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Public Services Work Team Essence Notes

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Public Services Work Team 05/24/16 Essence Notes

This meeting was set aside to review and share information learned about Alma from the recent GUGM Conference. Fred opened the meeting by stating that Alma has its own vocabulary that we will need to become familiar with and that we go down the “Happy Path” and eventually endure the “Valley of Despair.”

Then Jeff gave a Primo demo, stating that the search string “01G*” will bring up all the records in the database. And when we set the Primo “scope” box to Georgia Southern, we can see that there are currently 673,000 records loaded. There will not be a separate universal catalog, so to see the statewide holdings we just need to change the scope box to “USG.” And the search options on the left side of the search page are called “facets” in Primo as opposed to limiters in GIL and these can be customized at both the consortia and institutional level.

Primo has many of the same features of GIL, but one difference is that instead of the main search results page being cluttered with records for different editions of the same item, there is usually one record with a “view different versions” link that when clicked on will display all the records for different editions and formats. Primo also has a “Policy” section in item records with the description “Loanable,” so hopefully that will make interlibrary loan requests easier. And Alma has a “Community Zone” which includes records from all Alma institutions and that should make it easier and less time consuming to load new records and also make clean-up and authentication easier too. It might also be possible to exclude non-obtainable items like e-books and DDAs from other institutions in “USG” scope results, but hopefully Special Collections materials could still be included.

In addition Fred said that Alma most likely will work better with Banner than GIL and that there was some kind of Alma add-on for Illiad. And Jeff said there would probably be a single sign-in, so a patron PIN should not be needed. 3rd party apps can be added to enable features like stack maps and texting. In the item records there is a “Virtual Browse” section that displays the cover for items with the next closest call numbers, so it would include e-books and ARC items in addition to items from the stacks. Finally, someone noted that the Primo mobile display screen did not show the “scope” box unless the device was held sideways or in landscape view, so that is something that probably will need to be worked on.

Alma has its own vocabulary. For instance, the setting at the top of the catalog page for which library’s holdings you are searching is called the scope, but the limiters are called facets.

Deciding on the facets will begin with Ex Libris which will list all possible. Then the OPAC committee will select from that list possible facets for use by all USG libraries. Then the individual libraries will select the ones for use at their institutions.

If the scope is changed to USG, a user will see the book holdings of other libraries in the USG. Care will be taken to make sure electronic copies not available for use by non-affiliated users will not show in these searches.

It appears that making a GIL Express request will be easy and intuitive for the patrons. As of now, Ex Libris hasn’t completed work on a way for the patrons to place the requests directly to the lending library, but that is expected soon. Also, as of now the leveling or randomizing of the libraries selected for loan hasn’t been completed. After a little more work the three Vanguard libraries will be enabled to try out the GE package.

Clement noted that Ex Libris didn't develop Voyager but bought it, so this project is more like combining products rather than updating a product.

The new catalog will allow for ISBN/ISSN searches, something which come up often at the public service desks.

The University of Georgia and Georgia Tech are now both retrieving books from the shelves and holding them for patrons.

.The default scope for the catalog will be our holdings.