

# PURLs

## Persistent Uniform Resource Locators

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# PURLs

- Persistent URLs
  - Want a persistent URL?
  - Can't guarantee your URL?
  - You need a PURL!
- Simple redirect mechanism
  - Register your PURL – point it to your URL
  - If your URL changes
  - Change where the PURL redirects to
- Users don't notice the difference

# A bit more than simple redirects

- User & Group management
  - Who can do what with which PURLs
- Partial redirection
  - If a request does not match a PURL exactly, the requested URL is checked to determine if some contiguous front portion of the PURL string matches a registered PURL. If so, a redirection occurs with the remainder of the requested URL appended to the target URL.
  - Removes the need to register every URL below a root location

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persistent\\_uniform\\_resource\\_locator](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persistent_uniform_resource_locator)

# A bit of history

- Developed by OCLC (Research) – 1995
  - purl.org
- Modernized and extended – 2007
  - Zapheira under contract to OCLC
- Zapheira host Community/Code site
  - purlz.org
- Open Source Software
- Handy tool for vocabulary preservation

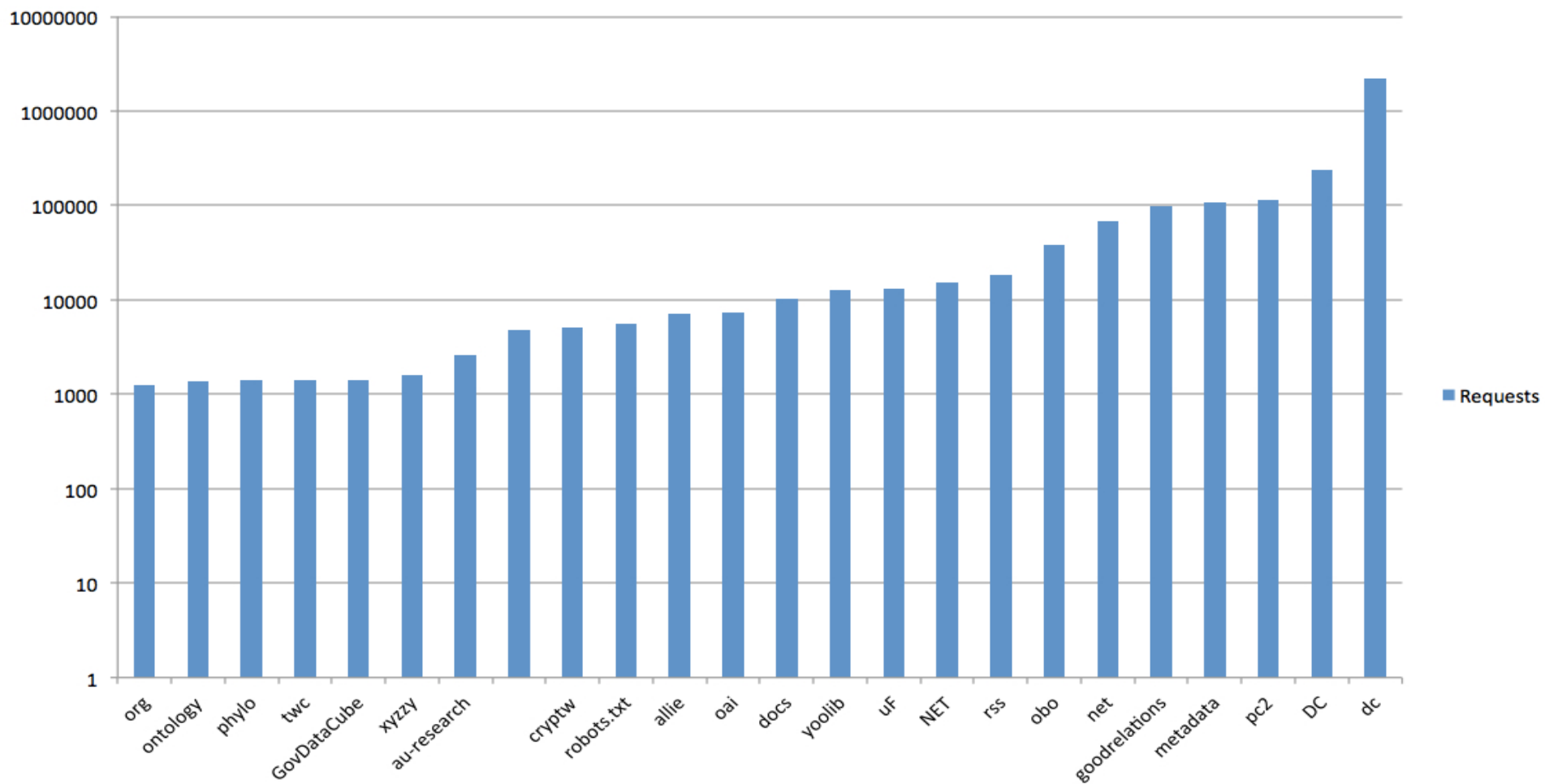
# PURL sites/services

- [purl.org](http://purl.org) - The granddaddy of PURLs sites hosted at OCLC
- [purl.bioontology.org](http://purl.bioontology.org) - Bioinformatics community project hosted at the National Center for Biomedical Ontology.
- [demo.sharedname.org](http://demo.sharedname.org) - Bioinformatics community project hosted at Shared Names.
- [purl.zepheira.com](http://purl.zepheira.com) - PURL service for Zepheira and its customers.
- [purl.access.gpo.gov](http://purl.access.gpo.gov) - Access to US government documents via the Government Printing Office.
- [purl.fcla.edu](http://purl.fcla.edu) – Purl service of The Florida Center for Library Automation

<http://purlz.org/purls-in-the-wild>

# purl.org - Usage

Requests per PURL Domain (for 2 week period)



OCLC

2,000,000,000

holdings



OCLC

WorldCat®

300,000,000

items

25,000+

Members



# purl.org & OCLC?

- **OCLC's plans for the service?:**

As a key component of the web, and web of data, that we all [including OCLC] depend upon; we [OCLC] are committed to using our best efforts to ensure its continued and continuing availability as a service.

- **Does OCLC currently intend to keep the service running indefinitely?:**

OCLC have no plans in the foreseeable future for the PURL service beyond maintaining the current service. (see above)

- **If not, what would the options be?:**

As indicated, OCLC are committed to continue the service for the foreseeable future. If that were to change our recognition of the key role of PURLs would lead us to ensure an orderly transfer of the service and software, which is open source, to whatever follows.

- **Does OCLC welcome the usage of PURLs for vocabularies?:**

OCLC are active users of PURL identifiers in our own vocabularies, recognizing the preservation benefits that brings. We welcomed the use, for instance by DCMI Metadata Terms and more recently GoodRelations amongst others. We would encourage others to follow this lead.



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