

EXPANIA – Spanish Ex Libris Users Group Report to INUG 2014

<http://www.expania.es>

Membership

Membership of the Spanish Group decreased from 15 to 14 full members (paying quota and having voting rights). Membership is decreasing from 2012 (19 members that year), in some cases to avoid the payment of the quota (150 euros), but in most cases because the institutions ceased to use EL products (SFX/Metalib users that switched to EL competitors discovery tools). Apart from the formal members, other institutions not formally registered as group members normally cooperate with Expania.

Communication Channels

The Expania distribution list has 173 members and it is used by the group members and by Greendata (EL distributor in Spain) to communicate news and incidents. Web site (<http://www.expania.es>) is mainly used for Annual Meeting organization and to distribute the content of the meeting. Most of the Steering Committee meetings are online meetings.

Annual Meeting

Expania Annual Meeting was held in Valencia, on June 5th. Length of meeting was reduced to one day, as the year before, for easier attendance. A practical workshop about “Building Aleph Services”, addressed to technical staff and taught by an Expania member, was organized as a satellite activity. The annual meeting was attended by 60 persons, from 16 institutions, Greendata, Ex Libris and the Portugal Users EL Group (USE.pt).

The meeting program was mainly centered on interoperability issues, with several communications of Expania libraries about experiences of integration between ILS and academic management systems, one more theoretical speech about integrated platforms and discovery tools and a presentation by EL about integration of Linked Open Data in Ex Libris products, focused on Primo. We also invited to a member of the Portuguese User Group (USE.pt) that talked about the users group and libraries situation and perspectives in Portugal after five years of cuts and economic crisis (not very optimistic).

Changes in EL policy

Ex Libris has contracted a person (Eduardo Lancho) to marketing issues in Spain directly and he attended the meeting and introduced himself to the customers. It does not mean that EL will leave aside the current Spanish distributor (Greendata) to act directly. The Spanish users keep on contracting products with Greendata and they receive support also from Greendata. Eduardo is devoted to marketing issues and, as his first action, he is trying to collect a group of institutions to form an early adopters group for Alma. The market is not very clear for Alma in Spain because the potential clients (Universities, Research Libraries, Consortia) had very heavy cuts in their funding during the last years and the now the budgets are absolutely freezed, so it will be difficult to address major software changes. Budgetary cuts are currently a major factor in the evolution of library software in Spain.

Support

Most of the support is given by Greendata (Spanish distributor) and it is correct. Proximity and the ability to communicate in Spanish are highly valued by customers. When an incident is escalated from Greendata to EL, response is slower and support is not as highly rated as the support given by Greendata. Aleph support for some institutions is provided directly by Ex Libris Germany. There have been some queries for EL behavior regarding upgrading and migration. These queries were not about the quality but about the extension of support. When an incident did not fit exactly the points in the support contract EL quickly wanted to sell its resolution as an extra service (and not exactly cheap).

SC:

- Chair: Gaspar Olmedo (Spanish Research Council Library Network)
- Deputy chair: Marina Losada (Pompeu Fabra University Library)
- Treasurer: Carmen Rodriguez (Galicia Regional Health Care System Libraries)
- Secretary: Inmaculada Ribes (Valencia Polytechnic University Library)