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From the Field

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Introduction

In 2013, two senior university administrators in Ontario, one at an institution with a library quickly running out of space on campus, the other at an institution interested in expanding its off-site preservation facility, discussed the possibility of collaborating to meet both needs. The idea blossomed. By early 2014, five of the largest academic libraries in Ontario had successfully applied for provincial funding to expand the University of Toronto's Downsview preservation facility. Keep@Downsview (K@D) (<https://downsviewkeep.org>), a partnership between University of Toronto, Queen's University, Western University, McMaster University, and the University of Ottawa, was launched!

The goals of the partnership when it began were modest and familiar: to release collections space in on-campus libraries for other purposes and to save money by creating a shared off-site preservation collection. Over time, as members of the partnership joined the larger shared print preservation community, as shared print discussions in North America increased, as the trust between those working on the K@D project grew, and as the project itself matured and thrived, larger and more ambitious goals began to emerge. K@D was moving beyond simply a space for five libraries to store a de-duplicated legacy print collection to something more strategic.

By 2019, the partnership was already seeing broader impacts from its work. The five K@D

partners, all members of the Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL), successfully persuaded the consortium to review its resource sharing practices in the context of other strategic and interdependent developments in academic library collections. The working group established to conduct this review is co-chaired by librarians from two K@D partner libraries. K@D and its member libraries were also participating in a variety of other groups and organizations that contributed to the formation of network-level shared print initiatives (see Strategic Direction 1). Additionally, working in collaboration with Memorial University of Newfoundland, K@D was exploring the path to bringing new partners on board.

Now, in late 2020, with the addition of Memorial as a pilot associate partner and the complications of the COVID-19 pandemic, K@D is embarking on a new phase of its development. We are engaging in visioning and planning work to shape strategic directions that shift K@D's growth and development into a more intentional frame. The strategic directions that K@D envisions will position the partnership to build a shared collection with impact in national and international print preservation efforts as well as digital preservation and access initiatives, while continuing to provide the space and cost savings that its members rely on.

Strategic Directions

K@D is positioning itself in the global context of network-level collective collections through activity in four strategic areas. In doing so, we will align our work with other shared print programs and join our colleagues at major research libraries who are already working at the network level.

1. Develop Partnerships

In the Canadian context, K@D seeks to be a leader in working with other shared print pro-

grams, such as COPPUL SPAN (<https://coppul.ca/programs/shared-print>), and to actively engage with the emerging Canadian national print preservation and access network (https://www.carl-abrc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CCPSWG_final_report_EN.pdf). The larger landscape of shared print and shared collections has evolved to one of partnerships of partnerships. Over the last several years, groups such as the Rosemount Shared Print Alliance (<https://rosemontsharedprintalliance.org>) and the Partnership for Shared Book Collections (<https://sharedprint.org>), among others, have formed to support collaboration across shared collections programs. Longstanding organizations such as the Center for Research Libraries (CRL) (<https://www.crl.edu>) are reaffirming that stewardship of preservation collections is a key part of their strategic role and the value-add that they can provide to members. Organizations such as these form an overlapping network of partnerships with which K@D has and will continue to collaborate.

2. Explore Collaborative Collection Development

Building a shared collection of newly published print materials has the potential to create opportunity for investment in different types of research inputs, to save acquisitions funds, and to preserve student space at our campus libraries. This simultaneously improves the breadth and depth of the materials available to researchers, increases discoverability through increased metadata control and quality enhancement, and improves access through improved resource sharing networks.

Recent initiatives such as the OCUL Collaborative Futures Project, which brought together sixteen institutions to implement and manage Alma LSP as a community, and the desire to enhance access to collections that are inaccessible due to the COVID pandemic have broadened the opportunities to deliver services in new and

better ways. As this group of institutions develops their shared Alma 'network zone,' it is offering a glimpse of future collaborative collection possibilities.

K@D will contribute to a national conversation with academic institutions to build support for developing collective collections in Canada. We will pursue grant funding opportunities to further the development of the national community for shared print preservation and shared collection development. We will benefit from and capitalize on lessons learned from existing shared print initiatives that are further along in the shift to prospective collection development. Opportunities to engage with other groups and programs such as the Big Ten Academic Alliance (<https://www.btaa.org>), Ivy Plus Libraries (<https://ivpluslibraries.org>), and the newly formed HathiTrust/California Digital Library/Centre for Research Libraries collaboration (<https://cdlib.org/cdlinfo/2020/07/01/cdl-crl-hathitrust-collaboration-for-shared-print-infrastructure>) will inform the development of Canadian initiatives.

3. Focus on Access and Preservation

K@D sees many opportunities to improve and strengthen access and preservation efforts in shared print collections, both internal to the K@D partners and beyond K@D through engagement with other programs and partners. Issues of metadata, digitization, and outreach pose challenges.

K@D has an important role to play in the digitization landscape. The digital corpus is growing exponentially; we need to explore how it could be harnessed and managed to maximum benefit within copyright. Currently digitized material is created and stored in myriad locations. Some items are digitized for immediate use, while others are digitized for preservation. We need to ensure both are properly managed and executed in coordination at the network level. This will

add value to K@D's strong preservation and service delivery mandate. We will work with external partners such as HathiTrust, who are also seeking to build digitized collections in a strategic way, and act on opportunities such as overlap analysis, data mining services, and others.

Additionally, the experience of providing access to collections through the current pandemic has highlighted the tremendous importance of shared digital preservation collections such as HathiTrust (<https://www.hathitrust.org>), the Internet Archive (<https://archive.org>), *Canadiana* (<https://www.canadiana.ca/>), and Scholars Portal (<https://ocul.on.ca/scholars-portal>). These collaborative, multi-institution repositories provide the most effective opportunities for strategic digitization.

4. Assess Resources in Relation to Anticipated Growth

Moving forward will also require an assessment of current resources to determine the capacity for K@D to grow. We anticipate the need for expansion in the areas of services, space, and membership.

At this point K@D requires a Project Manager to improve service across the partnership. This position would serve as the liaison, facilitator, and coordinator for transfer projects bringing collection materials from the individual partners into the shared collection. The Project Manager would also provide leadership in identifying and implementing partnership-level service improvements to better support students and faculty at all K@D member institutions.

A pilot project to add new members to the K@D partnership is in progress and a report with recommendations and criteria for membership is forthcoming. Understanding that the expansion of membership is dependent on the ability to expand our space and preservation model, it seems likely, given the current landscape, that we will be asked to take on more partners. Now

is the time to determine what kind of leadership role K@D should play in Canada and to assess the benefits and drawbacks of expanding our membership.

Influencing Factors

COVID-19

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Downsview facility was forced to close in March 2020 for an extended period, and staff at all K@D institutions worked remotely. The crisis continues to cause significant disruption to all institutions and libraries and raises the question of how to continue adapting to the current environment and foreseeable permanent shifts in accessing library collections and services that may result.

With the understanding that we are still working in a context of uncertainty, K@D partners are attempting to identify some potential lasting effects of the pandemic and plan accordingly to align user needs with institutional and K@D services. Borrowing language used by Lynn Silipigni Connaway, Director of Library Trends and User Research at OCLC Research, the Coordinating Committee is seeking to move from evolutionary change to immediate innovation.¹ All partnership members continue to value the benefit of collaboration, which will likely become even more important post-pandemic as described by Scout Calvert: “Collaborative, collective approaches to emerging technology challenges or endeavors that transcend a single unit, institution, region, or research library will be increasingly needed, valued, and expected.”²

Footprint of Collection Stacks and Serendipitous Discovery

The original impetus of the K@D partnership was to share common storage space to alleviate local pressures on each library’s at-capacity collection spaces. Further, as with other academic institutions around the world, on-campus space

is at a premium; questions arise as to whether the stacks are the best use of space when there are unmet demands for activities related to changing pedagogies, such as group study rooms, increasing student enrollments, and common dissatisfaction with available graduate student spaces. Given the Covid-19 pandemic, it is difficult to predict what long-term implications may result for library spaces. Will there be a continued need for social distancing and/or a learned preference for more distancing between users than was common pre-Covid? Will demand for group study spaces decrease as students seek individual rooms for participating in online instruction, Zoom calls, etc? If so, library master space planning may need to be modified, with a corresponding acceleration of transfers to off-site storage facilities and related service upgrades.

In 2019, three of the five K@D partners joined other Ontario partners in launching Collaborative Futures, a consortial implementation of Alma noted above, that includes virtual browsing and streamlined functionality to support curbside and scanning services. Little did we know that these efforts would prove useful as we managed demand for materials during a pandemic.

Access

In 2018, the K@D Coordinating Committee undertook a site visit to the ReCAP facility in Princeton, New Jersey to better understand its operations and high satisfaction levels among faculty for the Borrow Direct service. We left with a renewed sense of the importance of fulfillment speed and scale, and the interdependence with other library services. We followed OCLC’s Collective Collection research area,³ which ultimately positioned us to consider our work at the networked level.



All flows of print materials were disrupted in member libraries at the beginning of the pandemic as our buildings were closed. Downsview materials could not be accessioned into the shared storage facility, nor could they be requested for retrieval and delivery to member institutions. Article and chapter scanning services from the Downsview collection to member libraries resumed in June 2020 when staff returned to the Downsview facility. In many cases, however, restrictions on resource sharing and print collection access remain in place in Canadian academic libraries in the fall of 2020.

The K@D Coordinating Committee is reflecting on the closure experience and how to mitigate the negative impact on users of any potential future closures. Further, we are considering how to leverage the lessons learned from the pandemic on articulating goals for strategic priority #3: *Focus on Access and Preservation*. Access is taking on a new and urgent meaning when our traditional points of access are compromised.

HathiTrust (HT) launched its Emergency Temporary Access Service (ETAS) (<https://www.hathitrust.org/ETAS-member-information>) for the duration of disrupted collections access. ETAS access is based on a one-to-one relationship between an owned print holding and a full digitized version that would normally be limited due to copyright restrictions, making retention of print copies a key aspect of digital access.⁴ Four of the five K@D libraries are members of HathiTrust and took advantage of the HT ETAS access provisions after consultation with other HT Canadian members and respective general counsels. The HT ETAS has demonstrated a nimble and creative solution to an urgent need for access to a large corpus of content by students, staff, and faculty at over a hundred academic institutions across North America. As stated by Roger Schonfeld, “[t]he ability to simply ‘turn on’ digital access to such a high share of the print collection on a temporary basis is an absolutely amazing benefit to Hathi members,” and

justifies the long-term investments of research library digitization.⁵ While the service is intended to be temporary in nature, the experience demonstrates how shared print is irrevocably tied to digitization and methods of access. It also shows the importance of quality metadata and the need to improve overlap analysis at scale.

K@D members have been considering these intersections for several years and are emboldened to pursue planning on this front with recent developments due to COVID-19. Possible directions include developing an emergency temporary access solution for K@D, proactively digitizing tables of contents upon ingest for easier virtual browsing, and options for mass digitization and/or overlap analysis with digitized content at HathiTrust, the Internet Archive, CRL, Canadiana, and other initiatives. We are actively watching developments on Controlled Digital Lending (CDL) on both sides of the border.⁶

Resource Sharing

Similar to access, resource sharing’s importance was more widely acknowledged when print borrowing and lending were suspended. While electronic borrowing and lending continued throughout the pandemic, Ontario academic libraries have not resumed physical interlibrary loan as of December 2020. The K@D Coordinating Committee has been considering resource sharing services within the larger context of access since 2018, resulting in a Director’s motion at OCUL to form a strategic working group on the Collections and the Future of Resource Sharing as we approach the end-of-life for Ontario’s VDX ILL system (RACER). Co-chaired by two members from K@D institutions, the group’s report to OCUL Directors emphasized the importance of the intersections between access, preservation, shared print, and digitization, and the need to consider future resource sharing services and infrastructure within this evolving landscape rather than maintaining service silos.

In addition, the growing importance of digital content indicates a need to move away from our historical roots of considering resource sharing within a geographical region and boldly embrace global solutions that benefit from scale, load balancing, and time zone differences.

Digitization

The pandemic has shown us the importance of digital access to scholarly content, including older print material, in times when normal access to physical collections is not permitted. Preservation has always been a cornerstone value for libraries, but time, money, and a coordinated approach are needed to transition from ad-hoc local digitization projects to mass digitization. Our largest partner, the University of Toronto, has experience with mass digitization, but more recently has concentrated on digitizing special collections and archival materials. Our group is beginning to consider a coordinated and sustainable way forward to mass digitization that contributes but does not duplicate content in various digital corpora. As discussed previously, shared print programs operate on multiple dimensions – access, preservation, digitization, resource sharing – and new undertakings in any one area must be viewed within this larger context. How might we enhance the K@D partnership to leverage members' digitization capabilities and maximize investment in collective stewardship of shared print? A recent Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN) panel explored the issues in "Making the Connection Between Digitization Strategies and Collective Print Initiatives."⁷

Remote Course Delivery and Online Teaching

In response to the remote course delivery directive for most Canadian universities, and limited numbers of library staff allowed on campus, all partner libraries are currently purchasing reduced amounts of physical materials. Further,

the value of physical course materials is significantly diminished, and in many cases not offered, when students are asked to limit their on-campus visits and library service desks are closed. This observation is extended to print collections writ large as students who have not returned to campus need electronic delivery of research materials to complete course requirements. It is feasible that many courses will continue to have an online component, thereby accelerating the e-preferred stance that many libraries announced several years ago but did not always fully realize.

This further move to electronic will have implications for how the K@D partnership plans local and shared footprints for prospective print collections. It opens additional and timely opportunities for deeper collaboration on shared collection development and resource sharing of electronic materials, including full e-books.

Conclusion

This field report captures a chaotic moment in time for the K@D partners. Just as we began the work of drafting new strategic directions focused on expansion and impact, a global pandemic necessitated a quick reassessment of priorities and activities. In November 2020, the partners engaged in a visioning exercise designed to help reframe our direction in light of current events and to consider new opportunities for collaboration. We are ready to move beyond reacting to emerging priorities towards intentional decisions that address our commitment to access above all other considerations. We will continue to communicate through this process and will keep you up to date.

¹ Lynn Silipigni Connaway, "Envisioning the New Model Library: Navigating through the pandemic and beyond," *Hanging Together, The OCLC Research Blog*, July 30, 2020, <https://hangingtogether.org/?p=8049>.

² Scout Calvert et al., *Future Themes and Forecasts for Research Libraries and Emerging Technologies*, (Washington, DC: ARL, CNI, Educause, August 21, 2020), <https://www.arl.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/2020.08.21-future-themes-and-forecasts-for-research-libraries-and-emerging-technologies.pdf>.

³ OCLC Research Area [Collective Collection](#).

⁴ Fulkerson, Natalie; McIntyre, Sandra; and Stewart, Melissa, "HathiTrust Emergency Temporary Access Service: Reaping The Rewards Of Long-term Collaboration," *Collaborative Librarianship* 12, no. 2 (2020) <https://digitalcommons.du.edu/collaborativelibrarianship/vol12/iss2/8>.

⁵ Roger C. Schonfeld, "Research Library Digitization Has Found Its Moment: Long-term Investments Pay Off and Provide Lessons for the

Future," *Ithaka S+R Blog*, April 21, 2020, <https://sr.ithaka.org/blog/research-library-digitization-has-found-its-moment/>.

⁶ "Free CARL-CAUL-CFLA Webinar: Emergency Access and the Prospect of Controlled Digital Lending in Canada: Perspectives," Canadian Association of Research Libraries, June 24, 2020, <https://www.carl-abrc.ca/mini-site-page/cdl-webinar-june2020/?cn-reloaded=1>; "Library Leaders Forum 2020: Empowering Libraries & Communities Through Digital Lending," Internet Archive, October 6, 13, 20, 2020, <http://www.libraryleadersforum.org/recordings/>.

⁷ "Making the Connection Between Digitization Strategies and Collective Print Initiatives," CRKN Annual Conference, Canadian Research Knowledge Network, October 15, 2020, <https://www.crkn-rcdr.ca/en/conference/crkn-virtual-conference/program/making-connection-between-digitization-strategies-and>.