Koha in Finnish University and Special Libraries

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1. How We Selected Koha
Long history of shared library systems

- 1990s: VTLS for all "old" universities

- 2002: Voyager in all university libraries, including universities of applied science and some bigger special libraries

- Around 2011: "Voyager is aged. Let’s change!"
2012–2017: Quest for a New System

- 2012: Project, all libraries: university, public, special libraries.
- 2014: No clear path forward – different priorities.
- 2015–2016: Vendors were invited to pitch their products.
- 2017: Universities started a new project without others.
- 2018: No clear path forward – different priorities.
- 2018: Some universities decided to publish an invitation to tender.
  - (Result: Alma & Primo.)
- 2018: Others decided to go Open Source
  - and selected Koha.
2018–2019: When It Happened, It Was Quick

- February 2018: Discussion about Koha option begins.
- April 2018: First meeting of interested parties.
- October 2018: First new Koha Library goes live.
- October 2019. All 17 libraries in Koha.
Why Koha?

- **Affordable** – we *were* able to cut down costs.
  - Also had an effect on the costs of the commercial option!
- **Security** – we can be sure about the data security.
- **Openness** – important factor for some libraries.
- **Good experiences** – Finnish public libraries were happy.
- **Requirements** – we did not need bells and whistles.
- **Knowledge base** – Developers in the public libraries.
From a Local Fork to the Community Version

- 2018 we first adopted the existing Finnish fork of Koha.
  - Pros: customized for local practices.
  - Cons: burden of maintenance.
- 2020 we moved to the Community version.
  - Effort in the Community version where it benefits all.
  - Need to convince the community about your vision.
- Public libraries in the process of cleaning up their version, upgrade in summer 2022.
2. Koha in Finland Today
Many Finnish Public Libraries Use Koha

- ~100 municipalities, out of 309
- 25 % of population
- 7 "circuits", 1 mpty on its own
- Koha-Suomi Ltd, owned by the municipalities, provides services.
Koha University and Special Libraries

- 4 universities
- 9 universities of applied science
- National Library
- National Repository Library
- Statistics Finland
- National Archives

= Main Libraries
= Branches
Koha is a Component
Koha Is a Component

- **Finna.fi** – National Discovery and Delivery Service.
- Koha ILS
- **Melinda**, the National Cataloguing Platform and Metadata Repository (based on Aleph)
Finna is the Only Customer Interface

- [https://www.finna.fi/Content/about?lng=en-gb](https://www.finna.fi/Content/about?lng=en-gb)
- Organization can build its own look-and-feel,
- and select what resources are shown in searches.
  - Own library catalogue, neighbour libraries, institutional repository, others
  - Scientific journals through a central index (at the moment, Primo Central)
  - All customer actions: holds, renewals, etc.
  - E.g. Abo Akademi University’s own Finna: [https://abo.finna.fi/?lng=en-gb](https://abo.finna.fi/?lng=en-gb)
- In addition, “national” [https://www.finna.fi](https://www.finna.fi)
  - Gathers together resources that are easily accessible to all
    - public libraries’ holdings
    - Open access online text, images, etc.
Ajankohtaista

21.4. Uuden maailmankin kirjoja, merkittäviä kylttejä

3.1. Tiedotuskirjasto

14.12. Ohja ammattin varansa ja neuvon koko kirjastossa

12.7.1. Merkityksettä näyttelee kirjastosta Sillín-Finnassa

36.8. Saivietin digitoiminnan seminaarilla ja tarjoaa nuorten

18.8. Nämä käytä vihreäksi suunta, ja äänikirjaa – kutsu video

24.6. Lasten musiikinkeikoihin aiheutti lasten- ja nuortensaattia

6.4. Kirjallisuuden 1.4.2021 aikaan

Aukioloajat

25.4. Maan

25.4. Tyntään

27.4. Tässä

28.4. To

29.4. Pe

30.4. La

1.5. Su

Kansalliskirjasto
**Melinda is the source of Bibliographic Records**

- Shared metadata repository: re-use others’ records
- Cataloguing done either in Melinda, or in your own system
- Records replicated to local library systems
- Items (and holdings) created in local systems

- [melinda.kansalliskirjasto.fi](http://melinda.kansalliskirjasto.fi)
3. Koha Organization
Our Koha Team

- Supervisor (with other responsibilities)
- Chief Developer (Andrii Vashchuk)
- 2 Developers (Petro Vashchuk and Slava Shishkin)
- System Administrator for small libraries (Jussi Brunberg)
- 1 person doing projects that rely on Koha (Ari Ahlquist)
- Library support for IT, communications, etc.

- Libraries usually have a system librarian of their own, some buy extra services from the National Library
Koha Consortium of Uni and Special Libraries

National Library – Koha Team

Server platform

CSC – Platform Services
CSC Ltd = Centre for Scientific Computing, non-profit owned by the State and Universities. csc.fi

Maintenance & Development

Library

Library

Library
Koha Consortium of Uni and Special Libraries

- System Librarians 2/month
- Specialist Group 1/month
- Steering Group 1/month
- QA Meeting 3/year
- Directors’ Meeting 2/year

P = visited by public libraries
C = Visited by CSC
N = Visited by the National Library
Active Communication with System Librarians

- Bi-weekly meetings
- Slack for discussion
- Jira for tickets
- System Librarians’ mutual support important
- Learning how to formulate your problem – learning the business logic
- Especially important: upgrade piloting. Libraries take turns in putting extra effort in testing.
Koha in a National Library

- Some challenges, mostly solved, with
  - Complexity: service desks & reading rooms & stack locations & different rules for different collections.
  - Component parts – Finns cannot do without them
  - Older literature, esp. bound volumes
  - Holdings records still a bit under construction
  - Reading room loans were a challenge, now solved

- Printed collections do and will matter for us.
4. Future of Koha
SWOT
Dec ‘21

**STRENGTHS**
Customizations
Participation
Trust
Costs

**WEAKNESSES**
Electronic materials
Layered Code Base
Hidden Use of Resources
Agility Needs Learning

**POSSIBILITIES**
Modular Architecture
User-Centered
International Community
Knowledge Sharing

**THREATS**
Electronic materials
Dependence on Community Development Resources
If one leaves...
In the Focus Now

- **Electronic Resource Management**
  - Comparing Practices, Solutions
  - Also focus in the Community

- **Inter-Library Loans**
  - Customer self-service through Finna
  - Especially loans from the Repository Library
  - Standard support (ISO 18626)

- **Bibframe, Open Linked Data, Death of MARC**
  - Melinda makes the change first
Potential Future of Koha in Finland

- Public libraries:
  - Future growth is possible

- University and Special libraries:
  - Other solutions have strengths, too, but Koha is affordable and flexible.
  - Needed: a service model for small libraries: even cheaper but more bare-bones service.
  - ERM needs work.
Future of Global Koha

- Positive outlook
- Vibrant community
- Listening to suggestions

Needed:
- Vision and Direction
- Participation of non-coders