



THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

{Date}

TO: {NAME OF VENDOR}

FROM: **Beacher Wiggins**
Director, Acquisitions & Bibliographic Access Directorate

SUBJECT: **Vendor records**

The Library of Congress (LC) receives basic bibliographic information from many of the vendors that supply library materials through purchase agreements. This bibliographic information is usually provided electronically in the form of machine-readable cataloging records in the MARC 21 format. LC loads vendor-supplied records every week into its online catalog. When items arrive, if vendor records are available, they are used as the basis for creating Initial Bibliographic Control Records (IBCRs) needed for LC's new acquisitions. To create an IBCR, LC pre-processes each vendor record to add local information and check for errors. LC cataloging staff later enhances each IBCR to be a full cataloging record. Vendor records therefore serve two important purposes: 1) they allow LC to have basic information about titles being sent before the titles actually arrive and; 2) they help avoid costly duplication of acquisitions. They are not intended to be full-level cataloging records.

Machine-readable vendor records have replaced the product information that has been generally provided on paper for items vendors sold to LC. The provision of machine-readable records is often part of the acquisitions contracts (approval plans) vendors have with LC. LC would like all vendors to supply basic bibliographic information in machine-readable form, preferably in the MARC 21 format. LC can provide some assistance to vendors in understanding the basic bibliographic information that is needed and the requirements for machine-readable MARC 21 records. Vendor records benefit most libraries that purchase materials from vendors, even if vendors only supply a few hundred titles a year.

On March 31, 2013, the Library of Congress implemented *Resource Description & Access* (RDA), a new set of instructions for bibliographic records it completes for its catalog. Since January 1981, LC has followed the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, 2nd Edition, Revised* (AACR2) for the creation of its catalog records. The replacement of AACR2 with RDA has been in the planning stages for several years. The MARC 21 format will continue to be used for the communication of bibliographic records, with some changes to accommodate RDA. LC is prepared to provide assistance to vendors in understanding the changes associated with the implementation of RDA. LC hopes all of its vendors who supply machine-readable catalog records in MARC 21 format will be able to make changes needed to address the implementation of RDA.

LC will continue to accept bibliographic information from vendors that follows AACR2 or other local cataloging practices, since all of these have proven useful. If your company is not presently positioned to supply MARC 21 records, LC can also make use of any basic bibliographic information you are able to provide. Usually this consists of information such as the title, author, publisher, ISBN and invoice data (i.e. date, invoice number, etc.) that is included on invoices, shipping lists, and/or information from your product databases. LC can often create MARC 21 records from this information, provided it is in machine-readable form of some kind. We encourage vendors who supply LC with library materials to send machine-readable MARC 21 records for each monographic title supplied.

For more information and/or questions about creating basic MARC 21 records compatible with RDA, contact DeAnna Evans (email: deva@loc.gov) in the Network Development & MARC Standards Office, Library of Congress. Refer also to the attached document, "Supplying Vendor Records to Library of Congress: What Vendors Should Know."