

2021 ANZREG Chair's Report to INUG

Introduction

ANZREG is a recognized national user group for the International Group of Ex Libris Users (IGeLU). The group, led by a community elected committee, strives to promote communication among users of Ex Libris products at different institutions in Australia and New Zealand. ANZREG provides feedback locally and internationally to IGeLU. Membership is free to Australian and New Zealand libraries and institutions using one or more of Ex Libris products.

Snapshot

- ANZREG has 77+ institutional members across Australia and New Zealand
- 365 subscriptions to the ANZREG-L mailing list (hosted by the State Library of Queensland)
- Activities coordinated by the ANZREG Committee – with elections every 2 years.

Current Status

We have had a number of committee changes this year with a change in Chair and adjustment of roles to introduce Co-Programme Coordinator, better suiting the distribution of responsibilities for portfolios and workloads.

The current ANZREG Committee:

Chair	Stacey van Groll	University of Queensland
Deputy Chair	Amelia Rowe	RMIT University
Outgoing Chair	Cate Bardwell	University of Otago
Secretary	Lynne Billington	State Library, New South Wales
Financial Officer	Roshan Thapa	Charles Sturt University
Co-Programme Coordinator	Rachel Salby	La Trobe University
Co-Programme Coordinator	Peta Hopkins	Bond University
Web Manager	Deborah Fitchett	Lincoln University
Product Development Advocate	Amelia Rowe	RMIT University

The Committee said a fond farewell to one member of the Committee: Annette Schryver, of Macquarie University. Annette served as Financial Officer over many years, as a longstanding member from 2016. We thank Annette for her service to our ANZREG community.

Members of our community are also very active in our IGeLU user community internationally, as members and Coordinators of Working Groups and Communities of Practice. We recognise all our active and engaged regional representatives on our ANZREG website: <https://anzreg.igelu.org/pwg/>

Activities

Our webinar program for our member community continues to be impacted by COVID-19, with the decision made again in early 2021 to shift our usual ANZREG annual conference online again. The ANZREG annual conference is a popular event which showcases customer adoption of Ex Libris products and provides members of the community with the opportunity for knowledge sharing and dedicated time to consider the prioritization of common customer technical requirements. It is also the venue for the ANZREG Annual General Meeting.

As 2021 continued, with the ongoing proliferation of online events and zoom fatigue, the ANZREG Committee shifted focus again from a single dedicated conference event in 2021, and instead decided to responsively offer targeted events.

In March, ANZREG hosted a week long Hackathon that led to the creation of three popular Cloud Apps available on the Alma platform. The Hackathon was coordinated by our Co-Programme Coordinators, Peta Hopkins and Rachel Salby, in collaboration and with support of Ex Libris including Josh Weisman, Osher Gilinsky, Amelia Littlechild, and Katelin Grammer.

The program included:

- an initial UX design webinar, to engage the entire community with valuable content, even those not directly participating in apps development
- the week long Hackathon, with seventeen active participants in four teams of a mix of technical, development, subject matter expertise, and UX skills. The coordinating group hosted daily drop-in sessions, supplied supporting materials, and provided a slack channel
- Apps presentation webinar by the teams, open to the international community, with award of overall winner by panel of ANZREG Committee and Josh Weisman Ex Libris, as well as an audience choice winner
- a reflection session held after the Hackathon, with active participants present to discuss benefits, lessons learned, concerns, and as an opportunity for non-participating members to ask questions

Four cloud apps were developed during the Hackathon, with the three completed apps proving to be popular installations subsequently, as advised by Ex Libris:

- [Print Slip Report](#) – provides an alternative to the built-in Alma print slip feature - *Winner*
- [Trove Search](#) – search for records in Trove from metadata in Alma screens
- [Delete Your Sets](#) – allows users to delete multiple sets - *Audience choice*
- *Citation Checker (still in development)* – validates metadata in a borrowing request

This event strengthened our community, as the team members were able to build cross-institutional connections, learn about the cloud apps platform and app development, and gain a greater understanding of the broad range of skills in our libraries. Even for those not directly participating in app building, feedback from our community was very positive, with comments such as “It was brilliant”, “really impressed by the apps created”, and a number of people expressing interest in creating their own Cloud Apps.

Advocacy

The ANZREG Committee meets quarterly with Katelin Grammer, Vice President Sales, Oceania | ProQuest, and other representatives from Ex Libris as topics arise. Agenda items are distributed beforehand. These meetings are proving to be an excellent exchange of information and also a good avenue for highlighting and resolving issues arising from the ANZREG Community.

Items raised in 2021 include:

- Support for ANZREG community, with particular interest on an update on Chat rollout progress globally and for APAC, and support levels in the Australian office
- Issues with the Informit platform transition, as well as current content and metadata mapping for CDI
- Inclusiveness of the term 'Higher Education Platform' for sites such as State and National Libraries, and recognition of both Australian and New Zealand members
- Ex Libris plans in the resource sharing areas, with hope for regional NLA collaborative efforts for automated partner updates
- Options for highlighting regional issues via Salesforce Support, with follow up to our past interest expressed in an ANZREG Salesforce account
- Clarifying relationships with site representatives between customers and Ex Libris and ProQuest, and potential for additional complexity with the Clarivate acquisition
- Encouragement for Ex Libris representatives to engage with our community in our regional anzreg-l listserv, to improve open and transparent communications and collaboration
- Raised issue of Primo Analytics user actions in UTC only, with no time data, with significant impact for our region of actions recorded on the incorrect day by between 8-14 hours, depending on timezone

The Committee developed a new Advocacy page for our website, hosted by IGeLU, to improve visibility of our work with Ex Libris representatives on behalf of our community:

<https://anzreg.igelu.org/about-this-site/advocacy/>

Our Committee also agreed on a policy that we do not advocate or promote particular products or services for any vendors, after receiving a number of queries. This was included in our 'About Us' content, and makes clear the position of the ANZREG Committee as a representative voice for our user community: <https://anzreg.igelu.org/about-this-site/>

Highlighted issues

Cloud Apps support

- As an outcome of our Cloud Apps Hackathon, our community raised concerns around ongoing support and maintenance for apps, particularly with scenarios such as popular community created apps which become a key part of workflows and which may then become orphaned and lose functionality as staff move on.
- The ANZREG Committee queried this to Josh Weisman, with the result of additions to the Cloud Apps FAQ, but remains concerned regarding the uncertainty in this area.

Ongoing COVID-19 impact and information overload

- The ANZREG Committee webinar program has been deliberately lightened, including shift from a dedicated Conference, in recognition of the continuing lack of resources at Committee level and in our community. This includes available staffing and available time, with many in our community facing ongoing restrictions and loss of staff, making time to present and even just attend sessions even more precious. We also recognise the real problem of 'zoom fatigue' in current times.
- The ANZREG Committee has the ability to adjust our own program directly and responsively in this manner, to avoid additional pressure on our community, but we also notice the increasing webinar programming by Ex Libris adding to this load. While such sessions are

appreciated, there must be a balance, as well as ensuring the session content is also in accessible written form.

Support for Evidence Based Practice in Analytics

- We have discovered an issue with Analytics actions in Primo Analytics recorded only in UTC by date, which is only now documented by Ex Libris as a result of an ANZREG Committee member's Salesforce case. The outcome is a significant timezone variation of between 8-14 hours for our regional community. The initial response from Ex Libris was that this was acceptable as only "edge cases", until it was pointed out by the Committee that analysis such as user engagement actions by day of the week or trend analysis by teaching weeks across years becomes meaningless, and also clear issues such as key features enabled on a known date are then recorded in Analytics by user actions as being enabled on the previous day.
- The ANZREG Committee has received a more favourable response from Ex Libris after providing additional evidence of demonstrated impact, but is interested in raising visibility of this issue to our international community. There is an expectation of Ex Libris as a vendor to a global customer base of being able to support reliable and correct evidence based practice for our entire community, and yet only those in the UTC timezone actually have correct data.

Report by: Stacey van Groll (*Chair*), Amelia Rowe (*Deputy Chair*), Cate Bardwell (*Outgoing Chair*)

Submitted on behalf of the ANZREG Committee

August 2021