Norwegian National Users Group Annual Report 2016

BIBSYS report

The BIBSYS Consortia consist of 100+ institutions from the higher education and research sector in Norway, including all of the universities, university colleges, the National Library of Norway and research and health institutes.

The consortia went live with Primo and SFX in August 2013 and Alma in December 2015.

Being a large consortium; we see many different aspects of the products and we test the systems capabilities to the breaking point (and sometimes beyond).

As Alma is including more functionality for consortia, we see that IGeIU and NERS also must deal with this new dimension in the user-community of Ex Libris products and should offer consortia-memberships and consortium functionality in the voting process (NERS).

Alma
The consortium has used Alma for about 9 months and the basic day to day operations are up and running, but there is a high amount of support-cases(both to BIBSYS and Ex Libris). Resource sharing has proven to be a complex matter in Alma. The experience we have is that the resource sharing is vulnerable; everything must be done correctly in order to work properly.   We still experience a need for changes in the configuration and set-up of the institutions and it takes some time for the institutions to find out how they want to Alma to work and what the different settings in Alma means.

The BIBSYS authority file is placed outside Alma in a standalone application; it is integrated into Alma via OAI-harvesting and real-time updating using SRU-U. This is a new integration and there still are some issues that need to be solved. Ex Libris has been accommodating in this communication.

Being a consortium with 100+ members; BIBSYS relies on the Network Zone to distribute shared configuration and changes. However, in many cases Alma does not allow distribution and this makes it a cumbersome process performing changes. Although Alma is getting more consortium functionality, we are still missing important functionality that will make it easier to administrate a consortium.

In order for BIBSYS to compensate for the lack of consortium functionality and also implement additional (national) needs, BIBSYS relies heavily on API's to perform changes and updates. We also have some post migration task that require API's in Alma. The portfolio of API's in Alma is very useful, but some are poorly documented and do not always offer the needed possibilities. We would have hoped that the API's could offer the same possibilities as in the GUI, better documentation. In addition, more API's should be a focus point for Ex Libris.

BIBSYS lack a proper test-environment of Alma. This makes it difficult for us to verify and test new functionality/versions. This also makes it harder to test the impact of changing settings and configurations in Alma.

Primo
The first year and a half from the implementation of Primo in August 2013 there was performance issues (response-time and up-time) with Primo, but this has been sorted out and has been within the SLA since.

The Primo installation was moved to HTTPS during the spring. This was a long process. When the switch was done the majority worked however, there are still some issues. Some re-directs affects the system and bX does not work properly when Primo is on HTTPS.

With Alma we see that the integration between the Discovery and the ILS is closer than with the previous ILS (own developed). This meaning that often the root cause of the issue is found within Alma and not Primo itself.

There are several problems with the digital representations from Alma (ALMA-D). This affects the view-it/get-it within a consortium that has not been taken into account when the solution for digital representations was created in Alma. The digital model is still not mature and BIBSYS has disabled some of the ALMA-D functionality in Primo.

Being a large consortium, we encounter other issues that is not thought of because it only affects large set-ups and not a single institutions or smaller consortiums.

With Alma we de-commissioned the SFX. The Alma uResolver and administration of e-resources has shown to be more complex and harder than the SFX.
We are looking forward to the new GUI for Primo and will start working on this during the fall of 2016, and will launch this at earliest at the start of 2017 as a parallel to the current UI.

Leganto
BIBSYS has started a process that may end up in acquiring a reading list system for the BIBSYS Consortia. Leganto is one of other possible solutions/systems.