

Crossing the Divide

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*Has Verde helped to build bridges
between libraries and suppliers?*

When managing suppliers and building a good working relationship with them, we need facts, figures and evidence to be able to work on the issues arising. Can Verde help with this? When we purchased Verde, we needed to know what it could do for us...

Reviewing Verde

- What's there already?
- What use could we make of it in its existing format?
- Could we adapt it to our local business practices?
- How easy was it to extract key information?

Gathering the tools

Recording incidents

- Utilising the 'Incidents' tab to record supplier performance and issues
- Wanted to 'score' suppliers on how well they dealt with an incident – had to come up with a scale. But nowhere on Verde to allow us to search specifically on the score
- Following a year of rationalising our own in-house procedures, we increased the number of data label fields from 2 to 5, which now allows us to differentiate accurately between types of issues
- This allows us to obtain more meaningful statistics on Supplier Performance from Verde
- BUT there are still problems in extracting discrete areas of data when they are required

Data integrity

Getting help from our suppliers

- Asked suppliers to provide up to date access information twice a year, using a proforma that could be loaded straight into Verde with minimal manual intervention
- Response – "...No other Verde customer has asked us for this!"
- Some weeks later... we can now obtain accurate access data from suppliers, to be loaded into Verde via our proforma, which has resulted in far fewer incident reports related to access problems

What's in a name?

Quite a lot!

- The name of the 'package' or 'collection' of journals on Verde Knowledge Base versus the name provided by the publisher! Not always clear what package we need to select to reflect our access to purchased material
- Knowledge Base not always up to date with the latest supplier packages – if it's not there, then what?
- Either have to wait for it to appear or make time-consuming manual adjustments to avoid user confusion over what they can access
- There needs to be better communication between publishers and Ex Libris

Where next?

- **Alma?**
One of the areas we would like to be developed is the whole contract management area. In Plymouth, we are a converged service with IT, and the licence area on Verde is currently too exclusive to library related licences. It needs to be more generic and flexible so that it can be used for other types of contract as well.

Conclusions

- Verde has helped to some degree in enabling us to manage our suppliers. We have been able to utilise a number of its features to make tracking incidents easier and more meaningful, but the big issues are the lack of flexibility to add the data we would like, and subsequent problems in extracting that data without time consuming problems.
- We hope that Alma might give us the additional features that we need.

