

The Alexandria Newsletter

GROWTH • TIPS • PROMOS • ANNOUNCEMENTS • MORE

MONTHLY

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Looking back, Looking forward

It's been 20 years since we released our first library automation product, MacBook in 1988. In 1993 we released Alexandria v3, which ran on Macintosh System 6 through 10.4, an amazing lifespan for a piece of software. Alexandria v5 for Macintosh and Windows came out about 10 years ago and has seen continuous enhancements since it's release, as I'm sure many of you have noticed. Before the end of 2008 we'll introduce a new generation of Alexandria, version 6, our biggest release in 10 years.

Alexandria not only featured innovative interfaces and features, but we made it easy for our users budgets by combining support, updates and upgrades into what we call our "Software Subscription" service. Customers who purchased Alexandria v1 in 1990 have been able to get all their updates and upgrades through their Software Subscription at no additional cost. In addition, their data has always moved forward with the new versions, and updated manuals in pdf format could always be downloaded at no extra charge.

Alexandria v6 will of course be available as a free upgrade for everyone with a current Software Subscription. You'll be able to update your Data Station directly from our Update Server, which will in turn update all your Alexandria clients. You'll also be able to download updated documentation and training materials at no additional cost. Before you upgrade you can download a full functioning demonstration version so you can experience the benefits of Alexandria v6 before you upgrade your library. With Alexandria, you know your investment in time and money is protected through our business practices as well as our advanced technology.

In case you are wondering, Alexandria v6 technology will also be used in Textbook Tracker v4 and SmartMARC v7.

Thank you for your support of Alexandria, I look forward to telling you more about Alexandria v6 throughout 2008. ∞



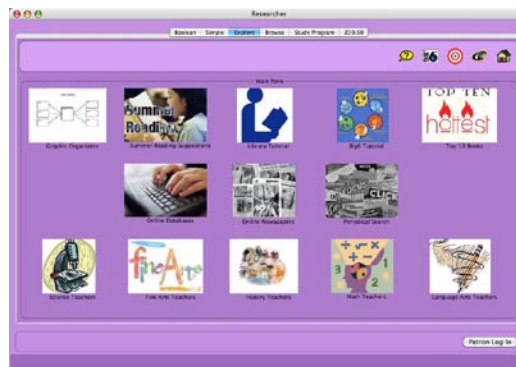
KAAREN'S CORNER

BY KAAREN LINTON
LIBRARIAN/ALEXANDRIA TRAINER

EXPLORE—MORE THAN JUST AN ELEMENTARY LEVEL SEARCH

Many elementary schools using Alexandria love the graphic search interface called Explore while other libraries with more mature patrons may feel that it is too juvenile for their patrons. This month, it's time to explore the possibilities that Explore offers.

Explore is a graphic interface that is fully customizable to suit your needs. While we have given you graphics and set up logical searches that can serve all patrons, you may choose to add to this base -- use some of the searches and add more of your own -- or scrap everything that has been done and make it totally your own creation. Perhaps you would like to use the Explore interface for easy access to on-line databases, to offer library or research tutorials, booklists by grade, class or reading level, to provide "teacher pages" complete with open-disclosure statements, research assignments, etc. If you choose to design Explore to perform these functions, your main pane might look something like this.



As you plan how you want to set up your Explore interface, plan from the "top" or main pane down, but create from the "bottom" up. This is necessary because to link to panes, they must already be created.

When we talk about setting up Explore, we talk about panes and buttons. A pane is a set of iconic buttons that are displayed when the **Explore** tab of the **Alexandria Researcher** or your **Alexandria Web Researcher** is selected.

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KAAREN'S CORNER CONT'D.

The initial pane that is displayed when a patron clicks on the Explore tab is called the Default pane.

Each button on a pane is programmed to perform a specific action. Buttons may be programmed to open another pane, launch a URL, perform a specific search of the Alexandria database, display a message, launch an application, or open a word processor document or a help document.

In the sample pane, the bottom row of buttons all open panes that will have buttons for individual teachers in the subject area. Those buttons will, in turn, open additional panes for the teachers with buttons for assignments, reading lists, Alexandria searches, etc. The tutorial buttons on the top row will launch PowerPoint and start the PowerPoint presentation associated with the button. The Periodical Search button will launch a website that gives the patron access to an on-line periodical database. The Top Ten and Summer Reading buttons may open a document or perform a search of the Alexandria database that will yield appropriate results.

The instructions for working with **Explore** are always available for you in the **Alexandria Help**.

- Go to **Help** on the menu bar and select **Alexandria Help**.
- Use the scroll bar to scroll down to the **Preferences** section and, then, click on **Preferences — Explore**.

While only the very basic instructions will be provided below, this document covers adding, editing, moving, and removing buttons and adding, editing, linking, and removing panes.

The Process

The Explore interface is customized through Preference settings.

- Go to **Edit** on the menu bar and select **Preferences**.
- Set the two drop-down menus in the upper-left corner of the Preferences window to **Researcher** and **Global**.

To add a pane:

- Click on **Add Pane** button.
- Enter the name of the new pane (Required). If you are configuring your interface for multiple languages, you'll need to provide a pane name for each language you want

to support. If you don't specify a name for the other language, the name you've entered in your default language will be used.

- Follow the instructions below for adding buttons to the pane.
- Click on **OK** to save or **Cancel** to cancel.

To add a button:

- Double click on a blank button area or select it and click on **Edit** button. The **Define Explore Button Action** window will appear.
- Drag and drop a graphic into the graphic box.
- From the drop-down menu, choose an action such as **Search**.
- If further information is required, enter it.
- When finished with the button, click on **OK**.

To link a pane:

- Double click on the pane on which a button will provide the link to another pane.
- **<Right-click>** (Windows) or **<ctrl-click>** (Macintosh) on the button that will be the link.
- From the **Edit Button** drop-down menu that appears, select **Action: Go to Pane**.
- Select the pane from the list provided on the **Select A Pane** window. (The pane must already exist.)
- When finished with button, click on **OK**.
- Click on **OK** to save the change to the pane. ∞

COLLECTION CLEANUP CHALLENGES FOR FEBRUARY

Last month, we gave you the simple challenges to clean up your homerooms and funding sources using the Authority Control feature of Alexandria. This month, we begin on one of the larger areas of Authority Control — Publishers. Note the word used is begin -- the goal is to clean up publishers from A through C. Now, if you have so much fun doing this, get carried away and go past C, that's great, but don't feel pressured to do it all at once. Do what you can and remember that Authority Control cleanup is a never-ending process. We are going to be working on publishers for several months.

Challenge Steps:

- Go to **Show** on the menu bar and select **Authority Control**.
- Change the drop-down menu in the upper-left corner

CHALLENGE CONT'D. ON NEXT PAGE

CHALLENGE CONT'D.

- of the window to **Publisher**.
- Look at the publishers that are listed. Do you see variations of the same publisher (e.g. A.A. Knopf, A. A. Knopf, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., Alfred Knopf)?
 - If so, decide on the one that you want to use and, then, double click on one that you wish to change and a window will open.
 - Change it to what it should be, then, click on **OK**.
 - Repeat this for every incorrect **Publisher**. Remember, deleting the entry here only deletes it from the index and not from the records. You will only change it when you click on **Save**.
 - Click on **Save** in the upper-right corner of the **Authority Control** window. Alexandria will go through your item records and replace the incorrect publishers with the corrected ones. ∞

ALEXANDRIA ANSWERS

WE DO NOT CHARGE FINES AT OUR LIBRARY. CAN I ELIMINATE THEM FROM THE SETTINGS?

Yes, you can eliminate them. Fines are part of **Policies** in your **Preferences** settings.

- Go to **Edit** on the menu bar and select **Preferences**.
- Change the first drop-down in the upper-left corner from **Library Information** to **Policies** and the second drop-down menu to **Global**.
- You will need look at each of your **Item Policies** and change the following:
 - (1) On the **Check Out** tab, change the **Amount of loan fee** to 0.00.
 - (2) On the **Overdue** tab, change **Fine rate for these items** to 0.00.
- Next, you will need to look at each of your **Patron Policies** and, on the **Overdue** tab, change the **Maximum fine for an overdue item** to 0.00.
- Remember to check the same three areas on your **Circulation Policies** if you have made any exceptions to your regular policies.
- Click on **Save** in the upper-right corner of the window to save your policy changes.

This will stop fines from being charged on any items checked out after the change is made.

To make these policy changes effective retroactively, you will need to run a utility.

- Go to **File** on the menu bar and select **Utilities** from the drop-down menu bar.
- Under **Utility Type**, select **Circulation** and from the **Operation** drop-down menu, select **Update**.
- Click on **Run**. Remember to ALWAYS say “Yes” when asked if you want to run an **Archive**. ∞

PRODUCT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Alex Explore is available with an A-license. Also included in an A-license:

WAN (wide area network) – Allows libraries within a district to “see” and search each other’s library collection, yet maintain their autonomy.

WEB – Provides the ability to access Alexandria’s Data Station via the internet - the OPAC for patron searches or the Web Librarian to accomplish librarian tasks such as circulation, cataloging, reports, etc.

Cross Platform – Alexandria will work in a PC or Macintosh environment – or both at the same time.

Z39.50 – Search other library databases that have Z39.50 access; such as Library of Congress, universities, public libraries, etc., using Alexandria so that patrons do not have to adapt to multiple library automation system’s methods of searching.

MARC Search – Provides a way to locate MARC records in the databases of other libraries right from the item record window in Alexandria. You can then save it and it will be imported into Alexandria. No separate software application is needed.

If you’d like more information about moving to an A-license, please call Sales at 1-800-347-6439 x527, or send an email to sales@companioncorp.com.