



Thoughts on Things **SUNYConnect**

Cover Story

[SUNYLA 2002](#)

Features

[CIT](#)

[NYSLAA Annual Conference](#)

[Thoughts on Things SUNYConnect](#)

[Additional SUNYConnect Updates](#)

[How to Contact Us](#)

[Linkable Links](#)

[Photo Gallery](#)

[Link to the SUNYConnect Committees List](#)

SUNYConnect...Libraries Wherever You Are is gaining in maturity. The list of SUNYConnect electronic resources is growing. The number of SUNY libraries using the SUNYConnect LMS (ALEPH500) is increasing.

When the SUNY Council of Library Directors [resolved that as many SUNY libraries as possible should use the same type of library management system](#) and that efforts at SUNY-wide purchasing and/or licensing of electronic library resources should be increased they knew that this offered challenges as well as opportunities. With a program of this sort within SUNY there is always going to be a balancing act between campus autonomy and striving towards the benefits of shared goals.

Both of these are achievable. Both are worthy objectives. But as we all learned early on in childhood, if you want to play together you have to agree to some rules.

The goal regarding SUNYConnect electronic resources is to cost effectively acquire shared access to databases that fulfill as many of the scholarly and research needs at the many varied SUNY institutions as possible. Ideally this frees up enough resources to allow an individual campus to invest in its more specialized database needs. The most recent addition that the SUNYConnect campuses have gained is access to the business database Investext Plus. Your representative on [SLiCAT](#) is your conduit for expressing your library's needs in regards to SUNY-wide access to electronic resources.

We've already seen the benefits derived from multiple campuses using the same library management system. SUNY is making its presence known in the greater, international community of ALEPH users/Ex Libris customers.

The benefits of a shared library system are only going to increase over time. The early ALEPH implementers are nearly unanimous in their opinions regarding the great potential for the Ex Libris software both for the present and into the future. Still it is unlikely that any system, even ALEPH, can fulfill every need for every SUNY library. As in most things in life - it is what you make of it.

For all that is made of the SUNY-wide aspects of SUNYConnect and the SUNYConnect LMS, one of the most important aspects of all of this is the individual LMS implementation at the individual SUNY library. The OLIS can establish baseline configurations, Ex Libris can offer assistance, your SUNY colleagues will provide guidance, information, solutions and war stories, but ultimately it is your library system at your library. Those that recognize this reach the greatest success.

"Aleph is a complex system with great capabilities. The time required to understand the basic concepts, architecture and processes of the system is significant. The OLIS will be



[Link to Ex Libris USA Web Site](#)

providing SUNY specific training sessions and mentoring activities, guidance on implementation processes, and standard Aleph configuration templates to help streamline migration activities that have general applicability across campuses. However, there is still considerable work that must be done at the campus level given the nature of the Aleph system and decisions that can only be made by the implementing sites," *SUNYConnect* LMS Project Manager Maureen Zajkowski in a posting to SUNYLA-1. This is the dichotomy we face. Doing what is necessary to get the benefits of "playing" together while retaining ownership in a way that is beneficial to the individual library and to SUNY as a whole.



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Feature

[CIT](#)



Feature

[NYSLAA Annual Conference](#)

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Feature

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