BACKSTAGE LIBRARY WORKS HAS BEEN PROVIDING
RETROSPECTIVE CONVERSION, DIGITIZATION, AND BIBLIOGRAPHIC SERVICES
TO LIBRARIES AROUND THE WORLD FOR 25 YEARS.

The bibliographic services side of Backstage Library Works traces its history back to the Retro Link division of Dynix, which was formed in 1986 to provide retrospective conversion services to libraries converting card catalogs to Dynix-powered MARC databases.

Backstage has been selected as the preferred supplier of retrospective conversion and database services by libraries worldwide. We are a corporate member of the American Library Association and support initiatives and conferences in the library and archives industries world-wide, including ALA, ACRL, PLA, SLA, and SAA, as well as various state and regional conferences and the user group meetings of library automation systems. Internationally recognized clients such as the Library of Congress, the British Library, and the National Library of Israel can attest to the quality of our work. Our lifetime guarantee ensures that your library will be happy with our services.

Our home office is located in Provo, Utah, about 40 miles south of Salt Lake City. The Provo area is the center of Utah’s technology industries and is regularly listed in national surveys rating livability and family-friendly communities. Our retrospective conversion production takes place at this facility.

In the very competitive business of retrospective conversion, our client list continues to grow. Three key elements give us an advantage in this industry: people, quality, and technology.

1. **People**

   Our staff is well educated and very experienced in providing retrospective conversion services. Over 35% of our employees speak a second language. Our Chinese/Japanese/Korean teams are staffed with native speakers. Our Hebrew and Arabic speakers are native or come from the excellent scholastic programs at nearby Brigham Young University. Many of our 75 or so employees have previous retrospective conversion experience at Dynix. For the newcomers, we have excellent, detailed training programs.

2. **Quality**

   Quality is the foundation of our production system. Every day, each operator’s production is statistically sampled. Errors are categorized by type, and results are immediately posted. The operator and his or her supervisor address any problems.
Every project is sampled at the daily, weekly, and final production stage. We guarantee our services and will rework any problems discovered at any time in the loading and use of records we convert.

3. Technology

Our conversion software was developed in-house to fit our processes and has been refined over decades to provide every tool imaginable to help our operators accurately search local and remote databases to convert library catalog materials.

Our imaging procedure is unique; every card is scanned and then linked in production to its respective MARC record. We don’t risk loss or damage by handling cards in production. Digital imaging greatly facilitates quality control. Each record selected for review automatically displays its linked source document which makes comparison and error-checking much faster.

Project Profile

Profiling

On-site project profiling is instrumental to the success of our large retrospective conversion projects. The Backstage Project Manager works with the Library Project Director in person and by telephone and email, using experience with past projects to thoroughly examine the card catalog and other materials and to identify potential problem areas. Every example of possible variance is studied, and a sample of the findings is produced to ensure compliance with the Library’s instructions. The Project Manager writes explicit documentation, called the project profile, about the project and the Library’s needs and requirements. By interacting directly with our Project Manager, many concerns can be resolved before the commencement of the project.

Backstage will evaluate a sample of the Library’s card catalog in order to determine the scope of the project and to assist in establishing the Library’s profile.
The following issues are some of those addressed in the profiling stage.

**Match criteria**

Backstage utilizes a set of customizable match criteria that enables its MARC Technicians to choose records from various databases. If a record is missing any of the designated match points, a record can still be chosen that does not contradict the card. In this case, the record is saved with a flag alerting the Library to the minimal level match. Backstage can create a bibliographic record from all information provided. If the Library has cards that they consider too minimal to convert, Backstage can discuss this during the profiling process.

For example, a card might have a publication place and a publication date, but no publisher. We would find a match that has the same place and date, but might contain a publisher. Because nothing else on the card contradicts the match, we will take it and add a 987 field that says “match points missing.” The Library can, if desired, compare these records to the actual items to verify a correct match. With this method, we have found that in almost every case, the correct match has been used.

**Local information**

Inconsistencies in shelflist notation and collection codes are natural in cataloging practice. During the profiling phase, the Project Director and Project Manager try to identify as many of these different notations as possible and indicate the manner in which Backstage’s MARC Technicians should process them. As questions arise during production, the Project Manager resolves them with the Project Director and relays the information to the MARC Technicians.

**Standard holdings**

Holdings fields are defined as those fields and subfields necessary to accurately identify a particular item, or to distinguish it from another item. Each of these fields and subfields are part of the Backstage standard service and carry no additional charge.

During profiling the Library Project Director specifies the holdings fields required by the Library Automation System. Backstage’s Technical Services Specialist verifies that all holdings information created by our MARC Technicians is mapped to the appropriate MARC fields during the post-production stage of the project.
Non-standard information

Over the years librarians have implemented many procedures for recording information on their catalog cards. Profiling attempts to document as many of these procedures as possible before the project begins; however, Backstage technicians often encounter information that has not been included in the profile, or wish to flag an item for the Library to review.

Backstage will use a 987 tag for this purpose, unless otherwise requested by the Library. The 987 flag is usually implemented when misspellings in the title field appear or when there is faint/illegible information appearing on the source document. Record flags requested by the Library Project Director, if any, will also be placed in this field. The 987 tags will be itemized in an Excel spreadsheet, and links with card images can be delivered with the records. This report typically includes a description of the question, the call number, the author, and the title.

Provide profile verification sample

Before production begins, Backstage generates a profile verification sample. This ensures that we are performing the work as understood in profiling and that any corrections are made before actual production begins. The sample is sent to the Library Project Director to be approved. Within ten days of receiving the sample the Library Project Director reviews the records, confirms their accuracy and completeness, and notifies Backstage of its findings. If the sample meets the profiling specifications established, Backstage proceeds with the conversion.

Catalog Imaging

Scanning of card catalog

Every source document for retrospective conversion projects processed by Backstage is scanned, if possible, to create an accurate count for the project. Each MARC21 record created or derived in production is linked to the card image it references; this scanning and linking facilitates quality control, production tracking, and project size verification.

Backstage Library Works can work from materials shipped to our offices or can come to the Library and digitize the materials on site.
Production

Upon completion of the project profile and approval of the pre-production samples, the production phase of the project begins. Each item is manually examined by a Backstage MARC Technician to determine the appropriate action.

Skips

In examining the sample cards provided by the Library, Backstage may determine that there is a likelihood of the existence in the catalog of cards that will need to be skipped. For example, two or more cards might describe the same item. To avoid the creation of duplication in the database, Backstage can train the MARC Technicians to identify cards which can be skipped according to visual cues. Backstage can provide pricing for this optional service.

Main Entry Search

Each item from the card catalog will be searched against databases chosen by the Library. Backstage technicians operate a proprietary MARC editor and database program designed specifically for retrospective conversion work to ensure cost-effective quality work. The program allows MARC technicians to search a combination of our in-house databases and remote databases by Z39.50 connection. Backstage is able to search using standard numbers, author, title, publication information, etc., to ensure a thorough search for matching records.

Databases — Backstage has access to multiple source databases for matching records, including the following databases:

- Library of Congress MARC cataloging -- Over nine million bibliographic records distributed by the Library of Congress since 1968 for books, maps, music, serials, and visual materials. This database includes LC Foreign records.

- Pre MARC (pre 1968) database -- Approximately three million bibliographic records converted from various academic and government sources. Many of these records predate the LC MARC database.

- Backstage’s original entry and audiovisual databases -- Over 800,000 records converted from various academic, special, public and school libraries. These records were originally created by MARC Technicians, and the database is continually updated as projects are completed.
We also offer the option of using additional databases, such as RLUK or OCLC/WorldCat, at the Library’s request.

Verify

If a matching record is found, it is verified by author, title, publisher, edition, publication date, collation, and publication place.

Enhance

If a matching record is found in the chosen database, the Library’s holdings information is included in the requested fields. Other item specific information is also included, such as volume and part numbers.

Any notes on the card that are not in the matching record are also added. The notes may include, but are not limited to, any of the following: general, dissertation, bibliographic, contents, credits, citation/references, performer, summary/abstract, audience, reproduction, linking entry complexity and local.

Matches provided are not otherwise changed unless desired by the Library. Additional charges may apply. These options include but are not limited to: the addition of a version 22 Dewey number or LC (or other) classification, addition of LCSH, and editing of copy cataloged records, which includes upgrading the matched record to MARC, AACR2, and ISBD standards, correction of typographical errors, and addition of missing information.

Key

If a match is not found in a database search, Backstage MARC Technicians will key all the information appearing on the card according to the specified MARC format and current AACR2 cataloging rules and save it to the Library’s database. The new record contains all local holdings and notes, as specified during profiling and per the Library’s specifications. Backstage follows all industry standard cataloging rules, including AACR2, ISBD, and LCRI. If the catalog cards are inadequate for original records, Backstage can provide pricing options for both full- and minimal-level cataloging.

Save

The new records are saved to the Library’s database.
Post-Production

Quality Assurance Procedures

Backstage uses several review processes to validate tagging information and to ensure accuracy and compliance with MARC21 standards as defined by the Library of Congress. We maintain three levels of quality control processing to guarantee the highest level of quality for both matches and original entries.

Batch editing

MARC Technicians visually review every record converted before saving it to the Library's database to locate possible typographical errors and verify compliance with the Library's profile and MARC formats. Unless record enhancements have been contracted for, when a database record is derived, we accept the tags, subfields, and indicators as they appear. If Backstage creates an original entry, the MARC Technicians scan each record to ensure correct tagging, subfield, and indicator formats. In addition, our MARC Technicians operate a custom program to recheck records in batches. This program allows them to view records in a variety of ways to more efficiently check each tag for possible errors. At the end of the Library's conversion project, a machine batch process is also run to test the record quality.

Quality control

Each of Backstage’s MARC Technicians belongs to a team of four to six individuals who are managed by a Team Leader. The Team Leaders inform team members of updates and clarifications to the Library’s profile, and review all records produced by team members. The Team Leader is responsible for verifying compliance of each record to the Library’s profile and MARC formats, as well as searching for possible MARC Technician errors within the records.

Quality assurance tests

Each Backstage project team is comprised of a Backstage Project Manager, Team Leaders and MARC Technicians. Once the Team Leaders and their Technicians complete batches of converted records, the Backstage Project Manager runs sample quality assurance tests to recheck the batches for typographical errors and compliance to specifications. The Backstage Project Manager reviews these samples periodically with each MARC Technician team to resolve any possible problems.
Quality assurance samples

In addition to the profile verification sample, Backstage prepares weekly random samples of all records saved to the Library's individual database. Detailed reports of these samples are given to each team leader and any errors are checked for in the rest of the records from which the sample was taken.

MARC21 verification

Each record is run through a program to verify that it conforms to MARC21 standards. Any record that deviates from these standards is pulled and manually reviewed by the Backstage Project Manager. After correcting the records, a second test is run in which the Backstage Project Manager looks through a list of fields, indicators, and subfields. Records with inconsistency in any of these areas are pulled and corrected.

Final Production Sample

Backstage will provide a final sample to the Library for approval before delivering the data.

Output Library’s database

Backstage will send the Library a copy of all converted records, separated into the requested files, by ftp or any other format requested. The records will be provided in MARC21 format and mapped to the automation system for loading in the electronic library catalog.

Restrictions

There are no restrictions on the re-use of the database supplied by Backstage, providing the database is used for non-commercial purposes exclusively by the Library for which it was created. Backstage acknowledges that record sharing is a goal of the Library and that the records may be loaded into national or international bibliographic databases.

Lifetime Guarantee

All services performed by Backstage come with our exclusive lifetime guarantee. Backstage will correct any problem arising from non-adherence to the established profile or unacceptable levels of manual errors on the part of our MARC Technicians to the Library’s satisfaction, no matter when such errors are discovered. If the Library is not satisfied that Backstage has followed the established profile, Backstage will work with the Project Director to determine the source of the problems and correct them at no charge to the Library.
Support

Backstage Project Management Tools

Backstage has an abundance of tools at its disposal to ensure that its clients receive the highest quality MARC21 records. Samples of each or any of the following documents will be provided upon request.

Standard & Custom Contracts & Proposals

Backstage utilizes both standard and custom contracts and proposals for its varied clients and projects.

Profile Guide

Backstage has created a custom document called the Profile Guide. This questionnaire-type form is the beginning of the profiling process; areas addressed in the Profile Guide include call number and cutter variants, match criteria, and holdings or location codes.

On-site Documentation & Profile

Based on the specifications provided by the Library Project Director in the Profile Guide, specifics learned through the on-site profiling, and other documentation provided by the Library, the Backstage Project Manager will create documentation for the project. This will be created with the help of the Project Director and will be approved on-site before the MARC Technician production instructions are written. Once the documentation and the on-site profiling is complete, pre-production sampling will begin and Backstage will create a production profile. This profile will be used by its technicians throughout the project as a reference on the details of the project. If the Library wishes, Backstage will make its production profile available for review.

Invoices

Invoices are submitted by Backstage’s accountant to a contact designated by the Library Project Director or other party designated by the Library. Standard Backstage invoicing is 30% of estimated total upon contract signing (or purchase order); 60% paid quarterly throughout production; remainder upon completion of project. Payment plans may be negotiated.
Problem Flags

Major queries will be directed to the Library Project Director. For other queries, Backstage’s technicians will use a 987 field to bring problems or questions to the Library’s attention. With each delivery, Backstage will provide a report of all 987 fields in the records delivered. The Library may also contract for delivery of images of the catalog cards corresponding to the problem records. These reports will include all information requested by the Library during the profiling process, and may include a link to the card image. This report typically includes a description of the question, the call number, the author, and the title.

Statistics

Backstage has the tools to provide any statistics desired by the Library. From a simple count of how many records have been created over any given time period to a complex breakdown of how many 710 fields have been added or a report of the French serial match count, Backstage can put together any statistical report that the Library desires.

For example, Backstage provides one of its clients a report on a weekly basis showing the total number of matches, the number of original records, the number of matches from each database, and the number of matches and original records for each of the following categories: monograph, serial, music, manuscript music, maps, manuscript maps, projected materials, non-musical sound recordings, musical sound recordings, non-projected graphics, computer files, kits, mixed material and realia.

Status Reports

Backstage’s Project Manager will remain in close contact with the Library Project Director, communicating by telephone or e-mail at least once a week. Any question about the status of the project will be answered quickly by Backstage’s Project Manager. Backstage is able to set up a regular formal production report at the Library’s request containing any information the Library desires.

Additional Project Management Tools

Pre-production

Before the first record is processed, Backstage has a number of tools to ensure that it meets every requirement the Library has.
**On-site services** – The Backstage Project Manager will work on-site with Library staff to establish the project profile. Backstage provides this service to allow the Library’s Project Director and key staff to meet directly with a Backstage representative. The Backstage Project Manager assigned to the Library visits the Library prior to project commencement for the purpose of outlining conversion specifications. At this time, issues such as match criteria and holdings information are finalized. Formats for output and other technical specifications are also discussed. The Library’s Project Director delineates specific needs and project requirements. Our representative then recommends profile requirements that meet the expectations of the Library.

**Profile** -- Based on the documentation supplied by the Library, Backstage will create a comprehensive Profile document with all details of data interpretation and handling for the Library’s records. (See Profiling above.)

**Pre-production Sample** -- Backstage typically processes a pre-production sample. This sample will have all of Backstage’s post-production processes run on it and will reflect exactly how the records will look when they are delivered. This gives the Library a chance to verify that Backstage is following the project specifications exactly or to correct any errors before production begins. The sample can be provided on paper, electronically, or both. Many libraries will load the pre-production sample to verify that records work with their automation system, as well.

**During production**

Backstage’s most valuable resource is our staff of highly trained MARC technicians. Backstage is located in Provo, Utah, near Brigham Young University and Utah Valley University, giving it a unique pool of potential employees. Through meticulous screening, Backstage hires approximately 10% of applicants, allowing it to keep only the best candidates. Backstage boasts employees fluent in ten different languages with some degree of familiarity in many others. A new employee at Backstage will undergo a rigorous training process to learn MARC format and AACR2 standards before beginning work on records for an actual Library project.

Backstage’s reputation for impeccable quality is maintained through a meticulous Quality Control Process (for complete details see Quality Assurance Procedures above).

During the production process, Backstage uses a local 911 field for all holdings information. This provides a standard for its technicians to follow that does not change from project to
project. The holdings information placed in the 911 field is mapped to the Library’s specific holdings field(s) at the end of production.

Throughout the production process, Backstage’s Project Manager is in contact with the Library Project Director. The Backstage Project Manager will forward any important questions to the Library Project Director as they arise.

**Post-production**

At the completion of the conversion, the Backstage Project Manager will run a Missing Image Program. This program verifies that a record has been created for every scanned card. Any image lacking a record will have one created.

Backstage’s technical services department has created a unique program called MARCfix. This program has all of the valid fields, indicators, subfields, fixed field values, and punctuation possibilities for valid MARC21 standards. It will pull for review any record which does not meet exact MARC21 standards.

Backstage utilizes a program called kcountit which prints every field, subfield and indicator in every record in the project. The Backstage Project Manager reviews this report and will pull for review any field number that appears suspicious.

These processes are run for each batch of records to be delivered. Backstage will then provide a post-production sample of the records produced to the Library for review. This gives the Library one more chance to test load the records and verify that all is correct before the delivery of the records.

Finally, Backstage’s Project Manager and Backstage’s Head of Technical Services will comb through the records one last time to verify that all standards have been followed and the records are exactly as the Library expects.

Once the Library’s records have gone through all processes, Backstage will supply a sample for approval. Upon sample approval, the complete database will be delivered to the Library. Delivery schedules are negotiable.