

OCLC Revises Implementation of New FirstSearch

By James Speed Hensinger

When OCLC New FirstSearch is implemented this August, libraries will have access to both OCLC FirstSearch services, the current FirstSearch and New FirstSearch. This is a revised approach by OCLC for implementing the New FirstSearch service. Rather than a hot cutover to New FirstSearch in August, libraries will be able to access both services for a five-month transition period. Libraries will not have beta access to New FirstSearch as originally planned.

Libraries with per-search accounts will be able to practice and prepare instruction materials from a selection of databases with a free account available from the New FirstSearch web site and the FirstSearch Bibliographic Instruction web site. Other valuable resources are available under the OCLC section of the Bibliographic Instruction Resources page on BCR's web site (www.bcr.org/~ids/Toolkits/bi.html). These databases, which will be announced via the FirstSearch-L Internet list, will demonstrate the many new features coming to New FirstSearch, including increased access to library holdings, increased visibility of full text, a more powerful and flexible user interface and thesaurus capabilities. Libraries with subscriptions will have access to their databases on both systems.

Libraries may transition to the OCLC New FirstSearch service any time between August and December 12. Current authorization numbers and passwords for FirstSearch will also work on New FirstSearch. After the August launch, OCLC will continue to add features and to provide updates as they become available. On December 12, OCLC will discontinue access to the current FirstSearch, Electronic Collections Online and text-only interfaces. The new FirstSearch will integrate FirstSearch and Electronic Collections Online and will provide text-based access via a Lynx browser.

Please visit the OCLC New FirstSearch web site for ongoing updates: www.oclc.org/oclc/menu/fs_new.htm. To receive updates automatically, subscribe to the FirstSearch-L Internet list at www.oclc.org/oclc/forms/istserv.htm.

