



ACEF annual report 2023 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 1st August 2023, the association had 78 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.) Switzerland (Swiss National library, Swiss Library Service Platform, BCU Lausanne, etc.) or Luxemburg (Court of Justice of the European Union). It should be noted that there have been no Québec institutions or African institutions.

Alma and Primo are the most widely used softwares among the members of the association with at least 54 and 59 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. The executive committee mandate will end in summer 2024.

The committee is assisted by a group of several referents. Most of them are referents for one software (Alma with three persons, Primo, Leganto and SFX with one person each). As such, they are mainly in charge of coordinating votes for Ners and monitoring changes in these softwares. The other people are in charge of a thematic folder : the translation of the UIs from the English to the French (one

person, soon to be two) ; the evolution of the cataloging format (one person) ; the sharing of IT developments (two persons).

The broadcast list is still very active with an average of 73 messages sent each month for almost 380 registered persons.

Main events since the last IGeLU meeting

Training campaign

The association has taken a break this year, after an academic year 2021-2022 very busy, with almost 10 training courses for nearly 150 trainees. It should be noted, however, that all of these courses are available online on the association's Intranet site (the videos are broadcasted thanks Youtube and a private channel), so much so that the new administrators were able to train themselves all year.

Three webinars were organized to present how Alma's APIs work and the IT developments made by some of our members: purchase request tools (built in-house) and automated workflow for delivering "quitus" (the term "quitus" refers to a certificate provided by librarians to students to certify that they are in "good standing" with the libraries and can enroll in a new institution).

General Meeting

Our annual meeting was held in Paris, on June 28 and 29. We were hosted by [Sciences-Po](#), one of France's most famous research universities, specializing in political science, public management and economics. This meeting was attended by almost 100 people.

The first morning was dedicated to the review of our activities ; the afternoon to Ex Libris for a presentation focusing on the following topics : integration projects between Ex Libris tools and Clarivate tools (for instance, the Alma webapp Journal Citation Reports) ; Rialto (for the moment, no French-speaking institution is using the service, as Ex Libris having preferred to focus on other markets) ; the helpdesk (activity report in the context of the new "project Flash") ; Leganto and Alma roadmaps (more particularly the new UIs, with a focus on the several problems occurred with the new UI of the Analytics menu).

The second day was devoted to experience feedbacks in the form of two separate sessions :

- The first one focused on Analytics, with the presentation of three integration projects (of data from Analytics with external tools, or of data from third-party systems with Analytics) and a discussion on the construction and day-to-day use of dashboards ;
- The second on different topics : a presentation of the virtual reference services in Switzerland ; a presentation of examples of data processing with Jupyter Notebook ; some feedbacks on coordination and technical support within large library networks

Alma/Sudoc Synchronization

Until now, the project of synchronization between Alma and the Sudoc, the shared catalog of the French academic libraries, only concerned two institutions : the University of Bordeaux, as initiator,

and the University of Toulouse, as beta-tester. This year saw about twenty institutions integrate this workflow, which has mobilized our association, through the above-mentioned institutions, as well as our partner Abes, l'Agence bibliographique de l'enseignement supérieur ([Bibliographic Agency for Higher Education](#)).

As a reminder, the workflow is based on the operating principle below : electronic portfolios are activated or suppressed from Alma Institutional Zone. Each month, electronic records identifiers from SUDOC (for books only) are injected into the Alma CZ on the basis of ISBN correspondence. 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.

Streamlining exchanges between the national KB Bacon and the Ex Libris KBs

L'Abes, already mentioned, manages a knowledge base for the French-language resources (Bacon) and, more broadly, the resources sold for the French market, by retrieving metadata from French publishers or publishers operating on the French market. The packages are more accurate than the equivalent packages retrieved by Ex Libris (when these equivalent packages exist, of course).

Since the origin, Ex Libris retrieves the packages on Bacon, but the work is done in an irregular way, which creates very important gaps between the state of a resource on Bacon and the state of the same resource on the Alma CZ or on the SFX KB.

Our association has started to work with the Content team to understand why updating the Bacon packages takes a long time and how to fix that. In the end, we identified two ways of streamlining exchanges with Bacon. One of these will be to raise the alert levels that trigger a human control operation on the files (a threshold of 20% of titles created or modified, or 15% of titles deleted, compared with the previous version of a file, triggers suspension of the automatic update for manual control. This threshold will be raised to 50%).

Outlooks for the coming year

Our association has several work tracks :

- Extend the Alma/Sudoc synchronization to the e-serials (the workflow functions only for the ebooks, due to a limitation imposed by Ex Libris)
- Study the possibility of using Abes records instead of publisher records for French-languages resources in the Alma CZ. At this point, Ex Libris has only added the PPN identifier (the identifier of the records in Sudoc) for correct functioning of the synchronization workflow detailed above. Its presence allows the French institutions to retrieve the corresponding Sudoc record, but its presence is useless for the librarians from Belgium or Switzerland. Their interest would be to have Sudoc records directly in the Alma CZ. We would therefore like Ex Libris to examine this question, at least for certain resources ([an Idea Exchange suggest created on this topic](#) has been recently rejected by Ex Libris)

- Create a task force on Alma Analytics. Few years ago, a similar initiative was launched but failed. The aim then was to create common reports in response to national surveys. The aim now is to create a pool of skills to share complex queries that will be useful to everyone, including non-specialists.
- Continue to work on interface translation : Ex Libris is planning to share its term file with us, which should enable us to go even further on this subject.

On behalf of the ACEF user group

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