ALEPH System Seminar
27 May-2 June 1992
Tel Aviv

A Letter from Hungary:

Ex Libris Ltd, continuing its successful tradition, organized a System Seminar in Tel Aviv, 27 May to 2 June 1992.

The seminar demonstrated the rapid development and great value of the ALEPH system and offered valuable information on a number of important matters:

- first, the participants had the opportunity to learn a number of technical details on matters such as node management, the handling of global tables etc.
- they got also valuable information on new developments in the field of working with links (thesaurus applications), introducing SDI services, managing images and establishing union catalogs.
- they were informed of the most important elements of the future development program.

A great advantage of the event was, that it brought together users from a number of countries, working in different environments, serving different types of clients. Contacts could be thus developed for the future exchange of experience, and real, practical co-operation between libraries having either similar or complementary responsibilities in their countries.

Some participants contributed actively also as lecturers, communicating the results of their own development efforts.

The seminar was very well organized, everything ran smoothly. Accommodation was comfortable and we enjoyed the beauty of the sea; the reception at the home of Azriel Morag was highly appreciated by all. The lectures were concise, interesting, well illustrated, and in spite of the difficulty of the subject, quite easy to follow.

We should not forget the cultural aspect of this gathering either; the excursion to Jerusalem will remain in our memory for a long time.

The organizers and lecturers of the seminar merit certainly our thanks and congratulations for their excellent work. We are looking forward to participating in the next similar seminar.

Mr. Pal Vasarhelyi
Library Director,
Technical University of Budapest.

Who's Who at the ALEPH System Seminar....

Readers of this newsletter who were not at the ALEPH System Seminar might be interested in a list of participants. Following is a list of institutions, and the names of the participants from that institution. The list is arranged by country. The names of the lecturers appear at the end of the list.

DENMARK

THE DANISH NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCIENCE AND MEDICINE
Ms. Ingbritt Butina

DANISH BUSINESS SCHOOL LIBRARY IN AARHUS,
Mr. Per Steen Hansen

THE NATIONAL TECHNOLOGICAL LIBRARY OF DENMARK
Ms. Inger Høy,
Ms. Ann Pedersen,
Mr. Søren Find

DATAKONCEPT AS,
Mr. Finn Staatsgaard,
Mr. Lars Barasinski

HUNGARY

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF BUDAPEST
Mr. Pal Vasarhelyi,
Ms. Róza Frank,
Mr. Laszlo Berencei,
Mr. Zsolt Sandor

IBR GENERAL LTD. CO.,
Mr. Agoston Nemeth

CENTRAL LIBRARY OF THE SEMMELWEIS UNIVERSI-
T Y O F M E D I C I N E
Ms. Ildikó Rédei
Ms. Judit Szabo-Szavay

I T A L Y

ATLANTIS S.R.L.
Ing. Luciano Galeotti,
Mr. Daniele Nottegar

UNIVERSITY GENOVA -
C.I.S.I
Dott.ssa Alessandra
Bezzi
Mr. Paolo Marino

SCUOLA NORMALA SUPERIORE
Dott.ssa Sandra Di Majo

PONTIFICIA SALESIANA UNIVERSITY'
Biblioteca Centrale,
Rev.Do Giuseppe Tabarelli

PONTIFICIA UNIVERSITA' GREGORIANA
Mr. Marjan Rebernik
Mr. Dennis Simms

L U X E M B O U R G

EX LIBRIS S. A.
Ms. Catherine Holzem

S P A I N

CONSEJO SUPERIOR DE
INVESTIGACIONES CIENTIFICAS
Ms. Carmen Pérez,
Ms. Agnès Ponsati,
Mr. Aurelio Herrero

INSTITUT D'ESTUDIS
ILERDENC,
Ms. Emilia Capell Garriga

LABORATORIOS DR. ESTEVE S.A.
Ms. Isabel Blanch
Mr. Manuel Cadeal

SWITZERLAND

SANDOS PHARMA AG
Mr. Martin Herren

CERN (AS-SI)
Mr. Mogens Sandfaer
Ms. Maja Gracco

U. S. A.

ANNENBERG RESEARCH INSTITUTE
Ms. Aviva Astrinsky

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
Central Library
Mr. Amnon Zipin

INDEX OF CHRISTIAN ART,
Princeton University
Ms. Lois Drewer

JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF AMERICA
Ms. Naomi Steinberger

I S R A E L

TECHNION,
Central Library
Mr. David Ben-Haim

HAIFA UNIVERSITY
Ms. Aviva Shichor

TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY
Library of Life Sciences
Ms. Dorit Mandel

HEBREW UNIVERSITY
Ms. Janet Lefkovitz

Lecturers at the ALEPH System Seminar were:

From ALEPH YISSUM:
Mr. Nathan Lev,
Ms. Judy Levi,
Ms. Tami Kreindler,
Mr. Juppli Hartmann,
Mr. Aharon Rivlin
From CERN:
Mr. Mogens Sandfaer.

Mr. Ehud Arad of EX Libris spoke about the future developments of ALEPH.

The SBS Servizio Bibliotecario Senese

From 1972, and step by step, the University of Siena decided the automation of its libraries. At the beginning it was through a punching system. Then the CUCES (Data Elaboratorio Center of University) developed for its own use a library automation system (named Sibiblio), with cataloguing and a limited set of search functions.

In order to improve cataloguing and to implement office automation and OPAC functions, our University resolved, in 1991, to check the opportunity to change or to implement its own software.

After having verified several automation systems, during one year, it was decided to test ALEPH, and a commission of 12 libraries, representing all the Libraries, was nominated.

On the 13th April 1992 the University decided to choose ALEPH and to change the connecting network.

The SBS (Servizio Bibliotecario Senese)
is a Consortium of several Libraries with different legal systems. It is constituted by the University of Siena, the Public Library of Siena: "Biblioteca degli Intronati", the Italian Language and Culture University for Foreigners, the Library of a Musical Institution: "Accademia Musicale Chigiana" and the Library of Basilica dell'Osservanza. Other important Libraries are interested in taking part in the Consortium and so this will increase still further.

The University of Siena consists of eight Central Libraries for the Faculties of Pharmacy, Law, Arts and Humanities, Education, Medicine, Economics and Banking, Mathematics, Physical and Natural Science, and the School of Social Work. (The Faculty of Engineering will start in a short time).

Our group of Libraries owns about 1,000,000 volumes and 18,000 journals. In the old online catalogue are included 170,000 monographic records and 13,000 journal records that will be converted to ALEPH.

The Libraries are located in two towns: Arezzo and Siena; and they include 27 Centers (15 other centers will be connected subsequently).

At the present time, Digital Equipment is setting up 126 terminals in all the academic Libraries and in the other associated Libraries.

The connecting network should be ready at the beginning of October and we will start with traditional functions for our users: cataloguing and search. Later on we will implement the other functions.

For the future we are interested to exchange our bibliographic information with other Institutions using ALEPH.

Guido Badalamenti
Library Automation Manager
Servizio Bibliotecario Senese

Developing a System

Having a lot to tell about the development of a software system in general, and about ALEPH in particular, I will start here a series of articles about the history of the development of ALEPH, the thoughts behind the plan of development, the pressures from various directions, and about the process of development. As we have gone through several major development projects in the last four years, I will describe these examples for the better understanding of the process.

Several of the comments and stories were told in various meetings, such as our ALEPH Users' Meetings, and I will appreciate the patience of my older friends, for whom I can hardly find a new story.

The History ALEPH was developed twice. The first time was in the late seventies. Computers were very large, quite different from one another and very rigid, while development tools were extremely scarce.

ALEPH was developed for The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, by an in-house team, under the internal Management and System group. The system was specified by librarians who were assimilated in the development team and who served as both planners and checkers by simulating users.

The product was an integrated library system, which was widely accepted in the university and was even general enough to be leased by users abroad.

The Pressure
The use whets the ap-
petite, we say, and once the system was operational a multitude of users flocked in with suggestions of new ideas of developments and enhancements, which "if only done would be...". In development of Software, the developer is always located at the end of the corridor of all the great new ideas.

The pressure mounted and other universities in Israel expressed their interest in a similar system. As always, it took some time but finally the body of Planning and Financing (cleverly structured under one management) of Higher Education, devised a development process and allocated incentive funds for other universities to join the program. The idea was, and so achieved, to have "A National and University Integrated and Transparent Library Automation Network".

The Plan Israelis are better known for their ability to improvise rather than for their painstaking planning. The idea, thus, was to develop a system, which would not have to be planned in advance. Sounds either terribly stupid or unbelievably clever. In time the latter was proven.

The writing on the wall said: "We will devise a system which will deny the need of librarians — meaning you, to meet programers — meaning us; or, in other words, we will devise a system which is flexible enough and "language-wise, high-levelled enough", enabling users to define their needs and requests without the immediate help and supervision of computer experts.

The Execution The solution was "The Table", usually referred to as TABALEPH, but which is actually a set of tables, used to define the entire system, from the sorting order of various alphabets, to the specification of terminals, to the conversation languages, to the writing direction (left to right or right to left) in each field, to the record structure, to the index files, to the hierarchy of libraries within an institute to... etc., etc., etc.

An Example To end the first chapter in this series of articles, I will try to exemplify the above by describing a session in Turkey at the beginning of July.

During the discussions regarding the implementation of our system in Turkey, several issues were meticulously checked in order to avoid the repetition of an earlier failure with another system:
- Sorting of the Turkish Alphabet
- Using commands in Turkish such as Boolean operators
- Translation of screens, error messages, etc.

The answer was given by laying out the following tables:

ALPHA.DAT
This table has a column of the 256 ASCII values and columns, one each, for the various scripts used by ALEPH. These include Latin scripts, (German, Spanish, "Scandinavian", Italian, Hungarian etc., and will now include Turkish,) Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, and Cyrillic. For each ASCII position there is a definition of its sort order. In German, for example, the DOUBLE S is defined as SS and thus will always be sorted correctly. After receiving the desired sort order of the Turkish alphabet, the definition of this sort order in the ALPHA.DAT table took about 3 minutes.

TRANSLATE TABLE
The prospective user expressed concern that his users may include non-English speaking persons who may have a problem to specify "AND", "OR", "NOT" as well as other com-
mmands. The translate
table lists all the
"internal commands"
and any number of equ-
ivalents in any number
of languages. These
include now English,
German, Spanish, Dan-
ish, Italian, Hebrew,
Arabic, Greek, Rus-
sian, French, and Hun-
garian. Adding Turkish
will take a few min-
utes.

SCREENS AND HEADINGS
These tables include
all the Screens, Help
screens, System mes-
gages etc. There are
875 such screens and
about the same number
of messages. The
translation is done
using an editor. It
takes about 40 working
days to complete a
full set of screens
and messages for a
"new" language.

The next article in
this series will re-
late to our views as
to the role of the users
in the develop-
ment of ALEPH.

Azriel S. Morag,
Managing Director,
Ex Libris Ltd.

ALEPH Installation
Profile

CSIC'S Network of Li-
braries

Address: Unidad de
Coordinación de Bibli-
otecas
C/Jorge Manrique, 27
28006 Madrid, SPAIN
Tel: +34-91-5854443

Fax: +34-91-5644202
E-Mail:
Bib_pribic@bib.csic.es

Type of library sys-
System: 64 specialized
libraries working in a
unique network with 3
nodes: Madrid, Sevil-
la, Barcelona.
Subject areas: Biology
and Biomedicine,
Material Sciences,
Food Technology,
Agricultural Sciences,
Physics, Chemistry,
Humanities,
Information and
Documentation.

System librarians:
Carmen Pérez,
Teresa Malo de Molina
System managers:
Miguel Jiménez,
Pilar Martínez,
Ana Alberola,
Agnès Ponsati

Date of ALEPH instal-
lation: July 1986
Type of computer:
VAX 6300 (Madrid)
Vax 8500 (Sevilla)
MVAX 3300 (Barcelona)
No. of terminals: 90
No. of titles: 240,588
No. of journals: 34186
No. of patrons:
real: about 2,000
potential: about 7,500

Description of the instal-
lation:
The CSC's installa-
tion contains a union
catalogue of the 64
libraries. The network
is organized in 3
nodes: MAD, SEV, BAR.
The control node is
MAD and contains the
information produced
by the other two (SEV
and BAR). The control
node in our installa-
tion is connected to
IBERPAC and INTERNET
giving access to the
catalogue to any CSIC
researcher or other
user, in Spain or
abroad.

Interlibrary Loans
Module

For the last year
staff on the Nation-
tal Technology Li-
brary of Denmark have
been working on the
development of an ILL
module in ALEPH. This
is in short terms our
suggestions for the
ILL-module.
The ILL module manages
loans of different
material and photocopi-
es requested from
other libraries.

To create an order in
the module the user
has to enter:
- Bibliographic informa-
tion (bibliographic
records can be copied
from external data-
bases).
- Patron information
(using the borrowers
file).
- Supplier information
(a new file with ad-
dresses and informa-
tion about the librar-
ies).

In the OPAC module it
is possible to search
according to:
ISBN ISSN numbers,
Supplier code, Expect-
ed day of arrival,
Patron ID, Author,
Title, Journal Title,
etc.
During the ILL process the order can have different statuses: e.g. new, claimed, not available etc.

When the ordered material is received the circulation is managed by the circulation module.

The ILL module calculates any cost (in foreign currency) connected to the delivery in the local currency.

Annette Winkel-Schwarz
Library Director,
National Technology
Library of Denmark.

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**News in Brief**

Ex Libris Ltd. has moved to new offices. Our new telephone number is:
+972-3-490-430
Our new fax number is:
+972-3-647-1241

We look forward to hearing from you.

Mr. Yuval Weiss has joined the Ex Libris team as Sales manager. Yuval comes to us after 8 fruitful years at Digital Equipment (Israel) where he managed the Education and Science Department.

He has an academic background in Life Sciences in computers. He will be a valuable addition to the Ex Libris staff.

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**ALEPH Users should not forget the "Third ALEPH Users' Meeting" to be held in Pisa. The dates have now been finalized.**

The meeting will be held on Thursday and Friday, 29th and 30th October, 1992.

Users are invited to present reports of the present status of development of ALEPH at their institution.

For more details please contact:
Dott.ssa Sandra Di Majo
Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, Piazza dei Cavalieri 7 56126 PISA, Italy

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**New Developments in ALEPH**

The ALEPH development team has been working on a number of interesting development items.

A new utility has been developed in the SERIALS module. This utility allows for a rapid check-in of issues.

The librarian can access this journal check-in screen by system number, or by ISSN number. From this utility there is also a possibility of SCANNING any of the application's ACCESS files. (There is no need to exit to the OPAC, SCAN, for example, the title file, and then reaccess the SERIALS module!)

In addition, the user can key in an abbreviation of the heading (e.g. title) when entering the search text. For example, entering JOU ANC ARC is sufficient in order to access the check-in screen of "Journal of Ancient Middle Eastern Archaeology".

From this check-in screen it is possible to register the arrival of issues and to access any sub-function of the SERIALS module.

Watch this column for more development information!