

Migrating of Library Automation from Alice for Windows to KOHA: Experiences from the Library of University of Sri Jayewardenepura

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Abstract

Library of University of Sri Jayewardenepura used the “Alice for Windows”, a commercial library management software to automate its library resource collections and management activities of the library. During nearly ten year time it was able to process 90% of the library materials. However it was very difficult to fully implement the process due to issues like (1) lack of web interface, (2) inability to work in local languages like Sinhala, (3) high cost of as annual maintenance fee and (4) non availability of local maintenance team. In this circumstance, the library decided to shift to Open Source software named as KOHA. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the challenging experiences obtained from migrating from Alice for Windows to KOHA- an Integrated Library Management System mostly used in the library automation activities.

The great challenge in the process was the exporting of bibliographic records from Alice to KOHA because there was no compatibility between the two. The migration process involved three steps and used the tools such as MARC editor, MARC21 Format and language converter tool and it was able to convert all the data within two month time without any losses of data. With some training and follow up workshops for the staff and familiarizing sessions for users, it was able to successfully implement the Circulation module, Serial module, Online Public Access catalogue and report module in September 2014. Users are able to search the OPAC using Sinhala keywords, can renew their borrowing period, and make reservations from anywhere using the Internet.

Keywords: *Library automation, KOHA, Alice for Windows, Data migration*