



Press Release

For immediate release
12th October 2006

UnityUK and LinkUK Integration Underway

OCLC PICA and The Combined Regions (TCR) are pleased to announce that the process to integrate the UnityUK service with the LinkUK service has successfully begun.

The groundwork for the project to bring together over 100 UnityUK libraries and 78 LinkUK libraries is well under way. Five libraries across the West Midlands: Staffordshire, Coventry, Stoke-on-Trent, Birmingham and Worcestershire began using the UnityUK service in August 2006. The first early adopter library authorities from across London and the South East: Camden, Slough, Bromley, Southwark, Enfield, East Sussex, Islington and Surrey, have already received their first round of training and are in the process of beginning to use UnityUK to supply items requested by other libraries.

LinkUK, formerly known as v3 Online, will be integrated with UnityUK to deliver the first national service for resource sharing in the UK. This countrywide initiative is part-financed by the European Union's European Regional Development Fund delivered through the South Yorkshire Objective 1 Programme.

Jennifer Cox, Stock Services Manager at Bromley Libraries, a previous Chair of the Forum for Interlending and a member of the OCLC Resource Sharing Advisory Committee, is already positive about the move to an integrated service, "All of us at Bromley can see the potential that the new service will offer, particularly its capability to streamline and speed up the ILL process for all members. This will make the job easier for staff and will ultimately improve the service we can offer to our library users. A national ILL service is the way forward we are excited about being part of its development."

LinkUK libraries will use both the UnityUK system and the integrated ILL management package, which enables them to use UnityUK to manage communication for all incoming requests and outgoing requests.

Early adopters among the LinkUK libraries will use both services as part of the integration project. This will facilitate gap analysis to identify the best of breed from both services and to ensure that the UnityUK service is developed in line with the LinkUK libraries usability requirements for the interface and workflow.

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Library Authorities from Wales have a training date booked for October 2006, and following training, UnityUK will be rolled out to these areas for item supply management.

Linda Saunders, Chief Librarian at Sandwell and Dudley, was pleased to become an involved at an early stage, "The integration of the two services is a huge step forward for resource sharing and I welcome the opportunity to be a part of its evolution. The new service is completely in line with the underlying values of libraries; co-operation for the benefit of our users has always driven us to find new solutions to share our resources more effectively."

The integration process started, on schedule, in August 2006 and with the process now underway, UnityUK is on track to deliver a national network for resource sharing for the UK during 2007.

The new integrated service uses the latest resource sharing technology from world leaders OCLC PICA who also host and manage the new service. Over 175 library authorities across the UK use OCLC PICA software to share resources and manage requesting.

UnityUK will be on show at the OCLC PICA stand (stand 214) at the Online Information Show taking place at London Olympia from 28th to 30th November 2006. (<http://www.online-information.co.uk>).



Project part-financed by
the European Union

European Regional
Development fund



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Notes to editors:

About UnityUK

UnityUK is the upgraded web-based resource sharing and interlibrary loan service provided by The Combined Regions (TCR). UnityUK, launched in May 2006, delivers leading edge functionality for union catalogue, cross database searching, holdings and item location, interlibrary loan and resource sharing services. UnityUK uses the latest international resource sharing standards and integrates with all major library management systems in use in the UK today. UnityUK also links together the union



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catalogues of the TCR member libraries and LinkUK library resources, to provide the first national resource sharing service for the UK.

www.unity-uk.com

About The Combined Regions (TCR)

The Combined Regions (TCR) is the organisation behind the Unity resource sharing service. For more than 10 years, TCR has provided interlending services to its 140 member library organisations across the South West, North East, East Midlands, North East and Scotland. Under the Unity name, TCR's resource sharing services began with a CD union catalogue, and in 2001 moved to become web-based. In February 2006, The Combined Regions announced the launch of a new and upgraded Unity service to be provided by OCLC PICA.

www.combinedregions.com

About OCLC PICA

As the European library cooperative, OCLC PICA offers a broad range of leading edge, high-tech solutions for professionals and end users of academic and public libraries, information centres from the government and health sector, museums, archives and other cultural institutions. Thousands of patrons daily rely on OCLC PICA systems and services for efficient cataloguing, library management, retrieval, resource sharing, portals and preservation. OCLC PICA participates in a large number of important standardisation platforms to make sure its users' interests are best represented. OCLC PICA staff consists of IT professionals, formally trained librarians and other specialists.

OCLC PICA B.V. has two share holders: OCLC Inc. and Stichting Pica. OCLC Online Computer Library Center Inc. (est. 1967) is a not-for-profit organisation and offers its services to 54,000 libraries worldwide. Stichting Pica (est. 1969) is a foundation that promotes and encourages the scientific and public information service in the Netherlands. From its head office in Leiden and regional offices in Oberhaching, Sheffield, Birmingham, Paris and Footscray, and the FDI USA office in Kansas City, OCLC PICA provides solutions developed in Leiden, Oberhaching and Sheffield. It also represents the OCLC services in Europe, Turkey, Israel and Southern Africa. More information about OCLC PICA can be found at www.oclc-pica.org.

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