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## **Serials Solutions Celebrates 10-Year Anniversary of Helping Librarians with E-Resource Access and Management Services**

*Founded by librarians for librarians, it provides best-in-class library technology to 3,000 libraries worldwide*

**SEATTLE – June 25, 2010** – Serials Solutions, the industry leader in providing libraries with digital discovery tools and integrated management solutions, is celebrating a milestone anniversary: 10 years of working to ensure libraries get what they are paying for. It was the year 2000 when Peter McCracken, a reference librarian at the University of Washington's Odegaard Undergraduate Library, along with his brothers and 2 other partners launched the first company devoted solely to helping libraries manage the burgeoning area of electronic resources. A decade and many groundbreaking products later, Serials Solutions has grown to serve some 3,000 libraries worldwide, offering an array of library technology that includes a complete family of integrated solutions.

"Serials Solutions' blazed a trail by easing librarians' frustrations with e-resources, and that path set our course for the future," said Jane Burke, ProQuest senior vice-president and former general manager of Serials Solutions. "It's the kind of simple model that works when you truly understand the people who use your services. And that deep understanding continues today... it's what's behind all of our innovative technologies and services."

The original partners – all of whom held other full-time jobs – worked on Serials Solutions' first product out of a dark Seattle basement in their spare time. It was the first ever electronic "knowledgebase," an A to Z index of e-titles. From those modest beginnings, Serials Solutions has grown to become the technological leader in library solutions.

Today there are 175 employees dedicated to its worldwide offerings. The suite of tools is built on a consistent software architecture geared to help assist librarians and library patrons. These services include Serials Solutions® Knowledge Works, Serials Solutions® 360, Ulrich's™ Global Serials Intelligence, Aquabrowser®, WebFeat®, and the Summon™ web scale discovery service.

Serials Solutions' discovery tools enable simple, easy and fast detection of materials located within an entire library collection enabling librarians and patrons to derive the most value from resources. Serials Solutions' hosted management services provide

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librarians with the tools to centralize and organize licenses, subscriptions, terms and contracts for their electronic material. These solutions and services help improve workflow, reduce librarians' workloads and ultimately reduce operating costs.

"From the company's beginnings with the first A-to-Z title list, to the newest offerings, Serials Solutions has been privileged to provide the world's leading libraries with resources to better manage their vast collections," said founder Peter McCracken. "All five founders are proud of Serials Solutions' accomplishments over the past 10 years, helping to change the way people use and manage electronic resources for research. From a dedicated core group, Serials Solutions has grown into a company of outstanding employees and forward thinkers."

### **Milestones**

Serials Solutions counts among its key milestones a number of library industry firsts including:

- The development of the first commercially-available e-resource knowledge base;
- The first cost-effective solution for creating MARC (machine-readable cataloging) records for a library's electronic journals;
- The first e-resource assessment service for the delivery of cost and usage analysis;
- The first integrated e-resource access and management solution; and
- The first Web-scale discovery service – the Summon™ service

"Ten years ago libraries had more print resources than electronic sources," said Matt Hall, director of sales, Asia-Pacific for Serials Solutions. "Serials Solutions' founders saw an opportunity to help libraries migrate seamlessly into the electronic age. Back then, large universities had 50 to 100 databases. Today, a few have upwards of 800 databases and most libraries' content is dominated by electronic content. Thanks to the innovations Serials Solutions has introduced to the industry, librarians and patrons can effectively use those resources."

In its early days as a company, Serials Solutions concentrated not on sales, but on quality. The team rounded up content aggregators and publishers, meticulously gathering invaluable data from content providers and aggregators. This early master list formed the basis of its knowledgebase.

Among Serials Solutions' earliest clients were the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia, the New York Public Library and its first academic library, the University of Montevallo in Alabama.

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Rick Burke, executive director for the Statewide California Electronic Library Consortium (SCELC) explained, "We very quickly saw the value in what Serials Solutions was designing and deploying. They genuinely had a vision for how to address the problems we as librarians were beginning to face with electronic resources. We worked closely with them early on, and more recently, to help develop the consortial ERM. SCELC was onboard with them every step of the way. We were always committed to what they were doing."

### **Further Growth**

Once Serials Solutions began to establish its reputation with various public and academic libraries, it sought to partner with larger library consortia. Among them were Westchester Academic Library Directors Organization (WALDO), LIBRAS, FEDLINK, MOBIUS and others.

The company's newest offering, Summon™, is the first Web-scale discovery service that allows researchers to instantly search, discover, and access the breadth of library holdings – no matter the format – through a single searchbox. It transcends federated search and next-generation catalogs to create an all-new service for libraries.

### **Humble Beginnings**

McCracken got the idea for Serials Solutions in 1998, while working as a reference librarian at East Carolina University in North Carolina. During a brainstorm with his brothers Steve and Mike, they developed a solution that fit in with the emerging dot-com world. McCracken had been frustrated at not knowing which journals were electronically accessible at a particular library, the result of no fixed standards, and communications gaps between library system vendors and aggregators.

The brothers did some preliminary work, and over time the initial partners developed software, working with data from various aggregators. Serials Solutions' initial product debuted at the Washington Library Association conference in May 2000.

The rare librarian-turned entrepreneur, McCracken was quoted early on in *Library Journal*, saying, "The position of the librarian-as-entrepreneur is an important one because librarians know best what librarians need. The great thing about our product is it takes two to three minutes to explain to people what we do, and they say, 'Absolutely, we need that'."

"In hindsight," said Stan Sorensen, vice president of product management and marketing for Serials Solutions, "our products reflect the evolution of our work: a problem, a vision, a solution. We didn't know what the end result would be, but it was everybody working in a common direction for the benefit of the librarian and the library.

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And that resonated across the industry. We're very fortunate to be a part of it."

### **The Next Ten Years**

Many experts following this industry believe that librarians will continue to be challenged by an increasing amount of electronic data. Furthermore, patrons will look to the library to help them discover information from locations other than the library building, using devices they carry and use daily. The discovery paradigm has forever changed; cost control and total cost of ownership of collections have become increasingly part of the equation when it comes to library management.

Going forward, Serials Solutions will continue to focus on helping librarians manage their ever increasing electronic collections, and the company will help libraries serve their patrons through the devices that patrons use every day.

Sorensen expands on the vision for Serials Solutions, "We will build on our lead in Web-scale discovery to continue helping librarians bring patrons back to the library and we will maintain our focus on helping librarians control costs and optimize total cost of ownership."

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