Best Practices and Efficiencies for Workflows in Alma

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Introductions

Amanda Robertson

Amanda has been implementing and supporting Alma for four years as both an implementation consultant and a support analyst. Prior to joining Ex Libris, she worked as a special librarian and knowledge manager.

Kevin Lane-Cummings

Kevin has been with ProQuest for eight years, managing documentation for Serials Solutions products, training library staff on those products, and most recently creating training curricula for Alma. Prior to ProQuest, Kevin taught astronomy, edited aerospace papers, and did flight instruction.
Objectives and Audience

By the end of this session, you will understand ways to use Alma more efficiently and usefully for your library.

This session is for Alma users who are responsible for acquisitions, fulfillment, and resource management.

While the information can be useful to those just starting out in Alma, we will not be providing basic instruction in Alma workflows. This session assumes you are already comfortable using Alma.
Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Acquisitions Workflows
3. Fulfillment Workflows
4. Resource Management Workflows
5. Summary and Resources
Introduction - Alma Workflows

Acquisitions
- purchasing/receiving
- invoicing
- record imports

Resource Management
- cataloging
- record imports

Fulfillment
- loans/returns
- requests
- resource sharing
- borrowing/lending
- course reserves
Alma Workflows- User Roles

Permission to view items or perform actions are enabled by privileges (which are grouped into roles):

**Administrator**: Configure workflow-related rules and profiles.

**Managers** and **Operators**: Carry out workflow activities.
Agenda

1. Introduction

2. Acquisitions Workflows
   - I. Ordering Considerations
   - II. Receiving
   - III. Invoice Workflow (No ERP)
   - IV. Invoice Workflow (ERP)

3. Fulfillment Workflows

4. Resource Management Workflows

5. Summary and Resources
Acquisitions Workflow

Order
- EOD File
- Create PO
- Line Manually

Receive

Invoice
- From PO/
  Manually
- Excel file
- EDI
I. Ordering Considerations

Create purchase review rules and switch default rule from true (review) to false (skip review)

Acquisitions Configuration menu > Purchasing Review Rules

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Operator</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AssertionCode</td>
<td>in list</td>
<td>Previously canceled ordered resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Price limit reached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Purchase decision exists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AcquisitionMethod</td>
<td>in list</td>
<td>Any</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VendorCode</td>
<td>in list</td>
<td>Approval Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Depository</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SourceType</td>
<td>in list</td>
<td>*Any API</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Import ESD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Import Shelf Ready</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Output Parameters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'true'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ordering – Import Profiles

Acquisitions Configuration menu > Import Profiles
Set up unique profiles for different vendor accounts

New Order of Physical Material - Yankee Book Peddler

Create a specific profile that will only delete records if necessary.

Use naming conventions!! (see above)
Use a Technical PO Line for E+P orders

• Create an order line for each material type

• Primary order line (electronic); used for evaluation & payment processes

• Secondary order line (print); may be discontinued and may not require payment.
  • (secondary order line) has Acquisition method of "Technical"
  • (secondary order line) "Related POL" points to primary line
Exercise 1

Create PO lines for electronic & print versions of an item:

1. Log in to Alma; change your “Currently at” location to an Acquisitions department if needed.

2. Go to Resource Management > Search External Resources and search OCLC WorldCat for Confessions of a Shopaholic by Sophie Kinsella – or title of your choice.

3. Find a record for an electronic version and click Import.
Exercise 1, continued

4. Click shopping cart icon to order item.

5. Fill out PO line:
   - Purchase Type: *Electronic Book – One Time*
   - Owning Library: *Main Library*
   - Choose a Material Supplier
   - Enter List Price
   - Select a Fund
   - Acquisition method: Select either *Purchase* or *Purchase at Vendor System*
   - Note the **PO Line #** at top of screen!
   - Select **Order Now** from drop-down
   - Click **Go**.
Exercise 1, continued

6. Go back to Resource Management > Search External Resources and search OCLC WorldCat for Confessions of a Shopaholic by Sophie Kinsella, or title you used for the electronic version.

7. Find a print book version and click Import.

8. Click shopping cart icon to order the item.
Exercise 1, continued

9. Fill out PO line:
   • Purchase Order Type: *Print book – one time*
   • Owning Library: *Main Library*
   • Choose Material Supplier
   • Acquisition method: select *Technical*. (Do not fill in list price or fund; not required.)
   • Open the *Additional* section. Search for your first PO line to associate that PO line to this one.
   • Select *Order Now* from drop-down and click *Go*.

10. Go to Acquisitions menu > Search for PO Line. Find by title to see both PO lines.
II. Receiving

Use “Keep in Department” functionality to assign “next step”

Administration > General configuration > Configuration Menu > Work Order Types
Item can be un-received if ...

- It is still in the receiving department ("keep in department")
- There are no requests or interested users
- It is part of a one-time order
**Receiving- Claiming**

**Use Claiming if item not received**
- Parameters defined in vendor record.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Claim Date Calculation</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expected receipt date after ordering + claiming grace period</td>
<td>Order made on April 1(^{st}). Expected receipt date after ordering of 5 days + grace period of 5 days. (10 days total). Expected arrival is April 11(^{th}).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serial issues: Receipt date of last-received issue + claiming grace period + subscription interval</td>
<td>Received last issue on April 1(^{st}) + claiming grace period of 5 days + subscription interval of 30 days. Expected arrival date: May 6(^{th}).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Claiming job runs nightly.

**Acquisitions menu > Purchase Order Lines > Claim or Claims Task List**

Claim notifications:
- For Physical one-time items: Claim letter automatically sent from Alma to vendor
- For Subscription/continuous and Electronic POLs: Manually send email to vendor from PO Line > Communications tab
III. Invoice Workflow (No ERP)

Create Invoice (EDI, .xls, or manual from PO)

Review

Approve (OPTIONAL)

Status: Ready to be Paid (No action needed)

Status: Waiting for Paymt (Manually input voucher #)

Status: Paid (No action needed)

Status: Closed (No action needed)

If prepaid or internal copy...
Prepaid checkbox is enabled when payment is *not handled by Accounting.*
Invoice Workflow Considerations (No ERP)

- If ERP is not used for invoicing, skip Ready to be Paid and move directly to Waiting for Payment or Closed.
Configure *skipping* Ready to be Paid step:

- Acquisitions Configuration Menu > General > Other Settings
- Click **Customize** button and set `invoice_skip_erp` parameter value to *true*
Disable payment on all invoices if not using ERP integration

Acquisitions Configuration > Configuration Menu > Other Settings

- "handle_invoice_payment" to “false”

- **Waiting for Payment** requires a voucher # to close the invoice
  - Invoices that pass the review stage immediately close
  - If a voucher number is needed, you can record it even after the invoice is closed
  - If invoice needs to be altered, it should be set back to Review
IV. Invoice Workflow (ERP)

Option: ERP

Create Invoice
(EDI, .xls, or manual from PO)

Review

Approve
(OPTIONAL)

Status: Ready to be Paid
(No action needed)

Status: Waiting for Paymt
(No action needed)

Status: Paid
(No action needed)

Status: Closed
(No action needed)
Invoice Workflow: ERP Configuration step

Administration > General Configuration > External Systems

1) Set up S/FTP connection details

2) Set up Integration Profile

3) Run Fund Allocation Loader to synchronize ERP and Alma funds
Invoice Workflow (with ERP)

Order
- EOD File
- Create PO Line Manually

Receive

Invoice (ERP)
- From PO/Manually
  - Excel file
  - EDI
- Via FTP:
  - Export payment requests to ERP
  - Import payment confirm to Alma
**Internal Copy** appears *only* when Alma is set to send invoices via the ERP.
Invoice Workflow: Prepaid Invoice (with ERP)

Export to Financial Sys. (ERP) available if ERP enabled in Alma configuration
If same staff member performs both review and approval- skip approval step.

**Acquisitions Configuration > Configuration Menu > Invoice Approval Rules.**

1. Edit *Default* Approval Rule ( "Default Review Rule")
2. For Output Parameters, select **False** for the result and click **Save**.
3. Disable all other approval rules (un-select yellow check mark)
Disable approval on all invoices:

1. Go to **Acquisitions Configuration > Configuration Menu** and select **Invoice Approval Rules**.

2. Find the **Default** Approval Rule (i.e., “Default Review Rule”) and click **Edit**.

3. For Output Parameters, select **False** for the result and click **Save**.

4. For all other approval rules listed, click yellow checkmark in Enabled column to disable each.
Invoice Workflow Considerations

If same staff do receiving and invoicing tasks, consider doing receiving at the time of invoicing to save time.
Agenda

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2. Acquisitions Workflows

3. Fulfillment Workflows
   - I. Physical Items
   - II. Bookings
   - III. Lost Items

4. Resource Management Workflows

5. Summary and Resources
## I. Fulfillment Workflow: Physical Item Requests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Who does task</th>
<th>System used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Submit request</td>
<td>Patron or Library Staff</td>
<td>Primo or Alma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Print request slip</td>
<td>Circulation staff</td>
<td>Alma <em>(Pick from Shelf)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Go to shelf/retrieve item</td>
<td>Circulation staff</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Scan-in item at Circulation desk</td>
<td>Circulation staff</td>
<td>Alma <em>(Scan in Item)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Place item on hold shelf</td>
<td>Circulation staff</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Loan item to patron</td>
<td>Circulation staff</td>
<td>Alma <em>(Manage Patron Services)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fulfillment Workflow: Personal Delivery

Alma allows personal delivery of requested physical items to a user's office or home.
Fulfillment Workflow: Personal Delivery Configuration

- Circulation Desk indication-personal delivery support
  - Fulfillment Configuration menu > Circulation Desks
    Select circulation desk > edit > supports personal delivery checkbox

- Terms of Use indication-personal delivery allowed
  - Fulfillment Configuration menu > Terms of use and policies
  - filter by Request > select a Terms of use > select appropriate Personal Delivery policy from drop-down
  - Configure Personal delivery fee request policy if applicable.

- Home and/or office address required in user record
  - Administration > Find and Manage Users
II. Fulfillment Workflow : Booking Requests

• Reserves item(s) for patron for specified time frame
  • Requester knows exactly when resource is available to him/her
  • Limits amount of time item is available to requester

• Can be used for high-demand items with limited number of copies, equipment, study rooms, videos

• Can be submitted via Primo or Alma

• Requires policies, terms of use, and fulfillment unit rules for configuration
## Booking Requests Workflow

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Who does task</th>
<th>System used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Create request</td>
<td>Patron or Library Staff</td>
<td>Primo or Alma <em>(Repository Search)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Verify availability of item for requested time; request submitted</td>
<td>Alma</td>
<td>Alma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Loan item to patron at scheduled time</td>
<td>Circulation staff</td>
<td>Alma <em>(Manage Patron Services)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Booking Requests: Availability

Item’s availability displayed in calendar format in **Availability** section of request form in Primo:

- If multiple copies of an item: Calendar takes into account availability of all copies
- If item is on regular loan prior to booking request: Shows as unavailable during timeframe of loan
Booking Requests: Future Date

If booking request placed before future limit specified in policies, error message displays
Booking Requests: Not Available

If booking request overlaps another booking request, message displays

Failed to save the request: The request conflicts with other requests.
Manage Booking Requests

Monitor Requests & Item Processes: Limit request/process type to Booking request

Patron record: Requests tab
Loan Attempt During Booked Timeframe

Regular loans for item will be blocked during booked timeframe:

- Loan attempt *during* booked timeframe:
  - *Item cannot be loaned due to booking request*

- Loan attempt *before* booking request time starts:
  - *The loan conflicts with a book request and the due date must be shortened*
Create **policies** for booking requests:

- Back-to-back booking
- Booking release time
- Future limit
- Is item bookable
- Maximum allowed booking length
- Preview period
- Pickup locations
Create booking terms of use to invoke configured booking policies:

Fulfillment > Fulfillment Configuration > Configuration Menu > Terms of Use and Policies
Booking Request Configuration: Fulfillment Units

Create rules that indicate which Booking TOU should be applied for specified fulfillment unit location(s)
Booking Request Configuration: Set Request Limit

Number of permitted booking requests can be limited by patron type

Fulfillment Configuration Menu > Patron Configurations > **Patron Limits**
III. Lost Loans Workflows

Mark Item as Lost:
• **Fulfillment > Manage Patron Services > [user record] > Title > Actions > Lost**

Advanced Search for All Lost Items:
• Physical Items where Physical items (Process type equals "Lost")

Lost items cannot be requested (by default in Alma)

Exclude lost items from repository search
• **Resource Configuration > Configuration Menu > Exclude Process Types from Publishing**
Lost Loans Workflows, continued

Configure Lost Loans Parameters:
• Add Lost Loan Fines, Replacement Fee, or Lost Item Replacement Fee Refund Ratio

Close Lost Loans
1. Create Lost Loan Fulfillment Set to display list of items Lost before a specific date:
   i. Fulfillment > Advanced Tools > Manage Fulfillment Sets
   ii. Configure Loan status = Lost
2. Run the Close Lost Loans process:
   Administration > Manage Jobs and Sets > Run a Job > Close lost loans
Exercise 3

Deal with a lost loan item:

1. Mark a user’s loan as lost.
2. Create a set of all lost items
3. Run the Close Lost Loans process
Agenda

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   - I. Edit CZ Records
   - II. Imports
5. Summary and Resources
I. Edit Community Zone Records

• Community Cataloging standard defined at: http://www.exlibrisgroup.com/files/Products/Alma/AlmaCommunityCatalogCatalogingStandardsPolicies.pdf

• Ability to add/contribute electronic portfolios and collections.

• Catalogers, Catalog Managers, and Catalog Administrators can edit CZ records.
Edit CZ Records

• From Community Zone repository search, click Edit for record you wish to edit.
Note that the 022 field is not editable:
• Edits to 022 field can currently affect the link resolution that is dependent on the 022 field; restriction to be removed in a future release.

Save and release the record when editing is completed.
• Changes to CZ records is automatically reflected
• Validation using the CZ MD Registry, validation routines, and normalized routines.
II. Imports and Handling Issues

• Once import profiles are configured, run imports from:
  • Import Profile (Actions > Run Import) or
  • Resource Management > Import
• Monitor and View Imports to check if job ran successfully
• Use Resolve Import Issues to view records that failed and see specific issues
Resolve Import Issues

• **Matching Issues**: Imported record matches an existing record in the database

• **Validation Issues**: Imported records have invalid data per Validation Exception in import profile
  - e.g., mandatory fields missing, LDR missing, multiple occurrences of non-repeatable fields
  - Validation exception profiles: Resource Management Configuration menu > Metadata Configuration > MARC21 Bibliographic > Validation Exception Profile List

• **Errors**: Indicates something unexpected has happened which cannot be resolved
  - e.g., problems with file data not related to matching or validation of records
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Summary

During this session, you learned how to:

- Conduct workflows within various functional areas of Alma
- Edit configurations that can impact workflows
- Apply best practices to workflows at your own institution
Resources

Available as online help in Alma or the Ex Libris Knowledge Center:

• Alma Acquisitions Guide
• Integrating with External Systems Guide
• EDI Standard Supported in Alma
• Alma Resource Management Guide
• Alma Fulfillment Guide
• Alma Developers (in Alma Administration menu)

Additional support resources within the ExLibris Ecosystem:

• Idea Exchange
• System Status Pages: Single Tenant ENV / Multi-Tenant ENV
• Developer Network

Technical Seminar Presentations

(located in the Cross-Product section of the Ex Libris Knowledge Center)
Session Evaluation

Please enter the following link into your browser:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/techsem2017
Thank you!

Amanda Robertson | Implementation Consultant
Kevin Lane-Cummings | Senior Training and Consulting Partner