

Questions submitted to PrairieCat:

Data Conversion & Loading Chart

Data Type	Record Count
*Bibliographic Data (w/items)	1,206,668 (as of 9/9/2026)
*Authority Data (MARC authority records)	610,648
Patron (User) Data	371,315 (as of 9/9/2026)
Circulation Data	
Charges (currently checked out as of 9/10/26	192,525
Bills (fines)	197,264
Holds	38,457
Charge History	We maintain 45-60 days of circulation transaction history, which includes all circ transactions, not just checkout. Item records can retain

	info on the last 3 patrons indefinitely
Bill Payments	we have fines paid history going back to when we migrated, June 2012
Acquisitions Data	
Fund	
Fund Cycle	
Vendor	227
Vendor Cycle	
Open Orders	81,035
Closed Orders (History)	164,201
Serials Data	
Bibliographic MARC Holdings Records	4,025

Q: Are you working with an authority control service provider, such as Backstage, now?

A: We are using Mitinet BESTMarc service

Q: How many, if any, SMS notifications do you send from your current ILS?

A: 25K-30K per month as of late last year.

Q: What, if any, acquisitions data do you want migrated into the new ILS?

A: See table above for counts and record types.

Q: What, if any, serials data do you want migrated into the new ILS?

A: See table above for counts and record types.

Q: Would you prefer that your vendor provide your PrairieCat staff with train-the-trainer level instruction or provide direct training to all member library staff or some kind of hybrid?

A: We prefer train-the-trainer, generally, however we may require some specialized direct training on some modules, such as acquisitions.

Section 6 Acquisitions and Serials

- Requirement: Ability to integrate with a third-party financial management software or system. Do you have a specific software or system in mind?

A: We do not have a specific third-party financial management system identified at this time.

- Requirement: Ability to support MARC or non-MARC serial holdings. Can you provide examples of non-MARC serials holdings for which you need support?

A: At this time, we have minimal serials functionality requirements. Our standard practice is to use the MARC 866 field for textual holdings statements, and some libraries use serials check-in cards to manage individual issues. We do not currently have a specific example of non-MARC serial holdings that requires support

- Requirement: Ability to automatically merge holdings when a missing issue is checked in. Can you provide an example of this workflow as it is currently used in your library?

A: At this time, we do not have an established workflow for automatically merging holdings when a missing issue is checked in. Our libraries use serials functionality at a minimal level, primarily recording textual holdings statements in the MARC 866 field, with some libraries using check-in cards for individual issues. Therefore, we do not currently have a specific example of this workflow in use.

Section 7 - Cataloging, Authority Control, and Records Management

- Requirement: Ability to control management of all types of records via staff user configuration. What type of control are you seeking here? Is it related to permissions to create, edit, delete, etc.?

A: Yes, the ability to create, edit, and delete. We desire the granularity to specify that User A can create or delete their own library's patron records and can edit any library's patron records but can't delete other library's patron records. The same user can individually edit only their own item records, but can be restricted from mass edit of records. They also can't create, edit or delete another library's items.

- Requirement: Ability to quickly check for duplicate ISBNs across bibliographic records. Is this referring to an automatic check when entering an ISBN during original or copy cataloging, the ability to check for duplicates during batch imports, or something else?

A: Both. When cataloging as well as flagging records on import

- Requirement: Ability to quickly identify errant data (mistakes, typos). Please provide examples of how you'd like the ILS to flag errant data.

A: Examples would include flagging potentially invalid or inconsistent cataloging data, such as duplicate ISBNs, invalid standard numbers, missing required fields, invalid MARC tags or subfields, and other data that does not conform to established MARC or system validation rules. We would also like warnings when imported records contain data that cannot be processed correctly.

Section 8 - Circulation

- Requirement: Ability to automatically manage expired holds. What kind of automatic handling is desired?

A: When holds expire, they are automatically deleted and staff do not have to manually delete them or use a function to delete them.

Section 9 - Reports

- Requirement: Ability to export complete statistical data for use in external data analysis tools. Does the library use any specific tools or require specific formats?

A: Our member libraries use various tools, depending on what each library has decided to use. Many times they don't tell us what external vendors they are using, they just ask for a report showing X. Exports are generally plain text, csv or excel formats. One example would be how many unique patrons from other libraries checkout items at the Rock Island Library and it's branches daily. They want the date, the count of unique visitors that day and the total number of items checked out by those visitors, for each of their 4 branches.

- Requirement: Ability to import item/patron records from an external list (preferably in plain text) for import into the report tool and/or editing tools. Please provide examples of how or why this is done in your current ILS.

A: School libraries will send me a list of their incoming freshman and other transfer students each spring. The list was exported from their student databases, with both csv and excel being common formats. I use a script to convert the files to a pipe-delimited plaintext file that I can then import into the ILS. For one of our school districts this amounts to approx. 5k-6k students and another 1-2 hundred staff that I load into our database every fall.

For item records, an example would be a library weeding a couple of hundred items. The library sends a list of them weeded item barcodes which I convert to plaintext and then import into the editing tool in the ILS. I can then group modify the items to withdrawn status in a couple of minutes vs several hours for the library to edit each item individually.

For item records, an example would be a library has added new location codes and now needs to have groups of items mass moved into each of the new locations. They send us a text file containing barcodes that need to be moved to the specific location.