Good Enough: The New Face of Reference

Doug Way, Grand Valley State University
Colleen Lyon, Grand Valley State University
Good Enough: The New Face of Reference

Doug Way and Colleen Lyon
Grand Valley State University Libraries
About GVSU

http://www.flickr.com/photos/paulcalypse/224948683/sizes/l/
Analysis of Reference Transactions
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Patron Type</th>
<th>Question Type</th>
<th>Time Spent</th>
<th>Question Format</th>
<th>Initials</th>
<th>Backdate</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zumberge-REF</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>0-5 minutes</td>
<td>Chat/IM</td>
<td>CL</td>
<td>10/15/09</td>
<td>Q: Where would I find the Call number DN ...</td>
<td>A: On the second floor</td>
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<td>Zumberge-CIRC</td>
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<td>Directional</td>
<td>5-15 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frey-290</td>
<td>GRBA</td>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>30 min+</td>
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<td>Q: Is there anywhere in here that I can break a five?</td>
<td>A: Yes at the circulation desk.</td>
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<td>10/15/09</td>
<td>Q: I need help finding books on police liability</td>
<td>A: Looked up some in the catalog with a keyword search.</td>
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<td>Q: I requested through Doc Del but they canceled it because you guys own it. Can you help me find it?</td>
<td>A: He gave the wrong title at first so after talking to Vicki, I located the right title.</td>
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Q: (3:28:25 PM) guslibraries entered the room. (3:28:29 PM) Guest_A664F9C7 entered the room. (3:28:40 PM) Guest_A664F9C7: hello? (3:28:40 PM) guslibraries: How can we help you? (3:29:03 PM) Guest_A664F9C7: hey there, im doing a bibliography for a history class and i am having trouble finding sources and how to cite them correctly (3:29:25 PM)
Reference Transaction Analysis

Winter Semester - 2009

Total questions: 4407

Questions related to a reference source: 249
Reference Source Questions

• 51 involved an **online** source
• 70 questions in which a librarian referred a patron to a source
• 172 questions in which a **student** requested a source
• About 46% of the total reference source questions referred to dictionaries, citation questions or assignment related sources
What We’re Seeing in the Use of Online Reference Sources
High Use

Reference Usage: Winter 2009

Print Titles: 125
eBook Titles: 336
High Use

Reference Usage: Winter 2009

- Print Titles: 125
- eBook Titles: 336
- eBook Section Views: 5,490
High Use
High Use

Reference Usage: Winter 2009

- Print Titles
- eBook Titles
- eBook Section Views
- Reference DB Sessions
- Reference DB Searches

Counts:
- 125
- 336
- 5,490
- 16,102
- 48,048
Strong Growth

Credo Reference Sessions Per Year

- 2005: 326
- 2006: 1,144
- 2007: 2,071
- 2008: 6,139

Total Sessions
Quick Adoption

Database Use in First Year

- Oxford Language Dictionaries: 1,331 searches, 9,520 sessions
- Gale Lit. Crit. Online: 2,988 searches, 31,345 sessions
- Pop Culture Universe: 3,016 searches, 20,500 sessions
Assignment Driven Use
Factors Driving Changes in User Behavior

Internet
Satisficing
Procrastination

80%

http://www.flickr.com/photos/44124473190@N01/47544223
What Has This Lead To?

Fundamental change in how users interact with the collection
What is impacting the delivery of reference services?
Increasing Demands on Librarians

Scholarly Communication
Increasing Demands on Librarians

Collaboration

http://www.flickr.com/photos/fncll/145149313/
Increasing Demands on Librarians

Workshops
Finding the Time

- Approval plans for some subject areas
- Patron initiated buying
- Take librarians off the reference desk

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wooden_hourglass_edit.jpg
Changes in Reference Education

- **Focus is on types of sources**
- **Individual source titles are not emphasized**
What Does the New Reference Collection Look Like?
Aggregated and Bundled

- Credo, Oxford Reference, Ebrary
- Sage
- Implications
Leased

ultinate position

For lease

> Cheap as chips
> 80 sqm approx
> Great location

View By Appointment

Ben Vaughan 0419 65 55 19
Matt Hudson 0404 00 11 66

8354 1180
citycommercial.com.au

http://www.flickr.com/photos/sweetone/3345107825/
Repurchased

• It’s about **use**

• It’s about **space**
Hybrid

• Tied to the book

• Use driven by the catalog
Hybrid

- Tied to the book
- Use driven by the catalog

Credo Usage: 2007

- Searches
- Sessions

http://www.flickr.com/photos/sweetone/3345107825/
http://www.flickr.com/photos/ginnerobot/2549674296/sizes/l/
Subject oriented...
but in a different way

- **Source type functions as subject**
- **Interface suggests subjects**
- **Hyperlinks allow for browsing that is familiar to patrons**
- **Jump between subjects**
Disintermediated

- Single search box
- Don’t need to know individual titles
- User doesn’t need to ask for assistance

http://www.flickr.com/photos/bjmcclray/515435761/sizes/l/
Multiple Users

- Multiple seats means users don’t need to wait for someone else to finish
- No time wasted trying to find misplaced materials

http://www.flickr.com/photos/mischiru/2860228008/sizes/l/
Good Enough

- Wikipedia mentality
- Might be better sources than when print was the only option

http://www.flickr.com/photos/teamaskins/319031243/sizes/l/
What does the future of reference look like?

- **Print is dead**
- **Off the desk**
- **Use is king**
Questions?