

## SUNY Prepares for ALEPH

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On October 26, 1999 SUNY announced the selection of Ex Libris (and their ALEPH500 software) as the recommended SUNYConnect LMS vendor. Since that time various planning and preparatory activities have been underway. As always these activities involve groups of SUNY colleagues working together. The SUNY library directors on April 24, 1998 provided a strong impetus for this complex project when they recommended that all SUNY libraries should strive to implement the same library management system.



See

<http://olis.sysadm.suny.edu/projects/virtlib/background/scoldres.htm> to review the library directors' resolution.

### Contract

Negotiations between SUNY and Ex Libris are well underway. Face to face meetings and conference calls have been conducted with the SUNY Contract Team and Ex Libris staffers (including Carl Grant, President of Ex Libris USA). The SUNY team is comprised of Mary Ann Corsetti (SUNY Contracts), Carey Hatch (SUNY/OLIS), Janet Potter (Oneonta), and Maureen Zajkowski (SUNY/OLIS). An advisory group made up of Meredith Butler (Albany), Patrick Callahan (Purchase), Mark Ludwig (Buffalo), Larry Randall (SUNY/OLIS), Judy Sikora (Genesee), Tamm Sissac (New Paltz), Mark Smith (Alfred Ceramics) provided useful input into the contract planning process. While significant progress on a SUNY/Ex Libris contract has been made, it should be remembered that additional steps are involved in this process. Any agreement must also be approved by SUNY System Administration and by New York State.

### Planning Team

The SUNYConnect LMS Planning Team has been charged to provide input to the [SUNYConnect Advisory Council](#) on the LMS implementation. Included in this planning are provisions for program participation, criteria for campus readiness, processes for selecting hub sites and establishing implementation schedules. Numerous documents and surveys are being developed to garner information from individual SUNY libraries. S.A.C. has suggested the following timeline:

January 2000 - hardware RFP issued

January 2000 - trial run of LMS migration survey

January 2000 - technical discussions with Ex Libris

Feb/Mar 2000 - contract review by NYS

Mar/Apr 2000 - hub site RFP

June 2000 - commence software testing

The members of the Planning Team are Larry Randall, Chair (SUNY/OLIS) Bill Drew (Morrisville), Barbara Liesenbein (Dutchess), Raj Madan (Brockport), Doug Michael (Cayuga), Andy Perry (Binghamton), Steve Roberts (Buffalo), Natalie Sturr (Oswego), Laurie Thompson (HSC Syracuse), Ted Phelps (SUNYNet, advisory), Frances Garrido (Farmingdale, COA representative, advisory)

### **Regional Meetings**

Thanks to our wayfaring Project Manager, Maureen Zajkowski and members of the SUNY community for their participation in regional meetings around New York State. During a whirlwind of December, Maureen and other individuals involved in the selection of Ex Libris and the ALEPH500 software conducted informational gatherings in Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo, Huntington, Syracuse and White Plains. The OLIS Web site provides access to the [meetings' presentation materials](#). Ex Libris will conduct demonstrations of the ALEPH500 software during Spring 2000.



SUNY's selection of Ex Libris is generating interest around the library world. Maureen traveled to Illinois to discuss the selection with an academic library consortium there (ILCSO - Illinois Library Computer Systems Organization). The journal [Integrated Library System Reports \(ILSR\)](#) in their November issue characterized the SLAM Web site as the "Best of the IOLS Web... A great overview of what one library system did to work together to select a system."

Information on the selection has appeared in other library journals including *Library Hotline* (November 9, 1999; Vol. XXVIII, No. 44) and *American Libraries* (January 2000; Vol.31, No.1).

### **Campus Preparation**

Some decisions regarding a SUNY library's implementation of ALEPH500 require finalizing the contract and implementation plans (via S.A.C.). Yet there are a variety of tasks that an individual library can undertake in preparation. The [SUNYConnect Financial Plan](#) (in its current format) is available for review. Specific costs (and benefits) involved in utilizing the SUNYConnect LMS can be found in this document.

From a more technical standpoint, issues involving local networking and computing infrastructure should be analyzed. Whatever improvements to local networking capabilities that a library can see to fruition will likely benefit LMS performance in the future. Likewise, certain computing components of an ALEPH500 implementation are known. These involve the use of internet browsers as the primary OPAC device and computers utilizing Windows as the primary tool for library staff functions. Training in

the use of ALEPH500 will be provided to campus trainers/librarians. Additional training will be a campus responsibility. [Additional information](#) regarding appropriate preparations for the LMS implementation is available.



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