ALEPH
INTEGRATED LIBRARY SYSTEM
**GENERAL**

- **ALEPH** is a software product designed and developed for management of libraries, information centers, Archives and museums.

- **ALEPH** is a generalized, table driven system that enables libraries and other institutions to meet their information handling and retrieval requirements accurately and efficiently.

- **ALEPH** was planned as a user-oriented system to provide easy access together with sophisticated information retrieval capabilities according to CCL ISO 8777 standards.

- **ALEPH can be adapted to any type of institution**, such as: library, museum, archive, research center, etc.

- **ALEPH can be tailored to various applications and types of materials**, e.g. books, articles, reports, publications, slides, drawings, stamps, microforms, patents, personnel files, school courses, etc.

- **ALEPH has been developed at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem by a team of Programmers, Analysts and Librarians.** It is currently installed at all institutions of higher education in Israel, as well as in many other public and private institutions in Israel and abroad.

- **Installations range from the DIGITAL VAX family of mainframe computers with hundreds of terminals, to independent users of a personal computer.**

**ALEPH FEATURES**

**Integration**

All aspects of the system are completely integrated, a one-time entry of information eliminates duplication and erroneous data. Information is entered and corrected in real time, and the users receive instant, comprehensive and accurate information.

**Modularity**

**ALEPH** is modular, so that an institution can easily decide to use only those components that are relevant to its needs.

**Table driven and user defined**

**ALEPH** is a table-driven system, which enables the users to define parameters and tailor the system according to their specifications, with no need for programming expertise. The application can be modified after the system has been operational.

**Flexibility**

Because of its flexibility, **ALEPH** can be adapted to any type of institution, such as: library, museum, archive, research, etc. Also the system can be tailored to any type of material, e.g. books, articles, reports, publications, slides, drawings, stamps, microforms, patents, personnel files, school courses, etc. Since **ALEPH** is flexible and customizable according to users' specs, it does not impose a predetermined working philosophy on its user institutions and is able to handle numerous operational and service methods used by different applications. A basic library-oriented table is provided with the **ALEPH** package. The table is a basic setup to field codes, field names, instructions and help screens. This enables the users to begin working on the system as is, while familiarizing themselves with it, and without having to make prior decisions. The basic setup can be modified as required.

**Multiple applications and network support**

**ALEPH** can handle multiple applications and libraries within a single installation. The libraries can share common data files, or maintain separate data bases with different parameters, indexing and data types. Users can easily switch between the libraries.

**ALEPH** supports networks of libraries in different sites. The system communicates enable users to access all libraries defined in the network in a transparent way.

**Multilingual, Multiscript and Bi-directional**

**ALEPH** can operate in many languages. The language of conversation can be defined by the user for all screens, error messages, operation codes and instructions. **ALEPH** can handle multiscript data, according to the ISO Latin II, 8859. Using an IBM PC terminal or standard VT terminal, the system allows the definition up to 10 sets of 256 characters each, with single strike and correct display. **ALEPH** is bi-directional and thus suited for a mixture of left to right and right to left alphabets.

**User friendly**

Special attention has been paid to the human engineering aspects of the system. Operations are straightforward, function keys are used to simplify input, and the user is guided by explicit instructions and help screens. The system is both menu driven and command driven to facilitate operation. It is designed so that the experienced user can operate the system quickly and efficiently with chain commands.

**Data downloading**

**ALEPH** enables an information center to utilize machine-readable information from previous databases and from other automated systems (e.g. loading MARC format records).

**Safety and reliability**

**ALEPH** is a safe and reliable system. It has a back-up architecture that ensures the integrity of all data at any time.

**System's advantages**

**ALEPH** provides many advantages to the library or the information center. By automating many functions currently performed manually, the system allows increased productivity, greater efficiency, a more economic use of resources, better service to the users, data consistency and accuracy.

**Display format levels**

- a. Alphabetized lists of entries from authority files or words from text inversion of any field, and indication of the number of postings under each entry.
- b. Short bibliographic display (details such as: author, title, year of publication, etc.).
- c. Display of cross references and notes.
- d. Display of full bibliographic record, 99 different forms.
- e. List of physical copies, their locations and availability (due date, lost, on order, etc.).
- f. List of current issues (serials).
- g. Display of the item's abstract, if defined.
- h. Photocopies requests.

**Cataloging**

- i. Free form and/or formatted entry.
- j. Full screen editor.
- k. Authority control during cataloging.
- l. Provisions for editing and amending records with minimum of retyping.
- m. Capability to transfer records to be used as basis for new bibliographic records.
- n. Various classification systems (e.g. Dewey, Library of Congress, UDC, etc.).
- o. Provisions for different types of material (e.g. serials, articles, slides, maps, etc.).
- p. MARC (LC, UK) format compatibility.
- q. Logical checks.

**Authority file and Thesaurus maintenance**

- r. Global changes to documents.
- s. Creating references (see, see form, see also, broader term, narrower term, etc.). The corresponding relationship is automatically assigned.

**Inventory (holdings)**

- t. Volumes, copies, notes. Each physical item is identified by a system number, volume level and copy number.
- u. Copy level information includes: copy number, alternate key, status, location, and notes. An institution with a previously bar-coded collection can retain these bar codes as alternate keys.

**Statistics**

- v. Retrieval and sort by any field in the record, printing bibliographic lists, book and microfiche catalogs, card catalogs, bar-code labels (for both books and readers). 99 user defined formats available for printing.
- w. Various reader and vendor correspondence (e.g. overdue notices, recall notices, claims, etc.).
- x. Various statistics, such as: Number of items, readers, items on loan, in process usage, circulation and acquisition activities, etc.
- y. Basically, three types of statistical information is available:
  - a. Statistics from the activity log.
  - b. Statics from the library files.
  - c. Statistics per terminal.

**Circulation**

- z. Circulation policies are reflected in due dates, quotas of books, copy statues, readers borrowing privileges. All these parameters are defined in an external parameter table in order to allow for maximum flexibility and cost-effectiveness.
- a. Users and items can be issued a bar coded label to facilitate entering transaction information.
- b. Management of loan and return transactions: item and reader statues are checked to determine the transaction's validity. Invalid transactions (reader has overdue items or over fines, registration has expired etc.) are stopped and the...
operator alerted. In a multi-site environment, the operator is alerted also if an item has been returned to the wrong location.

- Management of item related activities: Display reader information, change due data, register or display holds placed on an item. In a multi-site environment, a hold can be restricted to a particular location or to trap the first copy returned at any location. When an item with a hold placed is returned, the details of the first reader on the hold-list is displayed.

- Management of reader related activities: Record reader details (status, expiration, etc.), display reader information (all present and past loan transactions, fines due, etc.), generate notices for renewals, overdues, recalls.

- PC is used as a stand-alone backup system to register transactions if the main system is not available.

- Photocopies management.

**Acquisitions**

- Relevant order information: Vendor, order data, estimated arrival data, price, etc.

- Acquisition related correspondence (orders, claims and others).

- Information, control and follow-up procedures: vendor details and terms, settlement of invoices, allocated vs. actual budget, etc.

- Budget control.

- Currency table

**Inter-library loan management**

- Loan policy for Inter-library loans is defined by the library.

- Remote libraries can display holding’s information (availability, return date, status, location, etc.).

- Orders and requests for hold or photocopy delivery from remote libraries is transferred in a transparent mode.

**Periodicals control**

- Acquisition of subscriptions and single items, with immediate update of fund information, and warning if funds are about to be exceeded.

- Provisions for renewal of subscriptions.

- Provisions for recording frequency, volume and issue information in order to enable the system to predict forthcoming issues and to identify missing or overdue issues.

- Creation and maintenance of routing list, including priority level.

- Reports of completed volumes ready for binding, handling binding details.

**QALEPH - Electronic Mail**

- Remote users can send off line queries to an ALEPH database using standard EMAIL protocols such as BITNET or VAX MAIL.

- Queries can be sent to QALEPH at any time. However, the information center controls the hours during which the queries are submitted to ALEPH.

- Replies to the Users are sent by return electronic mail to their address.

**Import and export utilities**

- ALEPH can import data to all ALEPH files: documents, authorities, copies, circulations, borrowers, vendors, orders etc.

- The import utility adds new records, and corrects, updates and replaces existing records.

- A Check-match is performed according to the USBC matching algorithm of bibliographic records.

- The export utility downloads records from ALEPH files to external files.

**File security and integrity**

- Each application determines password clearance and authority levels for protection of information. The search functions can be accessed by all users, while update transactions require a valid password and an appropriate level of authorization. Thus, the integrity of the data will not be hampered by unauthorized users.

- ALEPH saves all updated transactions, thereby enabling the system to recover all files if necessary due to power failure, operational errors, etc.

- ALEPH includes a set of procedures for checking/detecting/correcting errors in data files. The procedures are in addition to the standard VMS tools.

**HARDWARE CONFIGURATION**

- ALEPH operates on a wide range of Digital VAX family of computers under VMS, starting from the VAX STATION and up to clusters that can support hundreds of terminals.

- ALEPH operates on the UNIX 5 operating system.

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