanent.⁵

LLMC control number for each title (which also happens to be the LLMC title number for the microfiche version of that same text).

⁴ As to costs, normally they fall in the range of about \$0.50 per record. However, since they are an OCLC product, LLMC is not involved with selling these records. Our information is that the price sometimes varies depending upon which regional network of OCLC subscribers a given library may belong to. You will need to query OCLC directly and ask for a quote on the full current corpus of WorldCat LLMC-Digital records.

⁵ The URLs will be permanent because they have been designed to be specific to the *LLMC-Digital* project, rather than to the host. We couldn't do that when we first got started with the UofM, because their existing system was designed to accommodate many unrelated digital libraries and could not handle collection-specific URLs. That was one of the tradeoffs we needed to make in exchange for the quick launch we managed to

Transition of All Titles to NBS Completed

Over the past three months LLMC and NBS have been doing a thorough cleanup of the records for all of the over 1,600 titles that were transferred from the UofM to NBS. This has been a bit more painstaking than we would have preferred. The reason is that the systems that supported the LLMC/UofM partnership were constructed "on the fly" when we started up back in 2002/03. A totally un-precedented apparatus of digitally assisted workload collaboration among three widely separated centers (Ann Arbor, MI – St. Louis, MO – Kaneohe, HI) was rapidly piggybacked onto the existing UofM's systems. Given the (could we say Jerry built?) nature of this patchwork system, there obviously was some potential for slippage; for the odd volume or even title to fall between the cracks. And some did. Fortunately, tedious as it was, the title by title review proved its worth by locating over a thousand volumes and almost one hundred titles that were languishing anon-ymously somewhere out there in the ether.

Naturally, we have tried to learn from this fortuitous experience. With no fault implied, it was just a fact of life that the UofM system had to accommodate the needs of many users, some of whom had conflicting requirements. This meant that when inefficiencies were discovered it was not always an easy matter to resolve them. In particular, it was very difficult for us to mount new titles in a timely fashion, or to quickly make changes to data on line when mistakes were identified.

In concert with NBS we have now modified past practices and instituted new safeguards to ensure that images sent from Kaneohe, HI, and cataloging information sent from St. Louis, MO, properly "marry up" in Eagan, MN, allowing everything to go up online both correctly and completely. Facilitating that effort has been the fact that NBS has been designing a system devoted exclusively to our needs. So we will benefit by the fact that the system is designed solely for our purposes. In addition, we will be able to make changes as needed in the future without having to navi

achieve by piggybacking upon the UofMs already existing system.

gate the shoals of other users' preferences and requirements.

We now feel that we have in place at NBS an image receipt and delivery system superior to what we worked with in Ann Arbor between 2003-2008 in terms of both accuracy and timeliness.⁶ No doubt, there will be regular future changes and enhancements, but we feel confident that a basic system is now in place that justifies our hopes and expectations in making the change to a new hosting situation.

Improved Internal Tracking Systems

Now that we are relatively happy with the content-input and image-receipt and delivery systems at NBS, we have shifted our focus toward improving the computer tracking systems that are used to manage the flow of work through the scanning processes at our HQ in Hawaii and extern-scanner sites, and the subsequent shipment of those images on to NBS for mounting on *LLMC-Digital*. This "backroom" stuff regularly induces yawns among all but the most nerdy. However, as we all know, if you lose track of the details, the details soon push you off track.

As with our relationship with the UofM operations, our internal production tracking systems were also thrown together "on the fly" as needed. If something had to be done, it got done with a system thrown together by whomever was on the spot, literally or figuratively. We rarely had the luxury of stepping back and integrating all of the pieces into a seamless and mutually reinforcing system. We're now working on that, aided by the fact that we are

⁶ As an example, we once contemplated but had to abandon a "HotDoc" program. The impetus for such a program came on several occasions where libraries contacted us with offers to share unique documents that suddenly had become relevant due to breaking news. Why not quickly scan such documents and make them immediately available to all LLMC patrons? Unfortunately, under the rigidities of the old system, introducing a new, not-previously-planned-for title was a process that took a minimum of six weeks and sometimes, depending upon the time of year (honest!), as long as nine months. Given the flexibility built into the new NBS system, that window has now been narrowed to one or two weeks.

now partnered with a company, NBS, that specializes in workflow management.

We will focus on two areas. One, the "backroom" tracking systems, unseen by the public, that are used to manage our production and other workflows. This network needs internal integration, enhanced integration with the cataloging operations going on at St. Louis University, and finally more seamless integration with the NBS input systems in Egan. The goal in this case will be to work toward a situation where we can honestly account for everything going through production while ensuring against losses of data and images and other such slippage. We already have started, and over the next six months or so will continue, to work directly with NBS toward designing a computerized tracking system that more closely integrates all of our distributed operations. Regular reports of progress on this front will be forthcoming.

The other area of internal, computer related focus is something that our subscribers and the general public do see a lot; namely our corporate web site www.llmc.com. Besides fulfilling its initial purpose of being LLMC's digital face to the world, our home web site is intimately integrated into *LLMC-Digital* in a very substantial, indeed essential way. The lefthand side of the *LLMC-Digital* home page is devoted to outlining the "Collections" offered. When you open any of those lists, you are given the choice of clicking on either a "Search" or an "Info" option. You may not know it, but if you click on the "Info" option, you are quietly being taken to our corporate web site. The reason for this arrangement is that all of the bibliographic and subject expertise for *LLMC-Digital* is physically located either at our HQ in Hawaii, or in St. Louis; not in Ann Arbor or Egan. So it made sense from the beginning to have our Hawaii staff be responsible for both the bibliographic and subject elements of the operation. At least in theory, the system could zip back and forth magically between www.llmc.com and *LLMC-Digital* while patrons would be none the wiser. In reality, it never worked quite that seamlessly; and not only for such plausible reasons as different time zones.

The webmaster whom we have hired to upgrade our corporate website is located in Egan and is a regular collaborator with NBS. His assigned task has been to fine tune the integration between www.llmc.com and *LLMC-Digital*, while maintaining the capacity for our Hawaii and St. Louis personnel to control and add to the content; even though the actual hosting of the web site, which used to be handled by a firm in Hawaii, will now be done by NBS in Egan. These upgrades are now in the process of being implemented, and we expect to see the principal fruits of the effort become apparent by mid-February.

Canadian Federal Statutes in French

We are delighted finally to be able to announce that, after efforts extending over five years, we have now completed the scanning of the *Statutes of the Federal Government of Canada*, French language version.⁷ The last volumes for this title will show up on *LLMC-Digital* in February. This project was high on the wish lists of our Canadian colleagues for years, but implementation was exceedingly difficult because all of our regular American lending sources and most Canadian sources held only the English language version. The one library that was able to lend us a copy, the University of Ottawa Law Library, needed their books for instructional purposes during each school year, and so could only loan pieces of the run during summers. In addition, due to heavy use, their set had many missing pages. Fortunately we were able to get re-placement copies for those from Canada's national library, Library and Archives Canada. On behalf of all of the patrons of *LLMC-Digital*, we would like to extend particular appreciation to several Canadian colleagues, all of whom played significantly helpful roles in arranging

⁷ The Canada federal statutes were issued in separate, but equally valid, English and French versions from the first session of Canada's Parliament after confederation in 1867 until the session of 1967/68; roughly 100 years. Thereafter they were issued in bi-lingual versions, with French and English on opposing pages. On *LLMC-Digital* the full French language version, 1867-1967/68, is offered as a separate title. The annual bi-lingual version of the session laws post-1968 are carried on the *LLMC-Digital* as a continuation of the English-language version.

the loans of material that made this project possible: Helen Rentis of Helaine Distributors Inc.; Jules Larivière, Stephen Park, and Nathalie Leonard, successively directors at the University of Ottawa Law Library; and Ian McDonald, Government & Law Specialist, Library and Archives Canada.

NY Records & Briefs Project Begins

It's only the beginning, and more significant milestones are in store, but readers will be heartened to hear that the first physical step of the NY R&B project, a joint effort between LLMC and Google, is now behind us. Right after New Year the first shipment of books left the Library of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York. Books are now going to Google's plant in California at the rate of 150-200 boxes a week. Also after New Year, the Board of Governors of the New York Law Institute Library, the other donor library for this project, gave formal approval for the loan of those of their books needed to complete the collection. More news will follow as this project develops.

Retagging of Encyclopedias Completed

In our early digital years, following the rules of the time, some dictionaries and some legal or general reference encyclopedias⁸ mounted on *LLMC-Digital* were unwisely tagged to their pagination. This meant that one had to browse the images one by one, a painfully tedious process, to find anything alphabetically. Fortunately, sharp eyed patrons soon informed us that this way of organizing the data made it nearly unusable. Guided by their input we quickly changed the rule. However, what with other pressing concerns, going back and redoing the early work took time. We are happy to report that all of that retagging work has now been completed. Users can now browse, and cite these reference tools by alphabet in the manner the original publishers intended.

⁸ The most important of which was the classic 11th Edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, which is included in the LLMC²-Digital reference collection because of its high relevance to our "Common Law Abroad" offerings.