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Public Contact: Mike Handy, (202) 707-8338, mhan@loc.gov

Press Contact: John Sayers, (202) 707-9216, jsay@loc.gov

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS ANNOUNCES STUDY OF
BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD PRODUCTION

The Library of Congress today announced the next phase of its investigation into the creation and distribution of bibliographic data in U.S. and Canadian libraries. The Library has commissioned a study to research and describe the current marketplace for cataloging records in the MARC format, with primary focus on the economics of current practices, including existing incentives and barriers to both contribution and availability. The study will be carried out by R2 Consulting LLC of Contoocook, N.H.

The Library has recognized that its role as a producer of bibliographic data is changing and that other libraries have options as they consider sources for cataloging records. The conclusions outlined in a report issued last year, "On the Record: Report of the Library of Congress Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control," indicate that cataloging activity must be shared more broadly and equitably among all libraries. Before the Library considers any changes to its cataloging commitments or priorities, however, it is vital to understand the extent to which other libraries rely on its contributions. The study will examine cataloging production and practice across all library types, including cooperative activity through OCLC, the Program for Cooperative Cataloging (PCC), the National Library of Medicine, the National Agricultural Library, library consortia, and other shared cataloging initiatives.

Under the general direction of Deanna Marcum, Associate Librarian for Library Services at the Library of Congress, R2 will develop a description of the current economic model and will determine the extent of library participation in and reliance on existing structures and organizations. The study will show the degree to which sources other than the Library of Congress are supplying quality records in economically sufficient quantities, or whether most libraries use records created by the Library. This

project is oriented toward fact-finding and reporting rather than solutions, and it is intended to produce a snapshot of the existing market. The project is scheduled for completion by June 30, 2009, with a written report and visual representation of the existing marketplace. Progress reports, along with various other data collection and communication tools, will be made available via the R2 Web site at **www.r2consulting.org** and the Bibliographic Control Working Group site at **www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future/**.

"I am very optimistic that the project will shed new light on the current cataloging supply and distribution environment," Marcum said, "in such a way that future opportunities and challenges can be promptly identified and evaluated. I am hopeful that librarians and all other participants in the distribution chain will be as forthcoming as possible during the investigative process. Our intention is to understand as fully as possible both the economic and workflow implications for the U.S. and Canadian marketplace prior to implementing any changes at the Library."

The Library of Congress is the nation's oldest federal cultural institution and serves as the research arm of Congress. It is also the largest library in the world, with millions of books, recordings, photographs, maps and manuscripts in its collections. The Library's mission is to make its resources available and useful to the Congress and the American people and to sustain and preserve a universal collection of knowledge and creativity for future generations.

R2 Consulting LLC was founded in 2000 by partners Rick Lugg and Ruth Fischer and specializes in selection-to-access workflow analysis and organizational redesign of academic libraries. The firm also participated in the "Economics and Organization of Bibliographic Data" session of the Library of Congress Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control. R2's primary professional interest is to help library organizations improve performance and adapt to the changing information environment.

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