**Constant data**

**Using constant data**

Constant data can be used to quickly insert fully- or partially completed fields in your OCLC records. They are most useful when doing original cataloging but can also have their place in copy cataloging.

First, you should check to see if your OCLC login already has some constant data files in place. Just like with our record saves files, there are both an online constant data save file, and a local constant data save file. To search the online save, go to:

* Cataloging
* Search
* Online Constant Data

You see the “Local constant data” option there as well, so that’s where you’ll come to search for that, too.

A little search box pops up, letting you search by the name of the constant data or by the “status”. For now, just leave both blank and hit “ok” – that will show you all the constant data files in your online save.

You see that we have a few different options there – yours might have some as well, or it might just say “no records found”. If we double click on one, it opens what looks like a regular OCLC MARC record, but with very little information. All it has is our 33x fields with that RDA data that we see in all our books.

Whatever information is in this file, that’s what we can apply to any MARC record that we’re working on. So, when we apply this constant data to a MARC record, it will insert these fields into the record – even if they’re already present. OCLC doesn’t check for duplicate information. It’s basically just a shortcut that does exactly the same thing as you manually typing in those fields. **If it has fixed field data, that DOES overwrite what’s in your MARC record if you opt to use it.**

So, let’s go ahead and pull up a MARC record and see how to apply these.

I’ll open my local save file and pull up this book I’ve been working on. We can see that this record doesn’t have our 33x fields that we want for RDA records. Let’s go ahead and use our constant data to add them!

To apply your constant data:

* Edit
* Constant Data
* either **“online”** or **“local”** depending on which save file you use, we will use **“online”**
* apply from list or apply by name (if you remember what your constant data file is named). Apply from list will bring up that same search we saw a minute ago
* **leave it blank and click “ok”** to get our list of constant data files

**Note at the top here that it says “Choose fields to apply”** – Fixed, variable, or both. This is because you can use these constant data files to store literally anything that goes on a MARC record. You can save constant data with complicated combinations of fixed fields, 006s and 007s, which can be useful for cataloging things like our Launchpads and Playaways. For our purposes here, we’re going to make sure **“variable”** is selected, that way if the constant data file has some fixed fields in it, it won’t overwrite what’s already in our record.

Now, this time, instead of double-clicking, we

* **single-click on the file we want to apply** – that “RDA for books” – and then
* **click “apply selected”.** And it pops us back over to our MARC record, and we see our 33x fields added in!

**Create constant data**

Now I’m going to show you how to create a constant data file. If you have never used them before, you should create at least two to make applying them easier; if you just have one, the function to apply them is a little wonky. A good one to start with is the standard 33x fields for books, and another with the 33x fields for picture books and graphic novels.

Let’s create a constant data file to save in our online save. I want to make one that inserts a 500 note saying that “This record was cataloged by SHARE”.

Go to:

* Cataloging
* Create
* Constant Data
* or you can hit Control-Shift-N

It will ask you for a work form type – set it for the format you intend to use this data with. We’ve got books, computer files, continuing resources, maps, mixed materials, scores, sound recordings, and visual materials.

This is asking us to pick because we can set both our standard variable MARC fields, things like the 3xx and the 6xx fields, AND our fixed fields and 0xx fields that are format-specific. You can mix and match, too. For now, we’ll go ahead and pick “book”. If you’re only going to be using variable fields for your data, you can just pick “book” and delete all of the fixed field information.

This opens what is basically a mostly-empty OCLC record. It’s got either black boxes or blanks in most of the fixed fields, as well as a bunch of the variable fields.

The first thing I do here is delete all of the variable fields – I just hold alt-delete until I’m left with just one blank field. Then I go and delete everything in my fixed fields. Remember, we CAN use these to apply fixed fields to a record, but that’s not what I want to do here. Then I go down here and turn this blank field into a 500 field and put my note here – “This record was cataloged by SHARE”.

To save this, go to “Action”, then “Save record to online file”. Or local file, whichever you’ll be using.

It’ll ask you to name the file, of course. We’ll call it 500 Cataloged by Share. We’ve got that check box for “Make default constant data”, we’ll leave that blank. You can set a status, or just leave it blank.

And there we go; we’ve made our new constant data that we can use on any records we work on in OCLC!