



Library of Congress, Cataloging Data, and Bowker, Oh My...

Do you have questions about how to register your book with the Library of Congress? Not sure where to go to register your book for Books in Print?

You can register your book with the Library of Congress if your publisher has more than 4 books published and registered. If your publisher does not have 4 or more books published by three or more different authors, then you will not be eligible.

However, there are ways around this rule!

Library of Congress PRE CONTROL NUMBER registration and a valid, properly formatted CATALOG IN PUBLICATION block on your copyright page are some of the items that separate your book from the thousands of books that will get looked at by librarians and be immediately discarded.

If you are a small press with fewer than 4 titles and want the benefits of a Library of Congress Registration and a Catalog-in-Publication block, the follow these steps:

1. Make sure your publisher name is not trademarked. It does not matter if you have a publisher with a similar or identical name as someone else UNLESS it is trademarked. Go here to find out:

<http://www.uspto.gov/trademarks/index.jsp>

2. Register your publishing name and your book at Bowker. Go here: <https://www.myidentifiers.com/>

Libraries and Bookstores will look up your information on Bowker. Don't skip or skimp this step. A fully fleshed out profile and title data listing on your ISBN log will make a good impression. A poorly executed profile or title data block will make a bad one.

3. Apply to the Library of Congress for a Preassigned Control Number. Go here: <http://www.loc.gov/publish/pcn/>

From the LOC website: A Library of Congress catalog control number is a unique identification number that the Library of Congress assigns to the catalog record created for each book in its cataloged collections. Librarians use it to locate a specific Library of Congress catalog record in the national databases and to order catalog cards from the Library of Congress or from commercial suppliers. The purpose of the Preassigned Control Number (PCN) program is to enable the Library of Congress to assign control numbers in advance of publication to those titles that may be added to the Library's collections.

4. Once you have all of that done, it is time to get a CIP. A Cataloging in Publication record (aka CIP data) is a bibliographic record prepared by the Library of Congress or one of its vendors for a book that has not yet been published. When the book is published, the publisher includes the CIP data on the copyright page thereby facilitating book processing for libraries and book dealers.

It is not possible to get a CIP from the Library of Congress if the book is subsidized in any way by the author or published by a house that has published books by fewer than three separate authors.

Do not despair! You can get a CIP data block from a vendor. Libraries want the data in a specific way and you can hire someone to provide that to you. Check out these guys: <http://www.dgiinc.com/pcip/> or these guys: <http://www.quality-books.com/pcipintro.php>

You are now on your way!