

Talking Points

Virtual Reference

Joint Meeting Roundtables 2004

1. Who are you? And how long have you been providing virtual reference at your library? Or what is your interest in digital reference?
2. What is the impact of providing Dig Ref at your library? Has your clientele been responsive to this media?
3. What 3 things would improve Dig Ref for you or your library?
(such as voice, fewer bugs, no lost sessions)
4. How is virtual reference different from providing traditional in person or telephone reference?
5. What have been your successes with providing virtual reference?
6. Do you offer email reference? Has it changed since you have been offering virtual reference?
7. What else would you like to know from others providing virtual reference?

ROUNDTABLE NOTES: Virtual Reference Roundtable

January 29, 2004

Attendees:

Kay Deeney (PSRML) - facilitator

Michaeleen Trimarchi (Scripps Research Institute)

Mary White (Drug Information Center, Kaiser Permanente, Downey, CA)

Doris Hayashikawa (Kaiser Santa Clara)

Dolores Judkins (Oregon Health Sciences University)

Sumedha Shende (Kaiser San Francisco)

Christina Mayberry (USC Norris Medical Library) – Recorder

- Firewall issues for collaborating with other libraries
- Provide answer or lead to resource
- Technical issues – trouble pushing pages
- Voice access

Kay Deeney, MLS, AHIP

kdeeney@library.ucla.edu

January, 2004

- Learning curve for chat interactions
- Licensing restrictions across libraries
- Not knowing to whom you are talking (context)
- Compensation for ILL for requests through digital reference interactions (Who should bear the cost?)
- Document delivery – legal issues for sharing information
- Users using multiple methods for obtaining answer to same question when initial answer is unsatisfactory
- How should assistance be provided? – print, fax, email, online
- Transcripts can be used to indicate areas for training
- Tracking users – servers, zip codes, other digital reference services
- How digital reference interactions are different from other types of reference interactions
 - In-person has visual cues
 - Phone has voice
 - Time lapse in digital reference
 - Lack of response after email sent
 - User background unknown
 - Easy to become disconnected
 - Feedback from users is lacking
- Sense of urgency – instant answer expectation
- Remembering that digital reference is just another mode like in-person, email, or phone (Use the most appropriate method for the question)
- Forget to do a reference interview
- Considerations for software
 - Selection (companies)
 - Cost
 - Features
- Patron registration – info required such as name, status, email address
- Privacy – transcript retention
- Investment of time, personnel
- Multiple users
- User and librarian can be located anywhere
- Branding/naming the service