The traditional library is changing in response to new technologies and user needs. There are cloud applications, digital media labs, makerspaces, wearable fitness devices and smartphones. Today's users want information anytime, anywhere. Understanding the dynamics and needs of users is essential. Libraries are focused on better meeting user needs and eliminating barriers that exist between users and the information they want. They are acquiring tools that will enhance services and keep their community of users engaged.

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VCU Libraries was looking for a management system that would bring integration, flexibility and interoperability. They discovered an effective tool that brings a unified management environment. This tool is Alma, a cloud-based next gen library management system that is transforming the way services are delivered. They are witnessing streamlined workflows and increased visibility and accessibility of resources for the user community.

**WISH LIST FOR NEXT GENERATION LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

- Integration, Flexibility & Interoperability
- Manage all resources, especially e-resources
- Analytics
- Optimized workflows
- Engaged Users

**CLOUD CLIMATE**

- Fast track implementation in Apr 2012 & GO LIVE Oct 2012
- Cloud-based architecture
- Staff felt trepidation, lost, but excited
- Developed & learned new workflows
- Acclimated to Alma language
- Tested workflows & trained staff
- Created documentation
- Checked for data accuracy
- Created workarounds for things that didn’t work
- Users love it
- Staff find it easy to use
- Monthly updates
- Unusually good uptimes

**FUNCTIONAL AREA EFFICIENCIES**

**CIRCULATION**
- User interaction is simplified
- Single source for users to find resources

**CATALOGING**
- Loading of and linking to headings is automatic
- Community Catalog of bib records that serves as a source of descriptive records for all Alma libraries
- Don’t have to worry about managing clients & upgrades

**SYSTEMS**
- Focus on developing applications instead of server upkeep
- Don’t have to worry about managing clients & upgrades

**SERIALS**
- Good management of e-serials
- Task oriented workflows that are pushed for management

**ACQUISITIONS**
- Analytics tool
- Ability to set up data from outside sources, such as OCLC, YBP, Amazon
- Can easily see format of resources for user requests

**RESOURCE DELIVERY**
- Searching for resources is simple
- Can easily see format of resources for user requests

**CONCLUSION**

- Choosing Alma was inherently the right decision
- It has filled a number of the Libraries’ objectives
- Implementation wasn’t as disruptive as we thought it would be
- Significant growth & development of the system have been seen
- Alma has proven to create efficiencies & remove silos
- Some functional areas didn’t witness as many efficiencies as expected
- System is dynamic, constantly changing

**WHAT WE DISCOVERED ABOUT ALMA**

- Supports the suite of library operations
- Single point of management
- Seam less integration of systems & data
- Dynamic system
- Comprehensive analytics
- Visible ness of unique resources
- System managed workflows

**MOVING FORWARD**

- Seek points that can be integrated, such as ILL & bursar
- Explore collaborative collection management
- Push Ex Libris to develop better integration with ILLIAD & DocLine
- Review internal policies to determine barriers for further integration
- Work with other Alma libraries to refine data
- Determine methods to expose rich level of data bringing different paths for information gathering
- Get a better understanding of how data can be used to support university’s scholarship & learning
- Investigate opportunities for new formats such as linked data and Bibframe
- Investigate collaborative opportunities with other departments within library
- Check on integration with Alma & Altmetrics