Virtual Reference in Wisconsin
Attitude and Approach

- Trying to plan for the future of WI VR
- Not forcing anyone in to any slots or products
- Can we move towards an ideal VR service for the state and beyond?
- Success from adversity?
Old money going away, so asked what liked about the old and what might want in the future

Coming from a long association and use of OCLC’s QuestionPoint service

Did some quick analysis

Confirmed that various webinar meet up attendees responded the same as the survey takers <yup>
Rate the "Importance" of the following aspects of virtual reference on a scale of 1 to 5, "Not at all Important" to "Extremely Important".

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>1 - Not at All Important</th>
<th>2 - Somewhat Important</th>
<th>3 - Moderately Important</th>
<th>4 - Very Important</th>
<th>5 - Extremely Important</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The virtual reference service is available 24/7</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>18.8% (3)</td>
<td>18.8% (3)</td>
<td>6.3% (1)</td>
<td>56.3% (9)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The virtual reference service is available as a statewide service</td>
<td>6.3% (1)</td>
<td>18.8% (3)</td>
<td>25.0% (4)</td>
<td>31.3% (5)</td>
<td>18.8% (3)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual reference is provided by a consortium of librarians</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>25.0% (4)</td>
<td>12.5% (2)</td>
<td>31.3% (5)</td>
<td>31.3% (5)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions are answered by librarians in the state</td>
<td>18.8% (3)</td>
<td>25.0% (4)</td>
<td>43.8% (7)</td>
<td>6.3% (1)</td>
<td>6.3% (1)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions are answered by librarians at the local institution</td>
<td>18.8% (3)</td>
<td>12.5% (2)</td>
<td>31.3% (5)</td>
<td>31.3% (5)</td>
<td>6.3% (1)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions sent to institutions are routed to other institutions as appropriate</td>
<td>6.3% (1)</td>
<td>6.3% (1)</td>
<td>37.5% (6)</td>
<td>18.8% (3)</td>
<td>31.3% (5)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The service includes service via text messaging</td>
<td>6.3% (1)</td>
<td>18.8% (3)</td>
<td>31.3% (5)</td>
<td>18.8% (3)</td>
<td>25.0% (4)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What other aspects are important to you?

[Show Responses]
Rate your "Satisfaction" with the following aspects of the existing AskAway service on a scale of 1 to 5, “Very Dissatisfied” to “Very Satisfied”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>1 - Very Dissatisfied</th>
<th>2 - Moderately Dissatisfied</th>
<th>3 - Satisfied</th>
<th>4 - Moderately Satisfied</th>
<th>5 - Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The answers from other WI institutions of the same type (academic or public)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>7.1% (1)</td>
<td>28.6% (4)</td>
<td>14.3% (2)</td>
<td>50.0% (7)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The answers from other WI institutions of a different type</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>14.3% (2)</td>
<td>21.4% (3)</td>
<td>21.4% (3)</td>
<td>42.9% (6)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The answers from librarians in other states</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>21.4% (3)</td>
<td>14.3% (2)</td>
<td>28.6% (4)</td>
<td>35.7% (5)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The answers from the contract employees</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>50.0% (7)</td>
<td>7.1% (1)</td>
<td>42.9% (6)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The features provided in the software</td>
<td>7.1% (1)</td>
<td>21.4% (3)</td>
<td>14.3% (2)</td>
<td>28.6% (4)</td>
<td>28.6% (4)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ease of use of the software</td>
<td>7.1% (1)</td>
<td>14.3% (2)</td>
<td>21.4% (3)</td>
<td>28.6% (4)</td>
<td>28.6% (4)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments. If not an AskAway library indicate your software or service.
Librarians prefer to have librarians answer their patrons questions, but not specific beyond that.

Therefore librarians “trust” other librarians.

Want to be able to answer, question and route sessions where ever necessary to get good answers to help local librarians help local patrons if needed.
If money were not a concern, would you be interested in continuing with AskAway as it exists now?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If "No", would you be interested in continuing with virtual reference in some other form?  Show Responses

answered question 15
For your institution, what days and hours are the most important to cover? Make multiple choices as appropriate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6am - 9am, before business hours</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9am - noon, morning business hours</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>noon - 5pm, afternoon business hours</td>
<td>53.3%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5pm - 10pm, evening hours</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10pm - 6am, night owl hours</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

answered question 15
How much money, as in dollars per year, could your institution contribute to a virtual reference service?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$0 - $500 per year</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500 - $1000 per year</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1000 - $1500 per year</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1500 - $2000 per year</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2000+ per year</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Past and current non-LSTA paying AskAway individual member libraries paid $800 per year.
How many hours of staff coverage, total per week, could your institution contribute to a virtual reference service, assuming the service would have a consortial component?

Keep in mind that your staff could be responding to your own patrons' questions as well as other institutions' patrons?
What would your ideal virtual reference service look like?

- Very easy to use for people of all ages and all levels of computer literacy
- More coverage by local librarians here, with 24/7 as a backup
- Easy to use software, 24 response guarantee, automatic referral to local library
- Outsourced and fully staffed by professional reference librarians.
- 24x7, accessible via mobile devices, via chat, IM, and texting
- It would have a component of chat reference for most hours the library was open, as the first line of answers. This would involve other librarians in each institution in our system being logged in and answering chat as a normal course of duties every day. I would see all libraries in our system or even our multitype shared catalog system being involved to some extent. Beyond the normal hours, and the hours monitored as coop, the QP system would back us up 24/7, as it does now.
OCLC Pricing – Current group

- Current group, state wide price
  - $83,000

- Current group, no contract coverage
  - $50,000
For the entire state, all libraries
$8,600
http://libraryh3lp.com/new-index

Other groupings
- Academic Libraries by FTE for 10,000 to 60,000
  $275 - $650
- Public Libraries by service population 100-000 to 600,000
  $275 - $650
The winner

Cost and flexibility

Check out the Video

http://screencast.com/t/ZB9isCp3PGd
What we’re likely to charge

- Consortium members
- $250 a year – minimum
- $350 a year – maximum
- That’s per library entity
- An entity is a library or group of libraries that would act as one for virtual reference: have one administrator, one queue, one staffing schedule for hours, etc.
AskAway.
- New name possible later to fit marketing needs.

WiLS will
- create the group
- negotiate with LibraryH3lp
- bill members
- administer initial service setups and patron interfaces
- train library administrators
- establish a training system for virtual reference librarians.
WiLS will work with the consortium members to establish a self governed and - as much as practical - a self-run group framework to continue AskAway.

WiLS would continue to be the central point for the consortium functions.
New Approaches

New Service = New Ideas = New Possibilities

Examples:

- Widget based, easier to cover more time in background, as reasonable for local situations of course
- Coverage expands naturally to meet patrons at demand, similar to desk times and open hours
- Someday expanded hours through contracts, or interns, or library students
- Someday expanded agreements with other consortium, such as NC
- Text message service
Resources

- LibraryH3lp
  - [http://libraryh3lp.com/](http://libraryh3lp.com/)

- LibraryH3lp blog
  - [http://libraryh3lp.blogspot.com/](http://libraryh3lp.blogspot.com/)

- LibraryH3lp docs
  - [https://docs.libraryh3lp.com/](https://docs.libraryh3lp.com/)

- AskAway demo widgets
  - [http://wilsorama.org/demowidgets/](http://wilsorama.org/demowidgets/)
Demo

- http://libraryh3lp.com/admin
- http://libraryh3lp.com/webchat
- http://wilsorama.org/demo

- Separate browsers to demo coverage and patron interfaces
LibraryH3lp Mini-Admin

Any account can create its own Queues and Users
- Admin your own service
- Run your own reports
- Only see your own users/queues/transcripts
- Overall Admin (WiLS) sees all
- Multi-layered hierarchy possible

Can establish top level queue that all can be users, therefore becomes the common shared queue for the entire service
Resources

- LibraryHelp Videos, old style
- Basic and Embed
  - http://www.screencast.com/t/pe1lTcmH7
- Popup
  - http://www.screencast.com/t/qYLovUhZjW
- Follow Me
  - http://screencast.com/t/CzRtGDo9
- Service Rollover
  - http://screencast.com/t/GpuM4YhQOy
Different widgets to different queues
- As many queues as you want, also ...
- As many widgets as you want

Same widget to different queues
- Gather it all back together

Same widget rolls over
- Prioritize service levels
Avatar Principles

- Each queue gets its own Avatar
  - Makes it easy for librarians to tell where the patron came from
  - Easier to handle multiple chats

- Each Librarian User becomes able to directly contact others
  - Specific other librarians
  - Anyone monitoring a specific queue
Avatar Example

IP Address: 144.92.126.240

2:30 23782413351324334033420856\40libraryh3lp.com@chat.libraryh3lp.com hey I have a question... can you see my avatar?
2:30 me I sure can, thanks!!!!
Profile Principles

- Each queue gets its own Profile
- Each user gets their own Profile
- They are merged into a single display upon use
- Uses the Avatar, click that button
RUSA VR user group meeting, Jan 2012.
- There were 75+ in room.
- How many cover while on the ref desk or working in the back room, not dedicated VR coverage, but running VR “in the background”?
- 90% said yup!

What’s the big idea?
- Can we create new approach to VR that creates a fully integrated approach to reference free of location and communication method?
Virtual Reference in Wisconsin

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