Can anyone believe it has been three years since RDA was fully implemented by the Library of Congress for all cataloging? As stated in the OCLC RDA Policy Statement, OCLC agreed, in conjunction with the Program for Cooperative Cataloging (PCC), that General Material Designations (GMDs, found in field 245 subfield $h) would be retained for a period of three years in existing WorldCat bibliographic records that were not re-cataloged according to RDA. That three year period came to an end on March 31, 2016. We are therefore announcing that OCLC will begin deleting GMDs from existing bibliographic records starting in April 2016. The removal of GMDs is part of the ongoing work to introduce RDA elements and practices to existing WorldCat records.

GMDs will not disappear overnight. This will be a gradual process over the next few years. We will start in April with WorldCat record #1 and move systematically forward, adjusting records with English language of cataloging (field 040 subfield $b eng) first. When other records are updated for reasons apart from the systematic walk through the database, GMDs may be removed from those as well. When GMDs are removed, OCLC will assure that the appropriate 33X fields for content, media, and carrier types are added to records whenever possible. Because we are using automated methods to make these changes, it may not always be possible to add all three fields. We will err on the side of omitting a field rather than adding an incorrect one.

Please note that members of the OCLC cooperative may continue to contribute new unique records to WorldCat formulated according to any cataloging code they are currently using. OCLC does NOT require libraries to catalog using RDA. Any institution wishing to add GMDs to bibliographic records may do so through local editing, but please do not add GMDs to a WorldCat record.

Additionally, for those who have access to WorldShare Collection Manager, you can configure WorldCat updates (a one-time process) to automatically receive updated WorldCat records once the GMD has been removed and 33X fields have been added.

Questions regarding these changes may be sent to rdapolicy@oclc.org.

The WorldCat Quality Team