

ITALIAN EX LIBRIS USERS ASSOCIATION – ITALE

National and Regional User Group Meeting 2025

Siena, September 14th, 2025

ITALE proposal of topics for discussion

1. NDE UX managed release

In Italy, seven institutions joint the NDE UX managed release in May 2025.

Contrary to its first announcements, Ex Libris didn't provide a Basecamp or a dedicated tool open to all testers. This decision has forced participants to open single institution cases and has undermined the possibility of sharing globally views and proposals for the enhancement of the platform.

ITALE has tried to overcome this hurdle by establishing an internal working group with members from all the Italian testing institutions, but this set up is not enough to get a global prospective.

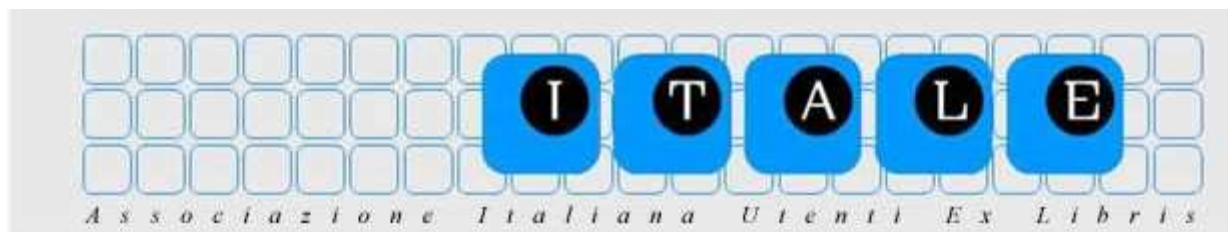
Moreover, the promised dedicated care on dealing with cases didn't actually take place: cases were hastily closed without a proper debate and with requests to post proposals for enhancement on Idea Exchange. Since only a few institutions worldwide joint the managed release, posted ideas cannot possibly gain enough momentum to get the developers' attention. In light of these challenges, we strongly urge Ex Libris to reconsider its approach and to implement more effective tools for collaboration and feedback before the general release of NDE UX in November 2025. A shared space for discussion is essential to ensure that the platform evolves in line with the real needs of its users.

We also hope that future implementation projects will once again make use of collaborative tools such as Basecamp, which proved to be extremely valuable in previous experiences like MixPanel and the Itale Primo VE project. These platforms fostered meaningful exchanges and collective problem-solving, setting a standard that should not be abandoned.

2. Products' compliance with UNIMARC standard

Most of the Italian institutions use UNIMARC as their cataloguing format. Ex Libris declares that Alma is a multi-format library solution, supporting MARC21, UNIMARC, KORMARC, CNMARC, Dublin Core etc.

However, often new enhancements are provided just for MARC21: to get the specifications for the other formats, institutions and national groups need to get to work and develop detailed proposals (like with the UNIMARC and Primo VE project, a collaboration between ITALE and ACEF) or to post requests for enhancement on Idea Exchange. However, ideas for small communities often go unnoticed. This is the case of the Journal categories, which are automatically created via a job only for MARC21 records, with an open idea for the extension



to UNIMARC left in a limbo since 2021 and NERS/CERV reiterated proposals remaining without the needed votes to be developed. Another example is the conversion from Dublin core, which needs to go through MARC21 first (with a loss of precious information) before coming to UNIMARC, due to the lack in Alma of a conversion table Dublin core-UNIMARC. We wish Ex Libris to schedule UNIMARC (or another formats) enhancements as soon as the MARC21 enhancements are released.

3. Multilingual compliance

Since last IGeLU, ITALE and Ex Libris set up an agreement for the revision of Italian translations to be posted in Alma, Leganto and Primo VE. Therefore, the Italian community is putting a big effort for the improvement of Ex Libris products.

However, we still encounter hurdles to have the proper recognition of the peculiarities of local languages.

For example, in the new NDE UX the main menu links labels can't wrap in more than one line, taking more space. The result is that with languages which use long words, such as Italian or German, less links appears than in Primo VE, where the labels could wrap in more than one line.

We wish Ex Libris, which is attentive to diversity, equity and inclusion issues, to put more consideration to languages other than English.