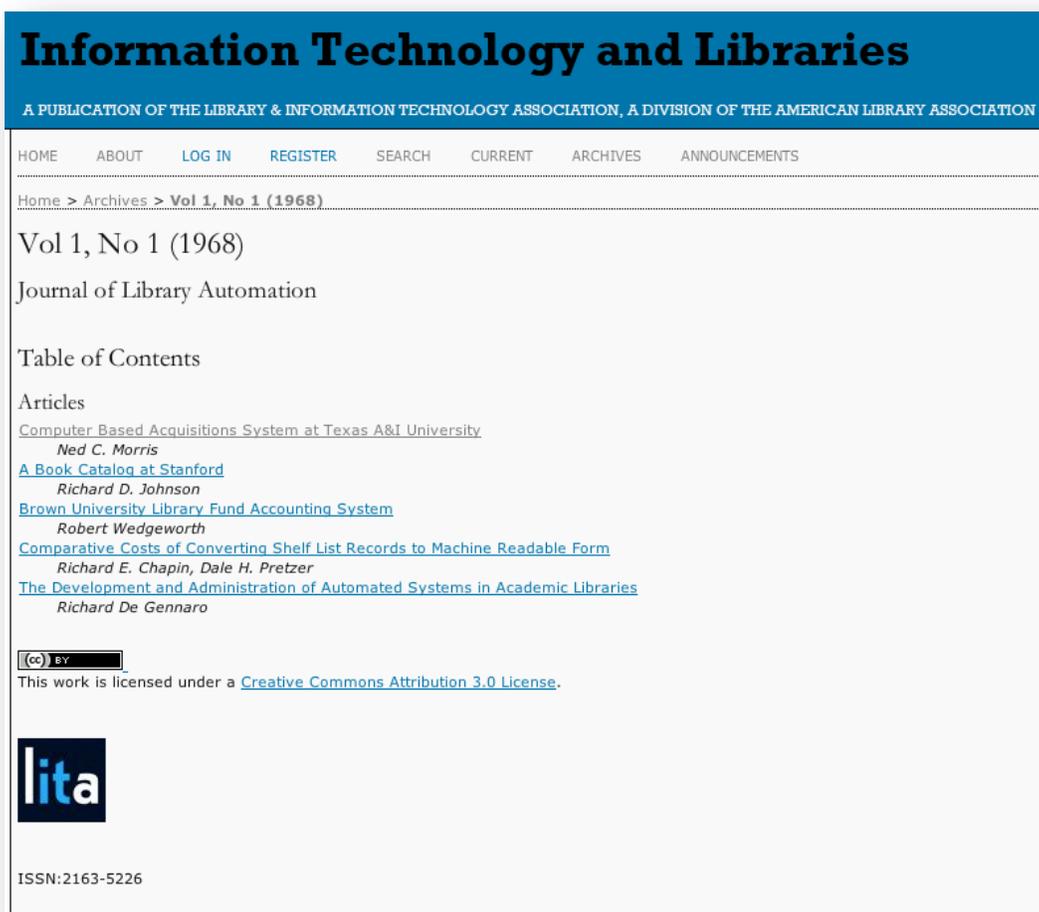


Past and present converge with the December 2012 issue of *Information Technology and Libraries* (ITAL), as we also publish online the first volume of ITAL's predecessor, the *Journal of Library Automation* (JOLA), originally published in print in 1968.



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Journal of Library Automation

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The first volume of *JOLA* offers a fascinating glimpse into early days of library automation, when many things were different, such as the size (big) and capacity (small) of computer hardware, and many things were the same (e.g., Richard Johnson's description of the book catalog project at Stanford, where "the major achievement of the preliminary systems design was to establish a meaningful dialogue between the librarian and systems and computer personnel." *Plus ça change, plus c'est la meme.*

There are articles by luminaries in the field: Richard de Gennaro describes approaches to developing an automation program in a large research library, Frederick Kilgour, from the Ohio

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College Library Center (now OCLC), analyzes catalog-card production costs at Columbia, Harvard, and Yale in the mid 1960s (8.8 to 9.8 cents per completed card), and Henriette Avram from the Library of Congress describes the successful use of the COBOL programming language to manipulate MARC II records.

The December 2012 issue marks the completion of *ITAL*'s first year as an e-only, open-access publication. While we don't have readership statistics for the previous print journal to compare with, download statistics for the e-version appear healthy, with more than 30,000 full-text article downloads for 2012 content so far this year, plus more than 10,000 downloads for content from previous years. Based on the download statistics, the topics of most interest to today's *ITAL* readers are discovery systems, web-based research guides, digital preservation, and digital copyright.

This month's issue takes some of these themes further, with articles that examine the usability of autocompletion features in library search interfaces (Ward, Hahn, and Feist), reveal patterns of student use of library computers (Thompson), propose a cloud-based digital library storage solution (Sosa-Sosa), and summarize attributes of open standard file formats (Park, Oh).

Happy reading.