
Patron upload: Where to start?

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Question

Where can I find information about the functions to upload patron data into Aleph and what is the preferred method to do so?

Answer

There are two functions in Aleph related to patron loading:

- * PLIF (p_file_20) - Patron loader interface
- * X-service update_bor

The PLIF documentation can be found here:

[How to Use the Patron Loader Interface \(PLIF\) \(file-20\) - 20.0 and Later.pdf](#)

The documentation for all X-services can be found in our Developers Network. For update_bor you find the information here: https://developers.exlibrisgroup.com/aleph/apis/Aleph-X-Services/update_bor

We recommend to use the XML file format (not the flat format).

UTIL F 2 5 2 (Create PLIF Sequential/XML Files from Borrower Data Files) may be very helpful. You can put in a patron ID and it will create a XML file of this patron from your DB in \$data_scratch. This file then can be used as a sample file for your XML input files.

Internally both methods (X-service bor_update and PLIF) are using the same programs. So there is no method that is more advisable than the other.

But the use case for both methods is different. Service update_bor is very useful when you have an external system that immediately want to "push" updates or new patrons to Aleph. There is nearly no delay as the external system does not have to wait for a nightly batch process. So the new patron is valid in Aleph immediately.

One of the main difference between update_bor and PLIF is that in update_bor you can only include one single per XML file only.

So you would need to split the input files to separate files per patrons and send each of them to the X-service (which may cause thousands of calls of this service depending on the number of patrons).

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