

The latest on our new initiatives

Finding commercial and BARD-only books

For the first eight decades of its existence, NLS almost always used its own recording studio staff or outside studios to record books. That changed in 2013, when we began striking deals with commercial publishers to obtain their audio files, free of charge.

“By taking advantage of commercial recordings when we can, we’re getting more books into the talking-book program and doing it in a more timely fashion,” NLS Director Karen Keninger said. “This helps us focus our efforts on producing books that don’t have commercial audio counterparts.”

It’s a money-saver, too. There are still costs for converting a commercial file into a format that can be read by NLS talking-book machines and downloaded from BARD, but the narration costs for such titles are eliminated.

The titles that NLS produces are generally available on digital talking-book cartridges as well as on BARD, and network libraries can order them through the copy allotment process. Those titles are also listed in *Talking Book Topics*.

The collection also includes many titles that are available only on BARD. These “BARD-exclusive” titles—most of which are commercial audiobooks—aren’t listed in *TBT*. So we need to be pro-active in helping patrons find them.

NLS keeps a list of BARD-exclusive titles under “Bulletins and Reports” on the [Network Services website](#).

To easily find commercial audiobook titles in the collection, librarians and patrons alike can use the Voyager catalog search engine at www.loc.gov/nls

under “Catalog Search.” Once you’re on Voyager’s “Basic Search” screen, type “commercial audiobook” (with the quote marks) under step one; leave the default option of “None” under step two; and select the first option, “Keyword (match ALL words),” under step three. That will give you more than 8,500 commercial titles currently in the collection.

“Of course, most patrons won’t want to browse thousands of titles to find a book they want,” Keninger said. “But they can also use Voyager to search for a specific title, books by their favorite author, or books on a certain subject—whether they are commercial titles or books that NLS has produced.”

BARD-exclusive titles are a great way for libraries to promote use of the BARD Mobile apps for personal smart devices—especially since the addition of the “Most Popular” feature last year, which points patrons to books their fellow BARD users are reading. Libraries using Duplication on Demand can also download BARD-exclusive books to cartridges for patrons who don’t use BARD or BARD Mobile.

Questions about using the NLS catalog? Contact your network representative.

Watch for the next issue of *On the Move* in your inbox on May 30!