Book-Be-Gone
for Alma
v 3.0

Overview

Book-Be-Gone is for withdrawing books in Alma. A user scans the barcode of an item and Book-Be-Gone performs some checks before adding it to a set in Alma. The user then run the "withdraw items" job on the set to finish the process.

Book-Be-Gone can also append the OCLC numbers for all scanned items into a plain text file. This file can then be loaded into OCLC Connexion for the purpose of withdrawing holdings.

Installation

Book-Be-Gone (BBG) is a Windows application that runs on both 32 and 64 bit systems.

It is also self-contained, meaning it can be run from a local folder without installing any other dependencies.

BBG is delivered as a zip file called bbg.zip.

The zip file should contain the following files and folders:

> ./images/logo_small.ico
> ./images/logo_large.jpg
> ./docs/bbg_docs.pdf
> bbg.exe
> config.ini

If any files are missing, it is because your antivirus software has quarantined BBG.

If that has happened, you will need to whitelist BBG with your antivirus software.

Your IT department can help you with this if you don't have sufficient permissions.

If your IT department has any concerns about the nature of the program, they are welcome to contact the developer. See CONTACT INFO at the end of this document.

Many people, even if they don't have permissions to install software on their computer, can probably run BBG without any problems.

TIP: If your system is still blocking access, you can try to unzip and run from a flash drive.

Setup – Config.ini

This is the main configuration file for BBG.

BBG will read this file at startup and check for errors.

If you make any changes to this file while BBG is loaded, you will need to restart BBG after saving the changes for them to take effect.

apikey

Place your api key here. See following SETUP - API KEY section for more information.

checks

A 'check' in BBG means that the program will alert the user and stop any further processing. Each check must be set to 'active' or 'inactive' for BBG to process.

serial_check

Checks if item in hand is a serial. Must be 'active' or 'inactive'.

other_items_check

Checks if there are other item records associated with the bib record. Must be 'active' or 'inactive'.

other_holdings_check

Checks if there are other holding records associated with the bib record. Must be 'active' or 'inactive'.

attached_orders_check

Checks if there are any associated orders for this item. Must be 'active' or 'inactive'.

bib_search

Checks bib for a search string. Must be 'active' or 'inactive'.

bib_search_phrase

Phrase to look for in bib record. This is case insensitive.

add_item_note

Will insert a note in the item record before adding to the set. This note can then be found with analytics, even after the record has been deleted. Must be 'active' or 'inactive'.

item_note_field

Specify the item record field to receive the note. Acceptable options are statistics_note_1, statistics_note_2, or statistics_note_3.

item_wd_note

Specify the note to be placed in the record. Can be any note of your choice. Alma analytics will remember this note even after the record has been deleted.

add_to_set

If the item passes the above checks, then it is added to a set in Alma. See following section SET - SETUP for more information. Must be 'active' or 'inactive'.

wd_set_id

Place the set_id here. This is Alma's unique identifier for the set. See following SET - SETUP section for more information on how to find it.

oclc_logging

BBG can write the OCLC number of the scanned item to a plain text file in a folder of the user's choosing. This file can then be imported into OCLC Connexion and the holdings deleted in batch. The file can be deleted at any time. BBG will simply start a new file if it doesn't find the file specified.

Must be 'active' or 'inactive'.

oclc_log_path

Path to where you want the OCLC log file to be written. BBG will check if this location is valid at startup and alert if not found.

oclc_prefixes

If you need to, you can add specific OCLC prefixes to the default list and BBG will search for the prefix and add to the OCLC delete holdings file. The values included in the config.ini are all the standard control number prefixes as listed in OCLC documentation, so, unless your institution does things outside the norm, this field should be left unchanged.

Setup – Api Key

To use Book-Be-Gone, you will need an api key with the following permissions:

-Bibs read/write
-Acquisitions read
-Configuration read/write

To test your api key, open BBG. Choose SETTINGS -> TEST API KEYS.

After about 30 seconds, a message will popup telling you the status of your api key. If each section says "OK" then you are good to go.

Also, the test will include the institution code associated with the api key. This will tell you where the api key is pointed. Make sure this institution code matches your library. If it does not match, you are using an api key pointed to the wrong place and BBG will not work properly.

If any other errors appear, then you need to check your key and make sure it is set up correctly.

Tip: A common problem is that the key was created, but it points to the SANDBOX environment and not the PRODUCTION environment.

More information: https://developers.exlibrisgroup.com/alma/apis

Setup – Set

You will need to create an itemized Physical Items set in Alma. This is where scanned items will live once they have passed all checks. It is also the set you will run the "Withdraw Items" job against.

After you have created an empty set, click on the set name in the main "Manage Sets" list view. Copy the "Set ID" from this screen into config.ini

How to Use

The user scans a barcode of an item in hand.

If the item passes all checks, it will be added to a set in Alma, where the user can then run the "Withdraw Items" job using whatever options makes sense for their library.

For example, you can run the Withdraw Items job and choose "delete bibliographic records" and "delete holdings" to fully delete the item and all associated records. Otherwise, you can choose to suppress the bib or holdings as you like.

If an item does not pass a check, a pop up alert will appear and BBG will stop processing this item further. It can then be placed into another workflow for special processing.

Troubleshooting

If there is a problem, BBG will display errors on the screen in red. The most common errors are:

Invalid API Key: Alma doesn't recognize your api key. Check that it is entered correctly and delete any trailing spaces. You can also run SETTINGS->TEST API KEYS to get a detailed report of your api key.

Bad barcode: The barcode provided was blank.

The following ID(s) are already in the set: The item is already a member in the set. Likely, it was scanned twice by accident.

No items found for barcode: This means Alma was unable to find the barcode in its database, probably because it was already withdrawn, or the barcode was never placed in the item record.

Exception: ….. : This means that Alma checked the item and found an exception based on the options set in the configuration file. At this point, the item can be put aside and put into a different workflow, based on your library's needs.

BBG will also check the config.ini file at startup. If any of the values are incorrect, it will flag you before you get started.

Contact Info

Jeremy Hobbs
jthobbs@calpoly.edu
http://jeremyhobbs.org