



## SPAN 5 Year Report and Recommendations

### Introduction

COPPUL's Shared Print Archive Network (SPAN) is a distributed retrospective print repository program, with 20 COPPUL members participating. SPAN's primary goals are to provide access to shared print archives, create opportunities for the reallocation of library space and to preserve the print record for its members in a cost-effective manner. This partnership emphasizes the role of shared print as part of an optimal copy network that includes other print and digital preservation initiatives. SPAN's successes have positioned COPPUL as a leader in the world of print preservation, raising COPPUL's profile nationally and internationally.

In the spring of 2017, SPAN celebrated its 5th anniversary and the renewal of the initial member agreement. As such, this is an ideal time to reflect on SPAN's accomplishments to date and to consider future directions. This report provides a summary of past and current SPAN activities and includes member feedback, an overview of other shared print archive initiatives, and recommendations for future activities and funding. SPAN's members have worked together to achieve some significant milestones in the past 5 years, and we look forward to many more successes in the coming years. As demands on library space increase and the shift to electronic information resources accelerates, SPAN will continue to play an important role in ensuring that important materials are identified and retained, ensuring their long-term preservation and availability to researchers.

### Summary of key recommendations

- The SPAN Management Committee recommends that SPAN membership fees be rolled into regular COPPUL membership fees going forward, and that clear accounting for SPAN revenues, expenditures and fund balances be provided to COPPUL Directors and the SPAN Management committee on a quarterly basis. SPAN represents a core strategic priority for COPPUL and is an important factor in regional collections planning and decision-making as our member libraries repurpose space and increase reliance on e-resources; hence, it is essential that monies contributed toward the work of SPAN by network members be used to advance that work. Any SPAN revenues not expended in a given fiscal year should be carried over to the next in the SPAN budget line.

- The SPAN Management Committee recommends three projects be prioritized in the short term: 1) completion of the current government documents project; 2) completion of the current monographs project; and 3) a new project focusing on rare Canadian serials project that formed the basis of the 2016 and 2017 applications for LAC funding.

## SPAN: 2012-2017

### Phase 1: 2012-2013

In Phase 1, archiving efforts were focused on widely held print journals with digital equivalents and post-cancellation access rights. Factors such as institutional participation in programs that allow post-cancellation access (PORTICO, CLOCKSS) and publisher e-journal licensing terms were considered when selecting titles. Archive Holders agreed to retain volumes until December 31, 2022, enabling libraries that have not committed to retain those titles to begin the withdrawal process if they choose. As of August 9, 2012, 1,721 titles were nominated for archiving, distributed among ten Archive Holders. Archive holders reported back that they had committed to retain 1,604 of those titles.

### Phase 2: 2013-2014

In Phase 2, archiving efforts were expanded to include journal titles that met the initial low risk criterion of allowing post-cancellation access, but are less widely held among member libraries. We included journals without post-cancellation access, and, for the first time, Canadian journals both with and without post-cancellation access. Given the increased risk level of many of the journal titles for this round, physical validation for completeness at the volume level was added to the archive holders' procedures, archive retention dates were extended from 10 to 25 years, and storage required environmental conditions beyond that of open stacks. Archive Holders committed to retain 17 low risk titles until December 31, 2023 and 1,138 medium risk titles until December 31, 2038. Libraries that did not commit to retaining those titles are free to begin the withdrawal process if they choose.

### Phase 3: 2014 - 2016

After two phases of archiving low use, highly duplicated print journals, Phase 3 expanded SPAN's focus into new territory to consider high risk journals and government documents.

#### Carried over journal titles

In Phase 2, Archive Holders identified continuing and preceding journals to the titles they were assigned. In Phase 3, SPAN assessed the risk level of those titles, and found approximately 400 journals to be medium risk, and therefore treated with the same process as the original journal title.

## High risk journals

Other journals that Archive Holders identified emerged as high risk titles, as they are only available in print. Among these titles, the expectation was that 100 or so would be selected for archiving. The archiving process is more detailed for these titles, including validating for condition at the issue level, and contributing missing volumes to archive builders/holders. Of the four archive builders for this collection, at least two (University of Alberta and University of Calgary) have completed their calls for missing volumes.

## Federal government documents

The Phase 3 government documents project, completed in August 2015, archived over 700 volumes of 26 low-risk Statistics Canada titles among seven archiving libraries. Archiving libraries included two first-time SPAN archive holders: Thompson Rivers University and Vancouver Island University.

## Phase 4: 2016 - 2018

### Government documents

The Phase 4 government documents project continues the work of Phase 3, this time focusing on archiving all print publications from Statistics Canada. The titles were compiled from the [publications.gc.ca](http://publications.gc.ca) website and grouped by year where appropriate. Initial title lists were distributed in Summer 2016 for SPAN members to identify holdings and indicate willingness to archive for SPAN. Participants submitted their results in late 2016, and the analysis and follow-up is currently underway. Further titles will be identified and distributed to SPAN members in Fall 2017.

### Monograph project

A proposal outlining SPAN's inaugural Shared Print Monograph project was considered in the fall of 2014. A revised proposal was distributed to members in Summer 2015 and the project was confirmed with 10 participating libraries in Fall 2015. Significant milestones have been achieved to date. The first half of 2016 was dedicated to extracting and compiling holdings data and learning the SCS "GreenGlass" data browser, analysis and modelling tool. Project participants reached consensus on a retention model in September 2016 and a further modification occurred in January 2017 to filter out materials commonly held in CARL libraries. Other consensus decisions reached throughout the fall of 2016 include: retention period (15 years with review every 5 years); criteria for rejecting commitments (e.g. missing, damaged or out-of-scope items); shelf verification process (sampling methodology is an acceptable proxy) and timeline. Retention lists were finalized on March 1, 2017 and a shelf verification process is underway. The project committee is currently designing a process for reviewing the project every five years.

## Federal grant application

Building on a 2016 application that was not funded, we reapplied for a Library and Archives Canada granting opportunity via the Documentary Heritage Communities Program, which is designed “to support the development of Canada’s local archival and library communities by increasing their capacity to preserve, provide access to and promote local documentary heritage”. We revised and refined our application in keeping with the feedback received in 2016. SPAN applied for funding for a project that would target the print archiving of approximately 1,000 Canadian serials by the end of March 2018. We requested funding for a part time collection analyst as well as some computer programming support. Unfortunately, we were advised that our project was considered ineligible this year and was therefore not funded. LAC staff confirmed that while the criteria for these grants has not changed, due to the large number of applications for 2017-18 funding, criteria were applied more stringently than in the past with a view to removing some projects from consideration. While this is an unfortunate outcome, we feel that the project itself is still of value to members and we will be recommending that SPAN undertake it on its own.

## Environmental scan and connections beyond COPPUL

CRL’s [PAPR directory](#) now lists 42 print archiving programs in North America. Together, those programs represent 174 participating institutions which collectively hold archives in 74 separate facilities. Of the 42 programs, 20 upload holdings reports to CRL’s [PAPR registry](#), SPAN among them. Print archiving in North America has now surpassed the 203,000 title count and continues to grow. A high-level LC-class breakdown of the archived titles indicates a roughly even division between humanities and social sciences (32%), STEM (37%) and professional or unspecified subject areas (31%).

As with SPAN, the reallocation of space and the transformation of library services have been key drivers in the expansion of print archiving programs. Another important factor is the preservation of the printed scholarly record within specific disciplines. New initiatives from the past few years include CRL’s partnership with Linda Hall Library to preserve STEM materials; LLMC’s program to preserve the print originals of materials they have digitized; Preserving America’s Legal Materials in Print (PALMPrint) for primary US federal and state legal materials; the Medical Serials Print Preservation Program for key medical serials; and Project CERES for agriculture materials.

Print archiving has had almost a decade to grow and now that many programs have demonstrated their initial benefits, discussions have begun about how to co-ordinate and standardize our activities. OCLC has developed [standard retention metadata](#) for use in the print archiving context. CRL has articulated its [Agenda for Shared Print, 2017-2016](#), which seeks to both expand and regularize print archiving activities. 18 of 21 OCUL members have been developing a “[Collaborative Futures](#)” framework for next-generation library services, including

print archiving. One of their [stated goals](#) is to shift from collaboration to “total integration,” including in the area of print collection development and archiving.

Two themes from the environmental scan align closely with COPPUL’s current practices. First, there is an increasing emphasis on preserving US federal government documents, which are both copious and ubiquitous. In addition to efforts aimed at legal materials, the Florida Academic Repository (FLARE) has taken on a stewardship role for Congressional hearing materials. CRL has recently underscored the importance of digital media for both access to and preservation of [crucial government materials](#). Second, CRL and other print archiving programs are exploring the means to shift from a highly-centralized repository model to one of a network of nodes (or even a network of networks). This is being done largely because of the significant, ongoing costs and obligations associated with operating a [print repository](#).

As part of SPAN’s mandate to communicate our preservation efforts outside of COPPUL, we have developed connections with a number of external groups over the years, including:

- Management Committee continues to record our archived titles with the [Print Archives Preservation Registry](#) (PAPR).
- In 2015, SPAN members participated in a one-day PAPR summit in Berkeley, CA to discuss the future of print archiving in North America.
- In 2015, the SPAN Chair made a presentation on the project at the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) spring meeting, and represented the project at an OCLC membership meeting in Toronto.
- SPAN is participating actively in discussions led by Library and Archives Canada (LAC) with other regional consortia to develop a national archiving strategy for Canada.
- SPAN was invited to present at the Print Archive Network (PAN) meetings at ALA Mid-Winter in Boston. It is rare for this group to have presenters outside of the US, and we were able to reach the entire print archiving community of North America to speak about our processes and efforts to date.
- SPAN has been asked to participate in the PAPR Advisory Board. PAPR is bringing together representatives from many of the regional print archiving projects to gather ideas about how to improve upon PAPR’s services and metadata. Meetings take place quarterly.
- Among academic library groups and scholarly associations, momentum is building around the need to formalize collective, collaborative approaches to the preservation of both print and electronic records. Notable recent examples include a CRL discussion “[Risk: Stewardship, Due Diligence and the Future of Print](#)”, a white paper and plan for action from [The Future of the Print Record: A Multi-Organization Working Group](#), and ongoing plans for an “@Risk North” meeting based on 2016’s “@Risk” forum in Chicago. These discussions and [other projects](#) are being discussed in the context of building partnerships and best practices.
- SPAN was recently asked to participate in a feasibility study on national monograph management, commissioned by the UK’s [National Monograph Steering Group](#). We spoke with one of the researchers, discussing current and past projects, challenges and

opportunities. We will look forward to the results of this research and hope to connect again in future.

- Over the years, news of SPAN successes and lessons learned has been shared at meetings/conferences and in a variety of publications:
  - G. Bird, S.Wong, "Consortial shared print archiving: perspectives from Canada," *Library Management*, 35(1/2), 2014: 45-55. DOI [10.1108/LM-05-2013-0045](https://doi.org/10.1108/LM-05-2013-0045)
  - G.Bird & S.Wong, "Consortial shared print archiving: perspectives from Canada," at *Academic Librarian* 3, Chinese University of Hong Kong, May 31, 2013.
  - G.Bird & L.Crema, "Do We All Need to Keep That? Shared Print Archiving in COPPUL," at BC Library Conference, Richmond BC, May 10, 2013.
  - G.Bird & L.Crema, "COPPUL Shared Print Archive Network," to the Print Archive Network, American Library Association Midwinter Meeting, Seattle WA, Jan 25, 2013.
  - S.Wong, "Shared Print, Shared Knowledge". *Feliciter* 2012, 58(6): 30-32.
  - G.Bird & G.Ashoughian, "All together now: planning for shared print archiving at Canada's western universities," *Collection Management* 2012, 37(3-4), 260-270. DOI [10.1080/01462679.2012.685433](https://doi.org/10.1080/01462679.2012.685433)

## Member Consultations

During the summer of 2017, members of the SPAN Management Committee conducted brief interviews with SPAN members to gather some feedback on the impact of SPAN as well as ideas for future projects. Several key themes emerged:

### Preservation of the print record

Members were very pleased with SPAN's accomplishments over the past five years. They felt that SPAN has afforded them the opportunity to participate in the collective preservation of the printed record of research and scholarship. Many of our users are concerned that print is disappearing in our increasingly digital world, and SPAN presents an excellent opportunity to show that we are still committed to print going forward. SPAN is a forward-thinking example of what a library consortium can accomplish through collaboration. CRL's PAPER database includes SPAN archiving commitments; this system could assist SPAN participants with local decision-making.

Many respondents noted the role of SPAN as an "insurance policy" or "safety net" and non-archive-holders identified this as being particularly important. Although SPAN initiatives had not directly affected local collection management practices at all participating libraries to any great degree, they were highly supportive of SPAN's role in facilitating collaborative decision-making at the regional level. Archive builders highlighted the need to better quantify and describe the benefits of SPAN's work.

### SPAN supports space and service transformation

Many members noted that space transformation is now a constant consideration in their libraries. Space for collections is often under pressure to make room for new services (e.g.,

maker space or collaboration space) or increased student space. Most respondents have not yet reported the results of their weeding activities to COPPUL. Better tracking of the results of SPAN initiatives would help Directors and other decision-makers to understand costs, outcomes and values, and would assist in communication to university administrators.

## SPAN helps drive collections transformation

One member noted that SPAN “informs retention decisions,” that “retention agreements are crucial in decision making in local processes,” and that SPAN is helping to “transform and reshaping collection management activities.” Other members noted that SPAN is helping to keep their collections more relevant and current, while supporting retention of deeper collections to support their patrons. Member libraries forecast print collection reductions of between 10% and 25% in the next 3-5 years. Interlibrary loan is seen as a key to access, especially for smaller institutions. To date, SPAN has contributed more to a process of refinement rather than transformation in member libraries, highlighting an opportunity for SPAN to develop future priorities in careful alignment with members.

## Future phases

Members contributed a variety of suggestions for future projects. Identification and digitization of rare or unique physical materials (newspapers, maps, media, microforms) was suggested by several libraries. It was noted that SPAN’s efforts in the area of government information could be expanded beyond the Statistics Canada publications that are targeted in the current project, possibly to include other levels of government publications. Several members noted that materials having to do with Indigenous knowledge are of high value and may not be widely held. It was also suggested that collections of local/regional interest (e.g., prairie provinces, Edmonton Capital Region, Lower Mainland, etc.) could present an opportunity to partner with the public libraries, in particular large urban public libraries.

## Partnerships with non-COPPUL institutions

We asked members if they would support SPAN exploring ways to expand beyond the current membership to include public or college libraries. While there was general support for this kind of exploration, some questions were raised concerning the relevance of public library holdings to COPPUL members. It was noted that while large public libraries may function more like research libraries, many smaller public libraries may be operating with a primarily current/popular collection, so there would be little role for SPAN. One participant suggested that OCUL could be a future partner.

## Recommendations

### SPAN Priorities 2017-2019

The SPAN Management Committee recommends that three projects be prioritized in the short term:

1. Complete the current government documents project
2. Complete the current monographs project
3. The rare Canadian serials project that formed the basis of the 2016 and 2017 applications for LAC funding

With respect to longer term projects, a number of the suggestions identified in member consultations should be explored further to determine feasibility. There may be opportunities for connections with COPPUL's Indigenous Knowledge Standing Committee and with the Digital Preservation Network.

We further recommend a renewed focus on connections with other shared print initiatives in North America and beyond. Clearly, activity around shared print initiatives is only increasing, and we expect there will be many opportunities for collaboration and connections with other organizations and projects. SPAN should renew its pursuit of opportunities to share information about its work via presentations and publications. We recommend increasing outreach to members to encourage and assist in reporting withdrawals (including monographs) to COPPUL and renewing efforts to accurately report SPAN data to PAPER. We recommend development of a process for quantifying SPAN results/effects in such a way that this information can be communicated more broadly within member institutions if desired. Updating SPAN's web presence and documentation will also be a priority.

## SPAN Fees

SPAN fees have been static since SPAN's inception and were based on library holdings, but adjusted downward slightly for very large libraries. The rationale for this was that large libraries would frequently be retaining materials on behalf of the group as archive holders. Current annual fees for SPAN members range from \$300 - \$3,000. To date, SPAN fees have been billed separately from other COPPUL fees. The vast majority of SPAN fees go to the salary for the SPAN Coordinator. Initially, fees were adequate to fund a .5 FTE junior librarian position, but this would now be very difficult to achieve. SPAN fees are currently only able to fund a more experienced librarian on a .2 FTE basis.

SPAN's primary goals are to provide access to shared print archives, create opportunities for the reallocation of library space and to preserve the print record for its members in a cost-effective manner. Thus, SPAN's work is very closely aligned with COPPUL's strategic priorities, as evidenced by the past two strategic plans, as well as with priorities articulated by many individual member libraries through their own strategic plans. Given that SPAN's initial 5 year plan has now concluded, and that COPPUL has established a Fees Working Group to review the fee structure more broadly, the SPAN Management Committee recommends that SPAN membership fees be rolled into regular membership fees going forward. Funding for special SPAN projects (such as the current monographs project) could still be considered separately as opportunities arise on an opt-in basis.

Along with the recommended change to fee collection, clear accounting for SPAN revenues, expenditures and fund balances should be provided to COPPUL Directors and the SPAN Management committee on a quarterly basis. It is essential that monies contributed toward the work of SPAN by network members be used to advance that work. Any SPAN revenues not expended in a given fiscal year should be carried over to the next in the SPAN budget line.

SPAN represents a core strategic priority for COPPUL, and its mission is highly relevant as our member libraries repurpose space and increase reliance on e-resources and interlibrary loan. The interviews we conducted with members showed strong support for SPAN's role and a wealth of ideas for future collaborations.

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