



GOTCHA!

The Roadblocks Vanderbilt Faced Migrating to Alma/Primo VE

Jamen McGranahan
Vanderbilt University

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DATA ALL AROUND US

Good afternoon and welcome to today's session on our migration experience and the roadblocks we faced. My name is Jamen McGranahan and I am the Associate Director of Library Technology & Digital Services at Vanderbilt University.

Role & Responsibilities

- ▶ Previous Systems:
 - ▶ Circulation, Acquisitions, Serials system = SirsiDynix Symphony
 - ▶ Discovery = Primo Classic
 - ▶ OpenURL, Eresources = SFX, Verde
- ▶ Part of Role/Responsibilities:
 - ▶ Insure forms were submitted on time
 - ▶ Configuration Form, Migration Form, Field Mapping Form, P2E Form, Verde Migration Form, SFX Migration Form
 - ▶ Extract the data in the correct format & submit to Ex Libris

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Just to give you a little background of where we came from and my role during this transition. We had a mixture of systems that had we meshed together to try to provide quality service to our patrons. But by the time we got to this point, it had become a nightmare trying to keep each of these systems operational and talking to each other.

Our Circulation, Acquisitions, and Serials systems all relied upon the SirsiDynix Symphony system, something we had been using for over 20 years. This was running on 2 virtual servers managed by our IT department at Vanderbilt.

Our Discovery platform was the Primo Classic system which we had been using since its inception. At the time of our migration, we were using the cloud-based version of Primo Classic.

And our OpenURL and Eresources systems were SFX & Verde, running on stand-alone servers which we managed and maintained.

Now my role during this process was to insure the various forms Ex Libris required were submitted in a timely fashion and then when we got to the data extraction point, I was responsible for running the various scripts to extract the data and FTP that information to Ex Libris.

Timeline

- ▶ 2016-11-21: ILS RFP Committee formed
- ▶ 2017-02 through 2017-03: Demos from vendors
- ▶ 2017-05: Official recommendation sent to Provost to choose Ex Libris
- ▶ 2017-10: Official announcement that Ex Libris had been chosen and contract signed
- ▶ 2017-11: Implementation Team formed and begins meeting
- ▶ 2018-01-23: Official Kick-Off with Ex Libris
- ▶ 2018-07-23: Go Live

This was our timeline during this whole process. We started in the fall of 2016, drafting and submitting RFP's to various vendors. We received 4 responses, all of which we invited for demos in February and March of 2017. After a couple of months of discussions and gathering responses from staff, an official recommendation to select Ex Libris as our vendor was submitted to the Provost in May 2017. After months of contract negotiations with Ex Libris, in October of 2017, it was officially announced that we had chosen Ex Libris and a contract had been signed. In November of 2017, the Implementation Team was formed and began meeting, starting work on the Configuration form. And in January 2018, we had the official Kick Off with Ex Libris. On July 23, 2018, we went live with Alma/Primo VE. Shew



Time Zone on the Migration form would not validate, no matter what was put there.

Terminology - same terms in the two systems mean different things:

Library

Location

Material type/Item type

Collection

Self-checks - took a couple of weeks to get this configured and set up correctly, using Stunnel

Major issues

- ▶ Invoices
- ▶ Invoices: Pro-rated
- ▶ Print-to-Electronic (P2E)
- ▶ Circulation Transactions
- ▶ Missing Items
- ▶ Enumeration
- ▶ Technical Migration
- ▶ Notices
- ▶ Multiple .001's
- ▶ UTF-8

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- Loading all invoices from previous years turned out to be problematic. Our script that ran on old servers did not correctly include the matching orderline key from Symphony, so titles/orders were not linked correctly to the invoices.

* solution: had to modify the script to check for and add the orderline key from Symphony

* problem - could not test this solution before hand - Ex Libris would not allow us to reload invoices to verify this worked correctly

- secondary solution - Ex Libris created a second system for us to load all of our invoice, fund, order data to test these scripts
- Invoices that were to have the shipping charges pro-rated across all funds did not load correctly. These had to be removed and reloaded. This was important for historical Fund expenditure information.
- We had a complete year of invoices missing – 2017. To correct this, I pulled the invoices from 2017 from the Symphony server and Ex Libris loaded them into Alma.
- - Print-2-Electronic (P2E) - WEBACCESS location in old Symphony + INTERNET Library (or other Library) = was supposed to migrate to all electronic; however, we still have 979 titles that have a physical location of INTERNET

- - circulation transactions encountered an issue during migration. As a result, some items were not discharged and some items were showing up twice in a user's record.
- --> cause: not 100% positive, but believe it was an issue of the offline-circulation + a mixture of the Library/Locations
- --> Resolution: Ex Libris did help with this to some degree, but we had many left that had to be manually searched, corrected, modified. This took many man hours to complete.

- - about 2400 bibliographic/holdings/44K item records, mainly serials, did not migrate
- --> cause: the script ran on the old system would split apart holdings if there were more than 100 items attached to a record, causing multiple MARC records for the same bibliographic record. When loaded into Alma, it only loaded the last MARC record it saw, plus the corresponding items.
- --> Resolution was to manually load these via API since we knew what MMSID they belonged to.

- - Enumeration - many of our items have their enumeration displaying in the formerly called "Alternative Call Number" (now "Item Call Number") field. This causes confusion with our patrons since they are not readily visible in the results.
- --> cause: the scripts loaded from Symphony loaded the item call numbers in this alternative field since it was not able to put it in the call number field of the item record.
- --> resolution: this has not been resolved and there is actually a support service ticket with Ex Libris who believes they should be able to correct this. It involves over a million records.

- - Items with process type of "Technical Migration"
- --> cause: we believe the reason this happened was because at the time of implementation, there were some Libraries + Locations that were not mapped correctly in our Migration file
- --> Resolution: manual process, working through them on a case-by-case basis. Some we were able to group together and withdraw, but there are about 4,000 left

- Upon Implementation, many of our Notices were enabled. Little did we know what kind of confusion and outrage we would get for the number of notices Alma generated. As a result, we disabled every notice and have gradually, one by one, enabled them after they have been thoroughly vetted.

- Symphony allowed for multiple 001 fields. This became very problematic with the load since Alma looks for the matching information in the 001, which should have been the catalog key. However, we also had OCLC numbers in this field as well as what was called the flex key. This was discovered about a week before Go-Live so we scrambled to come up with a file of records that had multiple 001s and provide the correct matching. We sent this to Ex Libris and their migration team was able to reload most of this information.

- During the extract process on the Symphony system, some records would not convert to

UTF-8 and thereby were not included in the loads. These had to be manually modified and loaded.

Some Other Implementation Issues

- ▶ Pseudo patrons
- ▶ Suppressed records
- ▶ Local Authorities
- ▶ Vendors
- ▶ Barcodes duplicated
- ▶ 3rd Party Integrations
- ▶ Requests
- ▶ Check numbers

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* We had many pseudo patrons in our old system that our staff used for things such as checking items out to their work desk or area. We are still working through these and trying to transform our processes to use Work Orders.

* With Symphony, we did not remove records when they were withdrawn - we changed their location and had them shadowed from the public catalog. We migrated all of these records and at the time of implementation, over 65,000 records did not get suppressed from display like they were supposed to. Ex Libris corrected this by running a script on their end.

* Our local authority records were not included as a part of the extract file because this was not a part of the Implementation process. This had to be addressed after implementation.

- Vendors were loaded once but Ex Libris would not reload these - we had to do it ourselves; completed using API tools
- We noticed that when our records were reloaded – the ones with item information in the 999 field – if the profile was not set correctly, the barcodes would be duplicated since they were already in the system. What we were trying to do was load the missing items, but Ex Libris informed us there was no way to do this. Eventually we had to completely remove the record and then re-add them – if caught in time. However, there were many duplicate barcodes in the system that had to be manually corrected. This was done by running an Analytics report to find all of the items with duplicate barcodes

and then going to each record and manually removing one.

- We are still working through our 3rd party integrations. Some are running correctly, like Connexion; others have taken more time, like ILLiad.
- Before Implementation, we had allowed guests to submit requests from our Special Collections and Annex since they had to be used in Special Collections. We discovered during Implementation, however, that this was not possible in Primo VE – users had to have records in Alma, had to sign in, and then they could submit the form.
- We learned about a month before Go Live that our recorded check numbers in our invoices were not being loaded into Alma. Ex Libris provided a new mapping form that allowed this data to be captured and loaded correctly.

Frustrations

- ▶ Spreadsheet Macros / Ex Libris
- ▶ Verde & admin data
- ▶ Funds
- ▶ FTP access / SFX/Verde servers
- ▶ Printing
- ▶ Premium Sandbox access
- ▶ Librarians' sentiments

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- Macros used in spreadsheets provided by Ex Libris often would not allow editing of the sheets. We could only add data in certain parts of the sheets, but couldn't remove rows (i.e., we make a mistake and want to remove a row)
 - In addition to this, during the process we needed to validate the spreadsheet, which was done each time the forms were submitted. However, in the middle of the process, Ex Libris moved this into Alma and it reported many more errors than was being reported. This had to be corrected before submission, even though we thought it was already corrected.
- Verde: needed an export of local admin data
- Mapping funds - after 20 years of being on the same system, fields were manipulated to fit our needs; this did not translate well to Alma
- Getting FTP access for our local SFX & Verde servers was a challenge. One we finally were able to get to work; the other Ex Libris had to do.
- Configuring printing - since Alma has no direct printing, this was a challenge. Working with our IT department, we were able to configure our network printers to accept print commands from Alma, but it did take quite a bit of work and testing.
- Delay in getting our Premium Sandbox after Go Live - received a month after going live
- Some staff are still wishing we could return to our old system. Normal - 20+ years invested in that system, with our custom policies/procedures/methods/codes.

What Would I Do Differently?

- ▶ More testing of the data
- ▶ Specifically build into contract multiple loads possible

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- I would want a checklist of ALL of the various data elements to be verified were correct.
- This may not be possible, but I would want to build into the contract with Ex Libris that during the testing phase, we be allowed to load the data as many times as needed.

Lessons Learned

- ▶ Be flexible
- ▶ Realize it takes time
- ▶ Expect the unexpected

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- Be flexible – there are often more than one way to solve a problem; work with Ex Libris to find the best possible solution
- Realize it takes time – you are going to have to be patient. Often Ex Libris is not able to provide an immediate answer, but they will do the best they can.
- Expect the unexpected – things are going to go wrong; you need to accept that. I made mistakes along the way; Ex Libris along the way; we have bad data that causes problems; scripts on both sides did not always work correctly..... so expect the unexpected – take what you have and go with it.

QUESTIONS?

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