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THE QUESTIONNAIRE

CHAPTER 1 – AVAILABILITY AND CONSORTIA

1. When is the library's virtual reference service available to patrons?
2. Does the library run a virtual reference service itself?
3. Does the library participate in a virtual reference consortium?
4. Does the library collaborate with one or more other libraries (not in a formal consortium) for its virtual reference service?
5. If your library participates in a virtual reference consortium, or partners with other libraries in a less formal way, how many library partners does the consortium or partnership have?
6. How many man-hours of labor or service does your library contribute to the consortium or partnership?
7. About how well would you say your consortium partners help your own library's clientele when they have questions about your own library's resources?

CHAPTER 2 – COMMERCIAL PROVIDERS OF VIRTUAL REFERENCE SERVICE

8. Has your library ever used _____ for its virtual reference services?
 - A. QuestionPoint
 - B. Digsby
 - C. RefChatter
 - D. Tutor.com
 - E. AspiringKidz.com
 - F. Vienova.com
 - G. VRLplus
9. If your library has used any other provider of commercial reference services not listed above, please specify.
10. Does your library currently use _____ for its virtual reference services?
 - A. QuestionPoint
 - B. Digsby
 - C. RefChatter

- D. Tutor.com
 - E. AspiringKidz.com
 - F. Vienova.com
 - G. VRLplus
11. If your library currently uses any other provider of commercial reference services not listed above, please specify.
12. Is your library currently using _____ for its library text messaging services?
- A. Google Voice
 - B. LibAnswers
 - C. LibraryH3lp
 - D. Reference by SMS
 - E. Mosio's Text a Librarian
13. Explain why you chose the text messaging and virtual reference platform services that you use. Why those particular services and not others?

CHAPTER 3 – USAGE STATISTICS

14. How many reference queries did your library get through virtual reference in 2012?
15. How many reference queries did your library get through virtual reference in 2013?
16. What is the average amount of time (in minutes) your librarians take to answer questions that are asked in real time while the inquirer waits for an answer?
17. What is the average amount of time (in hours) your librarians take to answer questions that must be researched in depth first and answered later?
18. Describe the statistics your library keeps about its virtual reference efforts.
19. Does your library track virtual reference questions by type of question or subject area?
20. If you track virtual reference questions by subject area, what are some of the leading subject areas for questions?
21. What are some of the most commonly asked questions that you hear over and over again?

CHAPTER 4 – SCOPE OF VIRTUAL REFERENCE SERVICES ACCESS

22. Does your library use a web form through which patrons can ask a reference question which the library will then answer (generally by email) within a given time period?
23. If your library uses such a web form, how many web form queries did it get in the past year?
24. Does your library offer virtual reference through Skype?
25. About what percentage of your library's reference query responses include a screenshot or video in the response?
26. If your reference librarians include screenshots or videos in their responses, do they use _____?
 - A. Camtasia
 - B. Jing
 - C. Screenjelly
 - D. Capture Fox
27. If your reference librarians include screenshots or videos in their responses, and use a program not listed above, please specify.
28. Does your library currently use any form of video reference?
29. Can library patrons send text messages to the virtual reference service as a way of accessing the service?
30. If your library reference service currently accepts text message reference queries, what percentage of total reference queries come through the text message channel?
31. Does your library accept reference queries through _____?
 - A. Twitter
 - B. A micro-messaging service other than Twitter
 - C. Facebook
 - D. LinkedIn
32. Approximately how many reference queries did the library field in the past year via _____?
 - A. Twitter

- B. Facebook

CHAPTER 5 – REFERENCE QUERY DATABASE

33. Does your library maintain any form of reference query database?
34. Does the library destroy the transcript or log of past reference queries after a given period of time?
35. If the library does destroy reference queries after a given period of time, what is that time period?
36. Does the library strip personal identifying information from its log or database of reference session transcripts?

CHAPTER 6 – VIRTUAL REFERENCE MANPOWER

37. Do you have one or more librarians whose main focus for a particular number of hours per week is on satisfying virtual reference requests?
38. If you have one or more employees who for at least some hours is dedicated to virtual reference, about what percentage of that person's (or their) time in that period is accounted for by work on virtual reference rather than on other tasks that may be performed during virtual reference downtime?
39. Approximately how many man-hours of labor per week did the library dedicate to virtual reference in _____?*
- A. 2012
- B. 2013
- C. 2014 (anticipated)
40. Approximately how many librarians at your library are involved in responding to virtual reference queries?

CHAPTER 7 – COSTS AND MARKETING

41. Is there a line item or specific outlay in the library budget for the virtual reference service?
42. What is the library's spending (in USD) on _____ for its virtual reference service?

* If two individuals each work 15 hours per week on virtual reference, the answer would be 30 hours.

- A. Equipment and software
 - B. Telecommunications costs
 - C. Staff training
 - D. Salaries
 - E. Publicity and marketing
43. What has been the course of the library's spending on virtual reference since inception? Has spending increased? If so, by how much? What might happen in the near future?
44. What measures has the library taken to publicize the virtual reference service?

CHAPTER 8 – FOR THE FUTURE

45. What advice would you offer peer institutions on establishing and running a virtual reference service?
46. What additions, changes, or alterations do you expect to make in your virtual reference service over the next few years?

SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Amigos Library Services
Arapahoe Community College
Ask Ontario
Auburn Public Library
Avera McKennan
Boston College
Bowie Public Library
Brazoria County Library System
Brooklyn College Library
Canyon Area Library
Colorado Mountain College
Columbia St. Mary's
The Community Library
Department of Water Western Australia
DeVry University
ETR Associates
Fayetteville Public Library
Florida State University, Goldstein Library
Fort Bend Count Libraries
Garfield County Public Libraries
Harold B. Lee Library
Health Canada Library
Illinois Valley Community College
Iowa Library Services
L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library
Lansing Community College Library
Laramie County Library System
Mamie Doud Eisenhower Public Library
Menlo Public Library
Nampa Public Library
Nicevill Public Library
Norwich University Library
The Open University
Peoria Public Library
Pflugerville Public Library
Phoenix Public Library
Pikes Peak Library District
Saint James School of Medicine
Shared Services (Bexley and Bromley Libraries)
South Texas College
Swem Library
Tanner Medical Center
Traverse Area District Library

University of Memphis

University College (University of Maine System)

University of Alberta Libraries

University of Haifa Library

University of Texas at Austin

Vail Public Library

Victoria College/University of Houston-Victoria Library

Weinberg Memorial Library

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

Overall sample size: 51

By Type of Library

Public	21
Academic	20
Special*	10

By Number of FTE Library Employees

Less than 5	10
5 to 19	12
20 to 49	10
50 to 149	10
150 or more	9

By Type of Virtual Reference Service

Real time	14
Answer later	8
Both services	29

By Year the Library's Virtual Reference Service was Established

No response	6
Earlier than 2004	16
2004 to 2008	17
2009 or later	12

* Includes several hospital, medical, and healthcare libraries, state libraries, and non-profit reference collaboratives of both public and academic libraries.