What is Aeon?

Aeon is special collections circulation and workflow automation software for your special collections library designed by special collections librarians. Aeon improves customer service and staff efficiency while providing unparalleled item tracking, security and statistics. The software was designed in consultation with the staff of the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library at the University of Virginia.

Aeon features a web based patron interface. From this interface, special collections patrons can request items from your collection that they have found either in searching your ILS or from an EAD finding aid. In addition, your patrons can see their entire request history and special notes from the library staff.

The main component of the Aeon software is the staff client, this is what really allows “librarians to be librarians, not paper pushers.” From the staff client, special collections staff can see a list of customer requests, search them in your local catalog (if required), print pull slips, handle checkout/check-in, place items on hold, and return them to be reshelved. The entire process is found on the screen in front of you.

Most importantly, the transaction database is separate from your ILS and only contains your special collections data. This data can be stored indefinitely, allowing you to easily create reports ranging from collection utilization to usage tracking for items that have been lost or stolen from your collection.

We’re impressed by how well Atlas understands our special needs and by their commitment to creating a product that will help us deliver better service with more security than we ever thought possible.

Christian Y. Dupont
Director
Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library The University of Virginia

Web Interface
Patron Requests Items from ILS or EAD finding aids.
In addition, patron can see their request history as well as custom notes sent to the library staff.

Staff Client
Staff manage requests including searching ILS, printing pull slips, and handling checkout/check-in and item hold. Date and time stamp tracking shows current status of each request (Awaiting Processing, In Stack Searching, Checked Out to Customer, On Hold, and Awaiting Reshelving)

Data on each request is stored indefinitely allowing staff to create reports on collection usage, and in the event of loss or theft to retrace the history of an item through multiple patron usages.

Now available from the following regional networks.
See Aeon in Action–Staff Interface

Special Collections staff members access Aeon via the staff client. The client can be installed on as many machines as needed within the library.

The main menu of the staff client quickly and easily shows you the status of all of your patron requests. Aeon tracks each request throughout the process, moving it from step to step as you process your patron requests. In addition, Aeon stores a date/time/user stamp each time a request is touched by staff or patrons.

Aeon was designed with easy to use “ribbon controls” which guide you through the process by showing you the next logical step. You see those ribbons at work when you select a specific patron request. Aeon is guiding you to the next possible steps–do you want to print pick slips? Search your catalog via z39.50 for call number or location information? Or maybe route this request to a different status. All are just a click away.

Since your circulation and patron information is stored in the Aeon database, your special collection library can maintain this data for an infinite period of time.

While this data retention is a great security feature, it also allows for the creation of a wide variety of management reports. With Aeon you can easily track patron request trends for staffing needs and search request data for collections utilization–answering questions such as should we move certain items to offsite storage or should we look to expand a certain collection–based on the usage by your patrons.

Inventory Control

Do you know at one glance where all of your special collections items are? With Aeon you do. Looking at the main menu will tell you at a glance how many items should be in your reading room, how many items should be on your hold shelf, how many items are being called from your stacks, and how many items you have ready to be re-shelved.

Customer Service

Need to know more about a patron request? It is not a problem with Aeon. Easily search the database for any information about a request. Do you have a patron in front of you who wants to see something they have requested before? The answer is just a few clicks away.

Patron Security

Do you need more security? Store a patron photo, signature scan, or use a patron “PIN” number.

Aeon has a variety of ways to control patron access ranging from LDAP, patron loads, to manual patron registration. You can also link to a variety of remote authentication servers such as Shibboleth or CoSign.
Patron Web Interface

Patron access to Aeon is via a simple web interface. This web interface is easily customizable to match the look and feel of your library website.

From the main menu, your patrons have the ability to request materials from your collections as well as see their entire request history.

Aeon makes it easy for your patrons to request items from your collection. Patrons simply search your collection through your ILS or EAD finding aids. Within the ILS or EAD finding aid you can link to Aeon via OpenURL. This allows for simple “one click” requesting.

Stay in Touch
Special collections staff can easily send messages to the web page of a specific patron, group of patrons, or to everyone. Do you have a new exhibit in your library or are you going to be closed for the holiday? Now you can easily notify all of your patrons.

Digital Services
Do you have researchers using your collection from around the world? Version 2.0 of Aeon will feature the ability for patrons to request photocopies or images of items in your collection. You can then deliver them directly to the patron via the web page—and most importantly—collect a fee for the service.

From within the EAD you can further control the level of requesting. Do you allow patrons to request at the box level, folder level, or item level from within your EAD guide?

Aeon takes your EAD data and provides convenient check boxes for patrons to request exactly the item(s) they want.

If you are like most special collections libraries, you have items that have not yet been added to your ILS or EAD. Aeon offers you the option of using a patron request form for these items. Your patron simply completes the form and submits it like any other request. Staff also have the option to look up a patron in the client and create a request for them.

Detailed Item Tracking
Every transaction in Aeon is assigned a unique transaction number. In the event of loss or theft, this allows you to quickly search by the specific item and see which patrons and staff have accessed that item.
Pricing

Aeon is provided as an annual subscription, which covers your usage of the software, all updates/enhancements/new releases, as well as email and telephone customer support. In addition, Atlas Systems provides server hosting for the Aeon software. With this additional service, all you need are the computers for your staff—Atlas will handle the rest.

There are 2 tiers for the pricing of Aeon—small and large libraries. Contact your local regional network or aeon@atlas-sys.com for a price quote.

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About Atlas

Atlas Systems is a software development company founded in July 1995 with the mission of “developing library automation services to promote library excellence.” Atlas is best known for the creation and development of the ILLiad interlibrary loan management software, in use in over 900 libraries and now exclusively distributed by OCLC. However, Atlas has a growing collection of library automation products designed to meet library needs not currently addressed by standard library software services.

Atlas is a process driven software development company. This means working with librarians to first understand the underlying environment to be automated and then designing the software to automate the process. Once the software has been created, Atlas provides implementation assistance, training, and ongoing support of the product, continually upgrading the software in response to our client’s needs and suggestions. This workflow review approach to software design sets Atlas apart in the library automation market.

Atlas Systems is based in Virginia Beach and currently has a staff of 15, split almost equally between development, customer support/training, and administration/marketing.

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