

Aleph Working Group: Kickoff Meeting November 15, 2005, 10:00-11:30 am Café de Grasta

Attending: Phil Andrzejewski, Aaron Bales, Pascal Calarco (recorder & leader), Sue Dietl, Tom Hanstra, Mandy Havert, Joe Holtermann, Natasha Lyandres, Kitty Marschall, Mary McKeown?, Pam Nicholas

I. Reforming Aleph Working Group (45 mins.)

1. Scope & Purpose: Needs

- Forum to discuss Aleph enhancements and strategic developments for MALC
- Working Group to review and vet service pack rep changes
- Forum to discuss and share Aleph best practices/standards/conventions that don't fit into one of the other Working Groups, or cut across functional areas

2. Membership: Needs

- A representative from each of the major functional areas, plus at least one person to represent MALC institutions
- Acquisitions
- Authorities & Cataloging
- Circulation / Course Reserves
- ND Branches
- Serials
- Systems
- Web OPAC
- Representatives from functional areas should be able to speak for their area MALC-wide; they should be informed what standard of practice is across all four MALC institutions; they are the functional experts
- The above have come from ND in the past, but that is not to say a person from the Colleges couldn't serve as functional expert in one of the above areas
- It would be good to have a rotating membership, and introduce new people on the group, to prevent burnout, encourage dynamism and energy, and promote/grow leadership across the organizations
- "A technology project team is too big when they can eat more than two pizzas." (roughly 8 people) – Werner Vogels, Amazon.com Chief Technology Officer

3. Existing charge

- "The Working Group is to provide near term direction for the management and the operation of the ALEPH system in the MALC libraries. This will include reviewing problems and suggestions for development; setting priorities for what can and should be done; communicating to the working group from the rest of the Libraries and again from the working group to the Libraries about the problems, priorities and reasons underlying decisions made."

4. Discussion:

- Mandy first briefly discussed the Aleph 16 training evaluation
- Aleph Working Group has taken a fairly broad view in the past; it has consisted primarily of department heads

- All MALC libraries should have a representative on AWG; attend as they are able
- Sue: Circulation may be better served by a combination of Judy and Clara, as they are closer to the work now; need to separate out Circulation and Reserves, as these are distinct
- We should split out Acquisitions and Serials areas, as we have had a good deal of problems with serial publication patterns and these require expertise to work with
- Aleph Working Group should be open for anyone interested to attend
- We will initially shoot for monthly meetings; we can revisit and review after a few months
- We need clarification on whether this group is empowered to make decisions, or if we only make recommendations that are forwarded on to LEC/MALC Directors
- Pascal: I think precedent has been set with Team Upgrade making the decision to postpone launch date for Aleph 16, and think that LEC would be comfortable with this body making decisions, where major resource issues (ie. people and money) were not involved; this has been a culture change in administration
- There is a tension between annual upgrades vs. every 2-3 versions; we don't currently have the personnel to do annual Aleph upgrades and support the other products Library Systems has been responsible for
- AWG and LSD can continue to investigate what can be decentralized out
- Pascal: suggest we think about "elect" positions for each of the module areas; perhaps start out with three year terms, with the elect positions coming on after the first year; this is an opportunity to promote upcoming leaders within MALC, also ensure that incumbents are not "sentenced to life" on the AWG, and will promote knowledge transfer throughout staff

II. Service Pack Review and Sign-off Process (30 mins.)

- Service packs for Aleph now being released generally twice per month, on Sundays
- What frequency do we want for MALC to apply, review, and move rep changes to production?
- How do people feel about the workload for testing and vetting rep changes?

Suggestions on how to manage this?

- Currently at 1077 on lib5; 1358 available on Doc Portal; see spreadsheet Discussion:
- Download and implement whatever is available every two months with a one week review period
- If we schedule this ahead of time, everyone will know when they need to work on testing, and when Aleph will be unavailable in production when we implement
- 3-5pm Fridays were suggested as optimal, implement on the second Friday of the month

III. Suggestions from Screen Design Committee on Item Request Functions (15 mins.)

- See handout; future discussion item if we do not get to this Discussion:
- We did not get to address this topic; tabled for next meeting

Outcomes and Action Items:

- All representatives should let Pascal know if they want to substitute someone for themselves on the Working Group
- LSD will work on specifics for scheduling Service Pack testing and installation Since this meeting, the following outcomes:
- Joe Holtermann asked Pam Nicholas to be the first representative for Acquisitions & Serials issues

outside of patterns

- Natasha Lyandres asked Lisa Steinbarger to be the first representative for Serial Pattern issues
- Sue Deitl will represent Circulation, and will consult with Judy and Clara/Marcy as appropriate
- Library Systems has set up the following schedule for Aleph Service Pack testing and application:
- Download the service pack that is available on the last Wednesday of each month, implement in test by the Friday (ie. 3 days)
- Review begins on the Friday or Monday, depending on availability, continuing through one full week, completing on the Tuesday of the second week
- All representatives should test and certify rep changes by this Tuesday
- Library Systems will begin to implement service pack table changes only on production server once review begins, naming the files with an extension of the service pack, ie. “.sp1371”
- When we implement the service pack on lib5 on the second Thursday, we will archive current versions of the files on lib5, and then rename the new files so they don't have the “.sp1371” extension

Pascal will add these dates to all LSD and AWG members in [CorporateTime](#) , and also publish this as a spreadsheet for those who don't have CT (non ND MALCs) 12/09/2005 Pvc

-- [RobinMalott](#) - 07 Jan 2008

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