



## **The Role of ANZREG in the Ex Libris community**

### ***Introduction***

In 2008 the ANZREG group was formed from a merger of a number of previous user groups: the SFX and MetaLib Users Group of Australia (SMUG-A), Aleph Users Group of Australia, the Australasian Voyager Users Group (AVUG), the DigiTool Working Group, and the Australia & New Zealand Regional EndUser Group.

After some years of growth, and consolidation of the activities of the group, the outgoing ANZREG Committee (elected in May 2008) decided to write a position paper which to help review and define the role of the user group, in order for it to remain relevant not only to its own member institutions but also as an effective voice to be heard by Ex Libris senior management. This position paper has been reviewed by the incoming committee (elected in June 2010).

### ***Regional focus***

It is the view of the committee that there is a strong (wider) role for the ANZREG community to be a voice within the greater region of Australia, New Zealand and South East Asia.

The ANZREG Committee believes the user group should engage more with both the Australasian office in Adelaide, and the regional Asia-Pacific office in Singapore, to maximize the influence on software development and strategic developments by the Ex Libris Group.

The ability of the ANZREG group to be a strong local voice, is enhanced by a strong engagement with the local offices in Adelaide and Singapore. Both the Manager of the Australasian office (in Adelaide) and the Vice-President, Asia-Pacific are very supportive of the ANZREG group and further engagement with our community. It is the view of the committee that we should take advantage of this situation to leverage financial and organizational support from Ex Libris for the ANZREG activities that we believe will be of benefit to our community.

### ***IGeLU and ELUNA user groups***

The role of ANZREG within the world-wide IGeLU user group, and also with our North American colleagues in ELUNA, needs to be considered.

Whilst Australasian institutions are able to be members of IGeLU, we feel that having a vibrant regional user group can bring value to the Australasian region. With a new web site and our own quick processes, we hope to be agile, respond quickly to, and be more relevant to our own community.

Currently as not all Australasian Ex Libris users are members of IGeLU, the Australasian region currently has a limited voice in the future direction of the Ex Libris products since non-members cannot vote on world-wide enhancements. By having a strong vibrant regional

user group we can act in a coordinated way and advance our regional interests.

ANZREG can continue to develop its high profile role within IGeLU because we will be seen as a strong vibrant regional group, and so we can get the advantages of being part of the international group whilst also developing our own regional identity.

ANZREG will continue to support IGeLU activities and to encourage ANZREG members to be members of IGeLU. We have had good strong membership and leadership in the IGeLU community and activities since IGeLU was formed (with Steering committee and Product Working Group membership) and the momentum with this involvement needs to be encouraged and continued.

### ***Processes and procedures***

A method of engaging with the community and performing tasks which are both relevant and actionable is to organize our voting for enhancements as a separate activity within the region, in parallel with the IGeLU voting processes.

By having a separate list of enhancements which are unique to our region and are in addition to any others submitted by other processes, we form a strong voice. By having our own regional list of enhancements, we can co-ordinate a manageable list which is smaller than the world-wide group, we can manage our own voting/co-ordination of input and come up with something that can be seen as an important package of requests for Ex Libris to work on.

If we prove to be, responsive, agile and a strong creative independent voice, then we become more effective within our own user base and will be acknowledged as such by Ex Libris.

One way for this to happen is for the ANZREG group to establish strong local Product Working Group Chairs for each of the products. These individuals will need guidance and help in their roles, but they will need to have a strong influence and interest in ensuring that local needs are not forgotten, that libraries in our region can confidently input enhancements that will be noticed by the region/group/ExLibris and will effectively pull together requirements into a package for active consideration by Ex Libris.

### ***Committee election***

The Committee is currently elected after a two year period, usually in June/July of each year. The Committee would like to change the timing for elections to coincide with the annual seminar so that a formal hand-over and announcement of the new committee can occur at the annual seminar. The ANZREG by-laws do allow for this timing to occur, but the current committee would need to continue on for another 6 month period after their current term expires, in order to hand-over to the new committee at the seminar in January/February. This will need to be discussed and ratified by the members at the annual seminar.

### ***Seminars/meetings/engagement***

There are a number of other areas in which it is the view of the committee that our involvement could increase in order to become more valuable and relevant as an organization.

Some of these are:

- Hold a separate one day Technical Seminar (in conjunction with Ex Libris) held locally, alongside the regular ANZREG Seminar.
- Hold our own hands-on (or demo) training day run by ANZREG members – similar to the VALA L-Plate or Boot Camp series of events
- Continue to encourage the user group to be more creative with presentations and communication (eg. Lightning presentations at the Seminar)
- Continue to develop the web site and link in with social networking and other web sites of relevance to our members (eg. Ning; Flickr; YouTube; Twitter; Facebook, etc)

### ***ANZREG Membership***

Membership to date has been free to any institution or consortium members using any of the Ex Libris products. The committee has reviewed the feels that by not imposing a membership fee to pay every year, this removes any barrier to membership and involvement within the ANZREG community and with any events being held. The complications with membership fee payment, invoicing and administration costs are also removed.

For the foreseeable future, the committee prefer that each institution pays a small attendance fee at events held by ANZREG in order to make it easiest for all institutions to be represented, with some being able to send more representatives than others, depending upon their size and location.

So far the organization has been able to build up a small amount of funds which help with the costs of each event and provide extras such as gifts to speakers, labels, any extra venue or catering costs and so on. These funds have also been used to continue with a small amount of web site costs such as the subscription to the Ning site and the cost of the anzreg.org domain.

In future, however, the committee may need to re-evaluate the costs of hosting the annual seminar and associated activities. Currently the committee is reliant on financial support from Ex Libris as well as the largesse of member institutions to provide a venue free of charge. Other foreseeable costs are the redevelopment of the new website, including the development of a social networking space, web design and content editing costs; honoraria for speakers & presenters; publicity & promotional activities; venue & equipment hire; telephone/teleconferencing charges.

The Committee in future may seek to introduce membership fees to help pay for costs if they increase substantially, but for the foreseeable future, free membership will remain.

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For ratification/voting/approval by the ANZREG community in 2011.