http://www.goalexandria.com/v7Docs/index.php/Authority_Control

Tools: Authority Control

Authority Control in Alexandria gives you a simple way to maintain consistency in your bibliographic records.

For example, if you are pulling a report for books by 'Mark Twain', do you know that you will find all of your Mark Twain books? What about the 'Mark Twaine' or 'Samuel Clemens' entries, input on accident or imported from another database?

Or maybe you found that some of your publishers have multiple variations, like "Fountas and Pinnell" vs "Fountas & Pinnell", or "A.A. Knopf" vs "Alfred A. Knopf".

Do you have to track down *all* of these inconsistencies, find the correct MARC tag, and change them? One by one? NO way! Life is too short for that.

With Authority Control, not only do you *not* have to know the MARC tags for Authors or Publishers or Subjects, but you can change every instance of a misspelled or mis-entered term *at the same time*.

Authority Control

From Tools, open Authority Control. Find the Patron and Item fields on the left, such as City, or Publisher, and click on a field to see (on the right) every single term used—across all your records—in that field. Any change to a term here will go out and change that term in all the applicable patron or item records.

Going with the earlier example, let's look under Publishers. In this data, I have Alfred A. Knopf in two variations, and Harper Collins with and without a space, plus some other duplicates in here.

You will have to decide which variation you want to use. Let's say we decide to go with HarperCollins as one word. Click on the entry you want to change, in this case Harper Collins, and click Edit Term. Make your changes, then hit YES or NO…

The YES button here gives you *awesome* information: like Utilities, it shows approximately how many records this change will affect. 300 records, huh? Close that for a moment. Edit the other instance of HarperCollins. 'This may modify up to 1 record'. Maybe you change your mind and decide to change the one record, or maybe you go back to that other entry and change all 300 of the others. Either way, when you finish, you will have *one* entry for HarperCollins.

You can go through the same process for A.A. Knopf, and any of the other publisher entries.

See & See Also

What about that other example, for Mark Twain (in any variation) vs. Samuel Clemens? Let's go to Names, Personal Name (Author), and do a search. This is a 'begins with' type search, so in this case, I'll look for Mark, and won't find the Twain, and a search for Twain shows it's because the entry has been done last name first. With a date. And a period. If you'd like to take a moment to check *your* database to see how many variations of his name you might have, I'll wait….

Whatever version you decide on, you can simply change all the entries here to match, but what do you do about Samuel Clemens? That's what the See & See Also fields are for. Click on a term, and you'll notice at the bottom you have 'Edit Term' and you also have 'Edit See and See Also'.

'See' terms are common incorrect terms, such as misspellings of the name, (Mark Twaine) whereas 'See Also' is for things like pseudonyms or common related terms. Enter Samuel Clemens here and click Add, then Save the record.

Patron Terms

We haven't talked about it, but Authority Control also works for patron terms, such as Homeroom or Grade.

Example #1: A homeroom teacher marries and changes her name. Come in here to change the term, and it will update all the patron records.
Example #2: If you run a lot of reports or utilities based on Grade—such as the Advance Patron Grade utility—you want to make sure the Grades in your Grade Table and the Grades in your Patron records are consistent. Check here in Authority Control to see what kinds of terms are being input in your patron records, and change them as needed.

Patron & Item Management

So maybe you've entered Salt Lake City in most patron records, but only Salt Lake in some. Authority Control lets you change these terms retroactively, but it also helps you enter them in the first place.

That's right—Authority Control manifests in the management windows as 'shadow text'; when you go to type in an Authority Controlled term, and type at least 3 characters, it will find the corresponding Authority Control entry and pull up the suggestion.
You can tab out of the field and it will fill it in for you.

Remove Unused Terms

Occasionally, you may get terms that have once been in your collection but no longer apply. Removing a title record does *not* remove the Authority Control subject or other entries unique to that record. Same with Patron records.

In any Category, come up to the actions menu, and you can 'Remove Unused Terms' in this category.

That's all for this video. If you need any help with Authority Control at all, contact COMPanion Customer Support at 1.800.347.4942.