



## The Register of Copyrights of the United States of America

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### Priorities and Special Projects of the U.S. Copyright Office Special Projects One-Year Update

A year ago, the U.S. Copyright Office announced a series of new projects designed to improve the quality and efficiency of its services for the twenty-first century. Detailed in the report *Priorities and Special Projects of the United States Copyright Office 2011-2013*, available at [www.copyright.gov/docs/priorities.pdf](http://www.copyright.gov/docs/priorities.pdf), these ten special projects reflect the Office's commitment to address current complexities in the copyright system and prepare for future challenges. Consistent with its focus on transparency and maintaining open dialogues with the public, the Office is pleased to offer this one-year update on the status of our work on the special projects.

#### *Fees and Services*

The Office's study of fees and services, conducted pursuant to the Office's statutory authority, is well underway. Following public comments on potential new fee services that the Office might offer, the Office offered a proposed fee schedule for public comment in March. The Office is currently considering the comments and expects to have new fees established within the next year.

#### *Revision of the Compendium of Copyright Office Practices*

The Office also has made significant progress on the comprehensive revision of the *Compendium of Copyright Office Practices*. The revision team has developed the structure and framework for the new manual and is consulting with the examining and legal staff to update existing practices and, where appropriate, develop new ones to accommodate the needs of the twenty-first century copyright community.

#### *Technical Upgrades*

Along with these practice revisions, the Office is also conducting a comprehensive evaluation of its technical processing capabilities. The review covers a wide range of technical issues, including online registration services, back-end processing, data management, and public record access. The evaluation team has completed its preliminary review of the Office's current system, established baselines for current capabilities, and is preparing to meet with stakeholders and other relevant organizations to learn more about stakeholder expectations and the universe of available technical solutions.

## *Reengineering of Document Recordation*

The Office began its reengineering of the document recordation function by hosting several stakeholder roundtables that included the participation of professional researchers, copyright attorneys, practitioners, entertainment industry representatives, librarians, digital archivists, and representatives from licensing organizations and other content businesses. The Office will issue calls for public comment and host additional roundtables throughout the next year.

## *Public Access to Historical Records*

The Office continues to move forward on its multiyear effort to digitize the entire inventory of copyright records for works registered between 1870 and 1977. The Office has imaged over 22 million index cards comprising the entire set of assignment cards and registration cards for the time frame of 1955-1977. The Office estimates the total card count at approximately 40 million, which means that the scanning phase is more than half complete. Additionally, the Office is committed to making the scanned records available online for researchers and other interested users. This, however, poses a complex challenge because it is difficult to determine how best to provide records to the public. Last November the Office launched its *Copyright Matters: Digitization and Public Access* blog, which engages copyright constituents on issues relating to digitization and access. In 2012, the Office issued requests for information to learn more about crowdsourcing as a way to capture large-scale metadata and options for building a virtual card catalog. The Office expects to build a virtual card catalog, or keyword searchable catalog, sometime within the next year.

## *Public Outreach, Academic Partnerships, and Revision of the Copyright Office Website*

In support of its role as a primary source of authoritative information about copyright law and policy, the Office has begun to identify innovative ways to reach the audiences who want help understanding general legal principles as well as registration practices. With assistance from the Library of Congress, the Office will launch a new website within the next year, and will continue its work to establish partnerships with the academic community through fellowships, and co-sponsored roundtables and symposia.

## *Skills Training*

Finally, in an effort to maintain a highly skilled workforce, the Office launched its *Copyright Academy* staff training program to ensure that every employee has the knowledge necessary to understand the mission of the Office and its various constituents. Additionally, to help staff understand and connect with the practical implications of copyright law, the Office of the Register launched the *Copyright Matters* lecture series last fall, featuring independent authors and creators discussing the craft and business of creative expression.

As always, the Office welcomes your feedback. Please send your thoughts to [registerofcopyrights@copyright.gov](mailto:registerofcopyrights@copyright.gov).