



Best Practices for Inventory for Shared Print Programs

For shared print, it is as important to have a record accurately describing the item as it is to verify its physical presence. Understanding exactly what is committed to a shared print program is critical to ensure the ongoing availability of collections. Inventory for shared print programs starts with the ability to locate the item on the shelf, and entails a complete list or count of materials in the collection which can then be expanded to allow for further verification.

Currently, the best practices below are for single part monographs; additional considerations should be given to monographs cataloged as sets.

Best Practices for Member Libraries

The best practices for inventory is geared toward facilitating long term assurances that shared print materials will be accessible and usable. Depending on your shared print agreement, different levels of inventory may be required. Below are descriptions of different tiers (good, better, best, aspirational) of best practices for shared print program libraries to follow--these relate to specific inventory practices, including physical item verification, validation, bib and metadata reconciliation, administration and program management, and reporting. While not all of these can be met by every library in every shared print program, the tier of better is considered a general best practice for inventory management.

At the end of this document are examples of inventory procedures from different libraries, as well as definitions of inventory and related terms.

Physical Item Validation

The member library should use the identifier designated by the shared print program (in most cases this is the OCLC record) related to a specific title being inventoried, inventory assumes the discovery of a physical item using the call number and/or barcode assigned to the specific title.

Depending on the library conducting the validation, other opportunities may exist for validation to occur (when an item is returned from being checked out, during a resource sharing transaction, etc.)

The best practice assumes that as a shared print committed title is relocated to storage or being assessed as part of a project, the following should be validated:

Each level presumes all checks of any/all preceding levels.

Good

Verify that the title and author of the physical item matches the local ILS record for the shared print commitment.

Better

- Along with verifying that the title and author matches in the local ILS as described in Good practice, check bibliographic utilities.
- Also determine that the condition of the item is usable. Because retained copies are meant to support various uses, shared collections materials should meet a minimum acceptable physical condition to allow circulation and digitization. Volumes not meeting minimum standards would be considered high priorities for replacement or reallocation if possible.
- Make sure the edition and date of the physical item matches the record for the shared print commitment.

Best

- Verify that the publisher and all levels of enumeration (when present) of the physical item match the record for the shared print commitment.

Aspirational

- Include photographic documentation of the physical item (cover, spine, title page, title page verso). Link it to your digital asset management system or store it locally linked to your bibliographic data.

Level of Best Practice	Validation of									
	Item located	Title of physical item to record	Author of physical item to record	Edition	Date	Condition	Publisher	Enumeration, first level	Enumeration, additional levels (when present)	Photograph physical item, cover, spine, title page and verso
Good	X	X	X							
Better	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Best	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Aspirational	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Validation and Bibliographic Data Reconciliation

Following locating the physical item on the shelf, the next part of inventory best practice is to conduct validation and bibliographic/metadata reconciliation for the item in your local catalog.

Each level presumes all checks of any/all preceding levels.

Good

- Validate that the bibliographic descriptive record in the local ILS is accurate and updated, that it reflects the program’s or programs’ commitment(s), and that Retention commitments are recorded in local catalogs using the MARC 583.

Better

- Along with verifying that the title and author matches the local ILS as described in Good practice, also check bibliographic utilities.
- Ensure that the holding and circulation status of the item is accurate in your local system.

Best

- Programs confirm a digital surrogate consulting the [Best Practice for Digital Surrogates](#).

Aspirational

- Apply RFID tags with a link to the bibliographic record and a link to a photographic record to the metadata.
- Locally analyze monographs issued in a series.

Level	Validation of:			Retention commitments are recorded in local catalogs using the MARC 583	Apply RFID tag with link to bibliographic record	Link Photographic Record to Metadata	Monographs issued as series should be locally analyzed
	Bibliographic descriptive record accurate and updated	Holding and Circulation status and records are accurate	Confirm digital surrogate				
Good	X			X			
Better	X	X		X			
Best	X	X	X	X			
Aspirational	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Administration and Program Management

As part of a shared print program certain administration and program management levels of inventory also need to be ensured.

Each level presumes all checks of any/all preceding levels.

Good & Better

- Assure that the inventory data related to the committed item should be owned or retained by the owning library in order to be shared or transferred when new systems are purchased (e.g. if a third party is used to conduct an inventory, ensure that this is a consideration).

Best:

- Programs conduct ongoing inventory checks and these checks include inventory data capturing and reporting. This includes tracking of the inventory dates, levels of verification conducted, and the data related to the inventory captured for historical reference (e.g. 583 action note noting completeness reviewed, in local reports, etc.). Non-bibliographic data should be stored at the organizational level, not the individual level (e.g. a shared cloud drive space).

Level	Assure library ownership of inventory data (if using a vendor)	Assure ongoing inventory checks	Inventory Data Capturing and Reporting (Project dates, levels, verification, data) ¹
Good & Better	X		
Best	X	X	X

Examples of Inventory Best Practices in Use

Inventory Tools

See “Tools” for inventory projects at <https://sharedprint.org/resources/tools/#inventory>.

Articles

- Sherri Michaels & Becca Neel (2020) Conducting an Inventory with Shared Print in Mind, Collection Management, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01462679.2020.1818343?journalCode=wc ol20>

A physical inventory of the open stacks collection at Indiana University was conducted to determine the rate of error in the corresponding bibliographic records. The inventory was started to address some errors that were found when materials were pulled for offsite

¹ The group suggests that a new best practice is developed to address inventory tracking metrics, standardization, and systems for inventory work.

storage, but took on an increased importance as participation in shared print programs increased.

KU's inventory practices

Creating pull lists

Lists of titles to pull from the stacks are generated using one or more of the following criteria:

- Low or no use ("low" usually defined as 5 or fewer circulations in the 10 years prior to project; varies according to subject or online coverage)
- Publication date of years prior to project
- All titles within a certain range/subject being cleared by subject specialists

Single volume titles

For monograph titles published as one part only, the following data points are confirmed for each title:

- Title
- Author
- Publication information (place/publisher/year)
- Pagination
- Call no./spine marking
- Barcode
- Enumeration
- Copy no.
- Circulation status

Multi volume or copy titles

Holdings statements are verified and/or corrected for titles published in multiple parts, or for which multiple copies are held. Relevant data points listed for single volume titles are verified as well, with particular emphasis on the spine marking to ensure each piece is labelled according to the part or parts it contains. Beginning and end publication dates (when known) of each journal title are checked against holdings listed; title changes across journal families are also tracked.

Multiple titles bound in one piece

An additional check is done when physical pieces contain more than one title, to ensure the accurate linking of catalog records for each title. When needed, standardized language is added to holdings records to describe unique or abnormal binding of titles.

Transfer management

Inventory at KU is performed before transferring materials to its high density, climate controlled facility. The location of each item within a transfer, as well as dates of transfer and facility processing, are captured to ensure titles in transit are accessible, and preserved long-term to provide an archive of all items/barcodes pulled out of browsable collections.

Georgia Tech Collection Census

A project based example

In 2015, Georgia Tech Library conducted a collection census prior to relocating material to a high density storage facility (<http://libraryservicecenter.org/>), using a in-house developed web-based tool. For each title, a team of temp staff compared the spine/title page title to the title from the catalog record and the spine call number to the catalog record, scanned and validated the barcode, and for pieces with enumeration/chronology, confirmed that the spine matched the enum/chron of the first issue in the volume. Early on in the process, width and length of items were measured against a sizing template. Items were pulled and sent to technical services if any mismatch was discovered.

For the main library's General Collection, 557,012 volumes were reviewed:

- 0.4% flagged as mismatch
 - 1063 barcode
 - 369 call number
 - 38 originally flagged NOS and found
 - 111 title
 - 375 enumeration/chronology
 - 250 other
- 3.8% 23,788 not checked through the system
- 6.9% 43,457 flagged not on shelf

The last two categories correspond to the 67,000 pieces that were in Georgia Tech's catalog in 2015, but had previously been weeded and/or lost/missing.

Additional Details:

- A team of 40 temp workers worked on the project, using 20 iPads with bluetooth scanners. Item checks were performed at the shelf, and color coded flags were inserted into pulled items to indicate the identified mismatch.
- Overall cost was around \$193k.
- \$158,000 labor (~17,000 hours at \$9.25/hr).
- \$35,000 equipment (iPads, carts, scanners, sizing templates)
- Special Collections, Architecture Branch Library, and Government Documents had different validation processes and were not part of this budget. An existing off-site print collection was reviewed using a similar paper validation system (insufficient wifi coverage), and is part of the above budget, but not part of the item counts.

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