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# Alma

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## Alma 2019 Release Notes

Last updated: Dec 8, 2019



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As many of you already know, Alma development periodically needs to take a "back seat," and maintenance, cloud infrastructure, and other important tasks need to be handled in order to ensure that Alma meets the highest standards of performance and high availability. The October 2019 release is devoted to such tasks.

We'd also like to take this opportunity to update you on the following:

## NERS Enhancements Updates

The **NERS 2018** commitment enhancements have been completed and rolled out.

The **NERS 2019** commitment includes **11 enhancements** in all functional areas:

- Provide an option to view URL in CZ portfolios
- Enhancing security and management of API keys
- User profile - Add field for last active date
- Automate Borrowing Request Processes
- Option to not show related holdings locations
- Add Pop-Up Notice at Scan in Items
- Link resolver delivers physical holdings for wrong titles for PCI records
- Administration: Expand Repository Advanced Search Options
- Split role user manager in 2: the user manager and the patron manager
- Add ability to customize Purchase Request online form
- Portfolios in an electronic collection/package should inherit data displays from the collection's service

## DARA

**DARA – Data Analysis Recommendation Assistant** - was introduced as part of the March, 2019 release. It has attracted wide attention and interest on the part of the Alma community.

What are the most popular recommendations?

[Feedback](#)



- 9,222 unavailable portfolios
- 4,523 load usage data
- 1,333 automatic usage data

In addition, we can report that:

- 2640 recommendations have been implemented by 359 institutions

## What's New Videos

There are now more than 1,000 subscribers to Alma's [What's New Videos](#).

What were the top viewed videos of 2019?

- ~2290 views [Alma April 2019 Release: Change Funds in Invoice Lines](#)
- ~870 views [Alma April 2019 Release: Update Library Opening Hours via Excel Import](#)
- ~790 views [Alma June 2019 Release: Filter a List of Items](#)

## Idea Exchange

- **204 Ideas** have already been **Completed**
- **82 Ideas** have the status **Planned**
- **~20 Ideas** are being considered and have the status **Under Review**
- **~250 people** interacted with Alma on [Idea Exchange](#) in the last 30 days

Be sure to post your great idea and/or vote for other great ideas.

## RapidILL and Alma

Further to the [RapidILL](#) acquisition which was announced in June, work has already started to strengthen the integration between RapidILL and Alma. Stay tuned for upcoming Q4 support of RapidILL APIs that will make the Alma/RapidILL borrower requesting workflow more streamlined, as requests will be pushed from Alma into RapidILL without requiring any library mediation.

If set up, the new integration will check if the requested resource (i.e. article) is lendable via RapidILL. If yes, the request will be pushed into RapidILL, where a new borrowing request will be automatically managed in RapidILL. If the resource cannot be obtained via RapidILL then the request will automatically continue on to the next potential lender in the rota.

## Alma Analytics

In October Ex Libris is completing the upgrade of Analytics on the higher education platform from version 11 to version 12 of OBI. In addition to OBI analytics, the Data Visualization tool (DV) will also be an integral part of Alma. A select group of early testing partners has begun evaluation, with general release scheduled for Q1 2020. We'll continue to update you on this upgrade in the next months. Stay tuned.

Extensive documentation and demos (blogs and YouTube videos) are available at [Data Visualization \(DV\)](#) and [OBI12](#) in Alma.

## Counter Release 5

The support of COUNTER release 5 in Alma will be made available in early 2020. Release 5 proposes the following improvements (see also [COUNTER 5 Code of Practice Release 5](#)) :

- Fewer standard reports. 36 reports in R4 have been reduced to less than half that number in R5.
- Fewer metric types. 25 metric types in R4 have also been reduced by half in R5, largely through the elimination of format-specific metrics.
- Changing how year-of-publication reporting is managed by eliminating the notion of a range of years and requiring reporting to be at the year-of-publication level.
- Removing the requirement for including titles with zero usage, thus controlling the size of reports.
- Removing inconsistencies between tabular and SUSHI versions of the same reports.
- And more...

## Security Changes

In April, 2019, Ex Libris announced security changes that impact accessing and integrating with its Higher Education Platform: [Deprecation of Obsolete TLS 1.0 and TLS 1.1 Versions](#).

To avoid security vulnerabilities and to align with industry standards, Ex Libris is removing its support for TLS 1.0 and 1.1. This will be for Alma, Primo, Leganto and Esploro as part of the Ex Libris Higher Education Platform. This took place on all sandbox environments in April 2019 and started on production environments in May 2019.

For more details about TLS and actions that should be taken see [Ex Libris Higher Education Platform - deprecation of TLS 1.0 and TLS 1.1](#).

# A Few Interesting Alma Statistics (across all regions)

- 400+ institutions use self-check machines
- 400+ institutions are processing SUSHI files
- 300+ institutions are sharing anonymized data (for benchmark analytics)
- 200+ institutions participate in analytics usage tracking
- While most institutions use LC Names, other popular Authority files are GND, BARE, NLI, FRBNF, HK and RAMEAU
- 380+ institutions use local authorities
- 60+ institutions link a photograph to user records
- 9 institutions use demerits for patron fulfillment blocks
- 8M+ loan requests in the last calendar year
- 1M+ Resource Sharing requests in the last calendar year
- 640M+ Electronic portfolios were activated in the last calendar year
- 11M+ Electronic collections were activated in the last calendar year

## Upcoming Issues to Note

- The sandbox release date for the January 2020 release has been moved to December 15, 2019.
- Please note that in Alma Analytics, the Cost Usage subject area and its related features will be deprecated in January 2020. This includes:
  - The fields of the Cost Usage subject area that are available when selecting New > Analysis > Cost Usage
  - The out-of-the-box reports and dashboards for Cost Usage under /shared/Alma/Cost per Use/Reports and under /shared/Alma/Cost per use via COUNTER reports and acquisitions data
  - The folder Cost per use via COUNTER reports and acquisitions data

When the Cost Usage subject area is deprecated, all reports that use this subject area will no longer work.

Institutions that use reports from the Cost Usage subject area can do the following:

- Take advantage of the over 30 new out-of-the-box reports in the /shared/Alma/Cost per use via COUNTER reports e-inventory and acquisitions data/Reports folder. These reports use the new Cost Usage of the E-Inventory subject area.
- Use the out-of-the-box Electronic Cost Usage Dashboard (which uses the above reports) located in the /shared/Alma/Cost per use via COUNTER reports e-inventory and acquisitions data/Dashboards folder.
- Make their own customized reports using the Cost Usage dimension of the E-Inventory subject area.

## Next Release Sneak Preview

Select [here](#) to view the next release sneak preview.

### Main Features

No main features match your criteria.

### Additional Enhancements

No additional enhancements match your criteria.

### Resolved Issues

- October 2019 Acquisitions SF: 00724098 00725343 00725348 00725349 00725540 00725568 00725604 00725651 00725655 00727004 00727081 00727105 00727126 00727436 00727587 00727613 00727648 00728000 00728836 00729524 00730071  
When a department was in the library level and statuses were in the institution level, the statuses were not displayed in the receiving workbench. This was fixed.
- October 2019 API SF: 00724597  
The Alma Course API call with search query for academic\_department or section did not work. This was fixed.