

PRESS RELEASE



California Digital Library

<http://www.cdlib.org/>

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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University of California Libraries Unveil New Melvyl Catalog

Today the California Digital Library rolls out the new online Melvyl-T catalog, allowing library patrons - faculty, students, staff, and other researchers as well as the public at large - to search a state-of-the-art catalog of the millions of books, journals and other items held by the libraries of the University of California campuses.

Compared to the legacy Melvyl catalog - which will continue operating until August 2003 in parallel to the new catalog - Melvyl-T has a new format and design, offers users a variety of enhanced features, and contains completely updated data for the holdings of the UC system. Once the legacy Melvyl catalog has been retired, Melvyl-T (for Transition) will become Melvyl.

Melvyl-T is at <http://melvyl.cdlib.org> and also available via the California Digital Library (CDL) web site (<http://www.cdlib.org>), which contains information about the catalog and other digital collections and services. The catalog is based on the union catalog module of the ALEPH500 library automation system developed by Ex Libris, a leading developer of library systems worldwide.

The Melvyl-T catalog of the University of California (UC) contains over 23 million records for material held by the libraries of the 10 campuses of the UC system. The database is updated continually as material is ordered, received, and cataloged by the libraries. Material from libraries of selected University partners is also represented, including records from Hastings School of Law, the Center for Research Libraries, Lawrence Berkeley Lab, the California Academy of Sciences Library, the California Historical Society Library, and the Graduate Theological Union Library. Records from the California State Library are scheduled to be added this summer.

Melvyl-T contains entries for many materials in formats beyond books and journals (e.g., manuscripts, maps, visual media, microforms and government documents) owned by the UC Libraries. In addition, predefined subsets of the catalog have been created to allow dedicated searching for online resources, for musical scores, and for sound recordings.

Immediately evident in Melvyl-T are refined and expanded search features that are a significant advance over the legacy Melvyl catalog, itself long known throughout the world as a pioneer in presenting effective features to patrons.

Among the important new features in Melvyl-T:

- More flexible search options, including phrase and proximity searching.
- Browsing by major indexes including author, title, subject, and call number.
- Expanded limiting and sorting of search results.
- Display of foreign language materials using their native language characters, including Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Hebrew, and Arabic.
- Ability to return to previous searches and combine, review, or save them into a personal workspace.

While the new search and display features are available to all users of Melvyl-T – both within and outside of UC – an additional feature gives UC faculty, students, and staff the ability to borrow material from another campus if unavailable at their home campus via a simple “Request” button.

Daniel Greenstein, Executive Director of the CDL and UC’s University Librarian for Systemwide Library Planning, considers Melvyl-T to be an important development that continues the UC tradition of library collaboration, allowing the many libraries to be treated effectively as one large library by the UC community.

"The California Digital Library was founded on the realization that digital services remove boundaries and allow greater collaboration at lower collective costs," Greenstein recently commented. "Patrons of UC’s many great libraries want to draw upon scholarship that the libraries collect and manage, regardless of its particular location. Through enhanced searching and presentation, by merging records from many libraries, and by linking from the catalog record to electronic versions of the source material wherever possible, Melvyl-T makes material easier to locate and easier to share. The collective holdings of the University now accrue more directly to each campus and to any student or researcher."

Cristina Campbell, manager of the project to implement Melvyl-T, explained the history of the new system. "The CDL drew upon staff from throughout the system to define the need for and functions of a new catalog. The process has taken several years, which is understandable given the complexity and scope of the UC system and its library holdings. Basing the catalog on the ALEPH product from Ex Libris gave us a great head start, but we undertook significant co-development with them to meet UC’s needs. It is great to be able to announce its availability and to share the moment with literally hundreds of contributors from throughout UC and at Ex Libris."

According to Oren Beit-Arie, Acting President of Ex Libris (USA), Inc., and President of its Information Services Division, “The rollout of Melvyl-T is a major milestone for CDL and Ex Libris. While union catalogs do not represent a new paradigm for Ex Libris, the scope, complexity and scale of Melvyl represent new challenges: with more than 23 million titles, hundreds of thousand of updates per month, thousands of simultaneous users, and various integration and interoperability points with other UC and CDL components. Based on ALEPH500, Melvyl-T introduces new union catalog concepts and

architectural design to meet these challenges. We are truly proud to be associated with CDL and Melvyl as CDL launches this new service.”

About the University and the California Digital Library

The California Digital Library was established as a digital “co-library” – complementing and collaborating with the physical libraries on the UC campuses. Founded by UC President Richard Atkinson, it opened to the public in January 1999. Organizationally housed at the UC Office of the President in Oakland, Calif., the CDL provides a centralized framework to efficiently share materials held by UC, to provide greater and easier access to digital content, and to join with researchers in developing new tools and innovations for scholarly communication.

The University of California is one of the largest, most prestigious teaching and research institutions in the world whose current faculty includes 20 Nobel laureates and 300 members of the National Academy of Sciences. Over 300,000 students, faculty and staff are located at UC campuses in Berkeley, Davis, Irvine, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz. A new campus in Merced, the first new American research university of the 21st century, is scheduled to open officially in 2004.

About Ex Libris

Ex Libris is a leading worldwide developer of high-performance applications for libraries, information centers, and researchers. A multinational company, Ex Libris has offices around the world. ALEPH, the Ex Libris integrated library solution, has been installed at over 800 sites in 50 countries. The Information Services Division (ISD) of Ex Libris, based in Boston, Massachusetts, is responsible for other Ex Libris digital information products including MetaLib, SFX, and DigiTool. For more information about Ex Libris, see www.exlibris-usa.com.

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