



# Granthalaya.org

Experience of a Union  
Catalogue for public libraries  
with Koha



- Total number of public libraries in Maharashtra as on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009 is 9625

Source : Govt. of Maharashtra Directorate of Libraries

- A very few of these large number of libraries are computerized. Most are still on pen and paper based management.



- Granthalaya.org aims to
  - Help these public libraries computerize their operations
  - Have standards based, free & open source library management software
  - Make their catalogues available on the internet
  - Create a Union Catalogue so that public can find out which library has the book they want.



## Why we chose Koha as the library management software of choice

- Koha is
  - Open source
  - Free
  - Standards based
  - Unicode support
  - Has a great vibrant community around it
  - Has multiple support options



# Koha has multiple ways in which we could implement a Union Catalogue.

- We could set up a PazPar2 based system which can search multiple catalogues and combine the results.
- Or we could set up a central Koha server with multiple branches, each branch being a public library so that we can have searches across branches.



- Because our goals included helping the libraries computerize their operations, we chose the second option i.e using a central Koha server with each Public Library as a branch.
- This way we could help libraries setup local Koha servers and keep the union database on a central server with catalogue updates done via Z39 or by sending new MARC records electronically.



- We offer public libraries :
  - Local Koha installation
  - Staff training on all Koha modules
  - Migrating their legacy data to Koha
  - Setting up barcoding etc to enable smooth operations
  - Making their OPAC available online
  - Adding their catalogue data to Granthalaya.org Union Catalogue
- For a nominal one time fee of Rs 5000/-



## Challenges we face

- Management resistance to change
- Staff resistance to change
- Data in local languages with proprietary fonts
- Data in proprietary backends ranging from Foxpro to MS Access to MS SQL
- Need to figure out the data schema, as each library that is already computerized is using a closed source software. None of which has ever heard of MARC or Z39..





## How we are doing it

- We install Koha on a local server at the public library
- Train staff for local language data input in Unicode using IBUS or Aksharmaalaa ( on Windows )
- We train the staff on working with Koha
- We assist the library management on best practices in cataloging, stacking, barcoding etc.
- For libraries with existing legacy software we convert their Non Unicode proprietary font based data to Unicode by using font vendor specific tools or by using a utility called Suvidha which does this for a large number of Indian font vendors for MS office file formats.



- So most of the times we ended up figuring out the data schema and getting the data in MS Excel.
- From MS Excel we converted the data to Unicode using Suvidha or font vendors conversion tools
- The data was cleaned up as much as possible
- And then we converted the bibliographic data to MARC using MarcEdit
- The converted bibliographic data was loaded in both the local server and the central Granthalaya.org server keeping same branchcode, barcodes etc.



## Where we are now

- So far we have helped 19 libraries convert their data to MARC and publish it as OPAC via [granthalaya.org](http://granthalaya.org) union catalogue.
- Granthalaya.org union catalogue now has approximately 800,000 books. Mostly in Devanaagari and some in English
- Visitors to [granthalaya.org](http://granthalaya.org) are able to easily search the catalogue in Devanaagari using Google Transliteration on the main search box.



## Whats next

- We want to add as many libraries as would join us to make granthalaya.org the most comprehensive Union Catalogue.
  - For smaller libraries which can't afford / don't want to host their own Koha server, we are offering a hosted Koha service.  
In addition to all the services offered to public libraries, at a very nominal annual fee, we host their Koha server on Granthalaya.org server. The libraries need only have internet connection from which they can do all their library operations and see their OPAC.
- We have a customer using this service :  
[opac.kalibindia.com](http://opac.kalibindia.com)



## Whats next

- People already find that its more convenient to search on [granthalaya.org](http://granthalaya.org) for a book
- We would like to bring the readers and publishers together by making [granthalaya.org](http://granthalaya.org) a platform where publishers can publish their catalogues and bring the books to the public faster, sell electronic / physical copies of the books.
- We would like to bring the readers and authors together by making [granthalaya.org](http://granthalaya.org) a platform for authors where they can publish and sell electronic / physical copies of their works.



# Thank you

## Granthalaya.org team

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