

Add-ons to ALMA ILS

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Background: on August 2016 ALMA a cloud-based ILS (Integrative library system) replaced the Aleph system used for the last 30 year. old. The implementation of the new system requires the modification of tools and interfaces.

The purpose of the project is to support the implementation of ALMA by modifying interfaces to preserve current capabilities and expanding the varieties of services supplied by the library to its patrons.

The project included the analysis of various users' information needs and define the needed interface to ALMA. The main concern was to decide between a new form and code, or an intermediate code layer between the old interface used on Aleph to ALMA.

The final product is a procedure that allows a decision between the design of a new responsive form (automatically adapt to the screen size) and code based on API or the modification of an old form making it responsive and adapting the code to API. At the end of this process the "Appeal" form was modified as a test case.

Project contribution to the library is the return of capabilities formally automatic but now manual, it will also allow for simple expanding of services using the same process.

Project contribution to information management is bringing up the debate of new vs. modify to answer information needs. Management is to decide how to go forward and deciding the use of time, cost and labor. A new project by nature is expensive and risky because of development and QA, while on the other hand modifying an old product means spending time on reverse engineering: figuring out the old code, extracting non relevant variables and inserting new ones to adapt the old to the new.

Conclusions and recommendations: this project calls for an extensive assessment of the users needs along with learning the new system capabilities taking into consideration the old tools capabilities and use, in order find a suitable solution for the current and future needs.