



ACEF annual report 2022 IGeLU National User Group meeting

Presentation and membership

Founded in 2000, the ACEF users group was formerly known as AUFA (*Association des Utilisateurs Francophones d'Aleph*). It changed its name during an extraordinary general assembly on February 12th 2007 and became the ACEF (*Association des Clients d'Ex Libris France*).

Initially dedicated to Aleph, as its former name suggests, the association has grown with Ex Libris' customers base. Its statutes were amended in 2016 to include ProQuest customers, who did not have their own customer group. The effects of this change have remained limited, with the steady decline in the number of ProQuest customers in France since that date.

By 31 December 2021, the association had 73 members. The majority of the members are French institutions (most of them being academic libraries), but several customers are from Belgium (University of Liège, Free University of Brussels, European Parliament, etc.) or Switzerland (Swiss National library, Swiss Library Service Platform, BCU Lausanne, etc.). It should be noted that there have been no Québec institutions nor African institutions.

Alma and Primo are the most widely used softwares among the members of the association with at least 38 and 47 customers (both Primo BO and Primo VE). However, Aleph and SFX are still used by a significant number of institutions (about 10 members each). The others (Summon, 360 Link, Digitool, Rosetta, etc.) have become marginalized.

Organization

The association is directed by an executive committee composed of 6 persons. These persons have been re-elected in 2022. In theory, the committee is assisted by a referent person for each software. These referents are more particularly in charge of coordinating votes for Ners and monitoring changes to their software.

In recent months, the association has obtained the participation of more people, which allows us to have 3 referent persons for Alma, 1 for Primo (for the moment, both Primo VE and Primo BO), 1 for

Leganto, 1 for SFX, 2 others for the coordination of a group of IT specialists and a last one to follow up the questions related to the evolution of catalogs.

The broadcast list is still very active with an average of 80 messages sent each month for more than 370 registered persons.

Main events since the last IGeLU meeting

Training campaign

The health crisis had disrupted the organization of the training campaigns, so much so that the last training session (Alma Administration) was held in January 2020. Given the large number of institutions which had begun working with Alma and Primo in recent years, this lack of training was prejudicial for many of our members. The executive committee then decided to give priority to the organization of a major training campaign.

In details, 8 training courses have been organized between September 2021 and July 2022, among which 3 that led to several sessions :

- Alma for Acquisition (7 hours)
- Alma for Fulfillment (12 hours)
- Alma for e-resources management (16 hours x 2)
- Alma Analytics for beginners (3 hours and half x 3)
- Alma Analytics for specialists (3 hours x 2)
- Primo VE (14 hours)
- Primo BO (17 hours)
- SFX Administration (14 hours)

12 instructors were employed, for a cumulative total of nearly 150 trainees from over 50 institutions.

This was a very big effort, that our association will not be able to repeat next year : the logistical organization required a lot of work (all the training sessions were organized by videoconference, with recording and audiovisual editing of these recordings) and represented a significant cost for our budget (most of the instructors were paid, as they were working on their free time). Nevertheless, we believe we have met most of the needs and plan to focus on complementary training (e.g., Alma for physical resources management).

General Meeting

This year, we were able to resume our (physical) general meetings. The formula has been changed : instead of two annual meetings for a duration of one day each, we have organized a single general meeting, but over two days in order to develop conviviality between our members.

The meeting took place in the University of Liège, on the 9th and 10th May. The first morning was dedicated to the news of our association ; the afternoon was dedicated to Ex Libris for a presentation of their new services or features (Rialto, Alma-D, Alma Library Mobile App and future evolutions of Alma) and a discussion on the future perspectives of Primo. Two parallel sessions were organized during the last morning : one for feedbacks related to the “Go VE” program and Alma Library Mobile App ; the other in the form of a workshop on CDI. The lack of time even forced the organizers to re-schedule (in the form of a videoconference) a presentation on the installation of remote lockers !

Nearly 60 people attended the meeting, which everyone considered a success.

Alma/Sudoc Synchronization

As explained last year, Sudoc is the shared catalog of the French academic libraries and the daily work tool for their cataloguers. As mentioned in our last report, l'Agence bibliographique de l'enseignement supérieur ([Bibliographic Agency for Higher Education](#)), the institution which manages the Sudoc catalog, and the University of Bordeaux carried out a project in order to simplify exchanges between Sudoc and Alma.

In detail, electronic portfolios are activated or suppressed from Alma Institutional Zone. Each day, Sudoc catalog comes to harvest electronic portfolios on the Alma's OAI server. For the newly created portfolios, Sudoc catalog creates a location ; for the deleted portfolios, the existing locations are removed. After that, the records which are linked with these new locations are sent to Alma in order to replace the CZ records in Alma Institutional Zone.

This workflow has been tested with another institution (Université de Toulouse) and implemented in both. A presentation has been organized for the members of the association in June, with the general aim of implementing this workflow in new institutions starting this fall.

Unimarc mapping

The work started with ITALE last year led to the submission of our joint requests to Ex Libris. A case has been created and is now in processing for a desired implementation at the end of 2022 or the beginning of 2023.

At the same time, the association asked Ex Libris for a way to improve the monitoring of Unimarc format developments. Each year, the Unimarc format used by the Sudoc catalog is evolving to follow the general evolution of Unimarc or for adapting the French catalogs to the RDA-FR rules (France taking an original way to modernize library catalogs). Unfortunately, we have noted a relative lack of interest from Ex Libris on this matter, which has resulted in previous years in delays in implementation and/or partial implementation.

A meeting has been organized in June, with Itai Veltzman and the French office of Ex Libris and in presence of l'Agence bibliographique de l'enseignement supérieur. We hope to keep working with Ex Libris to enhance the current workflow.

Outlooks for the coming year

Our main goal for the next year is probably to extend the principles of the synchronization workflow described above to new resources : e-seriales and physical resources. Concerning the first one, Ex Libris has mentioned a technical impossibility but did not provide any explanation. A meeting is being organized with Rael Elstein to discuss this point (among other topics). Concerning the second ones, a reflection must be carried out with the other associations of software users before starting anything. For the moment, l'Agence bibliographique de l'enseignement supérieur has worked a lot with our association, but its missions cover all the ILS and not only Alma.

In addition to this report, it should be noted that the French institutions are entering successively in discussion with Ex Libris for the renewal of their contracts. A few dozen institutions have re-signed with them for Alma and Primo. The discussions have been very long and complicated, because Ex Libris wanted to go back on concessions made for the French market. In the future, it is not certain that all institutions will renew their contracts. This must be a point of attention.

On behalf of the ACEF user group

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<http://a-c-e-f.org>