CNI PROJECT BRIEFING

Collaboratively Building the Future for Controlled Digital Lending

December 8, 2021
Controlled Digital Lending (CDL) is the digital equivalent of print library lending.

- Supports patrons who are quarantined, traveling, studying remotely or online, print-disabled, or otherwise unable to access physical materials
- Fosters equitable access to library resources in online and hybrid educational environments
- Reflects that digital delivery of library resources has become the norm not the exception
- Improves environmental sustainability and prevents loss or damage to print items
Core Principles of CDL

A library must own a legal copy of the physical book, by purchase or gift.

The library must maintain an “owned to loaned” ratio, simultaneously lending no more copies than it legally owns.

The library must use technical measures to ensure that the digital file cannot be copied or redistributed.
“Through CDL... libraries can amplify what they do best by meeting communities where they are—both physically and digitally.”

Library Futures
The Growth of CDL

- CDL White Paper published in 2018
- CDL efforts and engagement accelerated amid COVID
- Wide range of CDL solutions built to meet local needs
- National interest groups began engaging with CDL
  - CDL Implementers Forum
  - CDL Co-op
- Statements by national and international groups
  - CDL Position Statement
  - IFLA Statement on CDL
In September 2020, the Boston Library Consortium (BLC) convened a CDL Working Group

- 14 staff from 11 libraries + executive director
- Researched national and global CDL landscape
- Engaged extensively across the BLC community
- Consulted with a range of external organizations
- Published final report in summer 2021
The Consortial Path Forward

1. CDL is an extension of existing resource sharing practices
2. The commercial technology market is failing libraries’ desire to implement CDL
3. The solution is a consortial approach so as to scale impact and investment
CDL extends existing resource sharing practices

CDL Co-Op Statement, endorsed by 35 libraries, consortia, and allied organizations to date

- Interlibrary loan (ILL) is a foundational, Congressionally protected library practice.
- [CDL] is a modern method of lending that replicates a library’s right to loan legally acquired physical materials.
- [CDL for ILL] builds upon existing infrastructure and best practices for temporarily lending materials.
The commercial technology market is failing CDL
A Consortial Solution

- Consortia inherently deliver scale
- CDL implementations benefit from leveraging a collective collection
- Consortia are an integral layer in the resource sharing hierarchy
- Consortial solutions serve as models for the larger resource sharing network
Interoperability as a Core Value

- Resource sharing is built on interoperability
- Interoperability standards ensure solutions meet the needs of all libraries
- Interoperability gives libraries choice
- Enables libraries to leverage existing workflows and practices
- Supports a vendor-agnostic future
Collaboration with Project ReShare

- Library-led development and governance
- Open source software
- Supports consortial resource sharing
- Based on interoperability standards
Convened a BLC CDL Steering Committee
Seek ways to leverage consortial scale
Engage with vendors across the board
Pursue partnership with Project ReShare
  ○ $100,000 contribution to ReShare
  ○ Fundraising matches
Success with grant support
Call to Action

Engage with your consortia about the value of CDL

Endorse the CDL Co-Op’s CDL for ILL statement

Participate in CDLI, Consortial Approaches to CDL, and other forums

Unify vendor advocacy and contribute to ReShare CDL for ILL development
About the BLC

Founded in 1970, the BLC is an academic library consortium serving public and private universities, liberal arts colleges, state and special research libraries in the northeastern United States.

The BLC members collaborate to deliver innovative and cost-effective sharing of print and digital content, professional development initiatives, and projects across a wide range of library practice areas.

Learn more at blc.org

Contact us

Nathan Mealey
Associate University Librarian for Discovery & Access, Wesleyan University
nmealey@wesleyan.edu

Michael Rodriguez
Collections Strategist, University of Connecticut
michaelr@uconn.edu

Charlie Barlow
Executive Director, Boston Library Consortium
cbarlow@blc.org