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## To what should the OPAC session timeout be set?

- **Product:** Aleph
  - **Product Version:** 20, 21, 22, 23
  - **Relevant for Installation Type:** Dedicated-Direct, Direct, Local, Total Care
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### Description:

What should the OPAC session timeout be set to?

### Resolution:

The session timeout is controlled by the `www_a_session_time_out` or the Meta-tags "REFRESH" value -- if it is present and has a lower value.

There are two considerations:

One is the freeing up of the resources associated with a session and a second is the privacy issue associated with public terminals.

1) Since the ALEPH Web OPAC is "stateless" there aren't many resources associated with a session. The z05/z110 result-sets persist regardless of any timeout which may occur. For license purposes, web sessions are considered active for 2 minutes even if the session has timed out. (And having a timeout longer than 2 minutes will not result in the session continuing to be counted as active for license purposes: the system will stop counting it after 2 minutes if the user has not hit Enter, even if it has not timed out.)

2) Thus, the main session time-out issue is the public-terminal privacy issue. Within this, there are 2 sub-cases:

- (a) the case where the user is not signed on; and
- (b) the case where the user \*is\* signed on.

2.a. If a non-signed-on user walks away from a public terminal, you, ideally, would not leave the search indefinitely for the next user to view. On the other hand, you don't want to kick a user back to the initial screen who is legitimately just sitting and thinking about a particular screen. We have been distributing the `setenv www_a_session_time_out` as 600 seconds (10 minutes). Customers implementing the OPAC have found a REFRESH value of "200" (3 minutes) to be too short.

2.b. The case of a user who \*has\* signed on and has failed to log off has bigger implications: the succeeding user could get the logged-on user's phone#, address, the books he/she has signed out, and change the user's pincode.

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## Additional Info

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- **Article last edited:** 12-Mar-2016