UMD Background

* 11,000 students
* 500 faculty
* Eight reference librarians
* Ref Desk Transactions
  * 13,000 in-person / year
  * 3,000 chat / year
* 66 ref desk hours/week in AY
Reference Desk Log

Date: 3/25/2011

Day: FRIDAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>&lt;1 min or Directional</th>
<th>1 to 5 min Reference</th>
<th>5 to 15 min Extended</th>
<th>&gt;15 min Consultation</th>
<th>IM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:45-9:00</td>
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<td>9:00-10:00</td>
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<td>10:00-11:00</td>
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<td>12:00-1:00</td>
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<td>1:00-2:00</td>
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<td>3:00-4:00</td>
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</table>

Look familiar???
* Paper Tally

  * **Cons:**
    * Data transferred to summarizing spreadsheet
    * Difficult to analyze spreadsheet
    * No insight into other behaviors
    * No place to record additional information
    * Chat singled out

  * **Pro:** Quick & easy
2008 began quest to move to digital tracking tool

Investigated Libstats, Desk Tracker and a fancy Excel program.

Chose Libstats with a 7/1/09 implementation date. Pushed back indefinitely due to technical issues with installation

A Microsoft Access tracker was created. Abandoned due to lack of enthusiasm and ease of use
Years later, we finally knew what we wanted. 😊

- Quick
- Limited demand on IT support staff
- Simple
- Minimal clicks
- Ability to add optional notes
Creation of SimpleStats

* Epiphany
* How to build it?
  * MySQL – too dependent on IT staff
  * Forms in Google Docs (UofM version) – hmm?
* One hour later, we had a working prototype, with no prior experience.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Techn</th>
<th>Direct</th>
<th>In Person</th>
<th>Chat</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>&gt; 5</td>
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<td>15+</td>
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Never time out
Brainstorm

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<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
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Clicks on Web interface would lead to input into a data storage place (spreadsheet, my SQL ?? etc.)

Every ref librarian or service desk could have a customizable version to record the Accr Field (e.g. Ref desk, Scarter, me berhar, etc.)
Creation of SimpleStats

* Epiphany
* How to build it?
  * MySQL – too dependent on IT staff
  * Forms in Google Docs (UofM version) – hmm?
* One hour later, we had a working prototype, with no prior experience.
### SimpleStats -- REFERENCE DESK

#### Note (optional):

**What format was this question in?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In Person</th>
<th>Chat</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Directional</td>
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<td>Computers/Printing</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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</table>

Submit
### Simple Stats Backend

#### Simple Stats -- Reference Desk

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<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Timestamp</td>
<td>Username</td>
<td>Note (optional):</td>
<td>Sample Question 2</td>
<td>Untitled Question</td>
<td>What format was this question in?</td>
<td>What format was this question in?</td>
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<td>music for &quot;This Land is Your Land&quot;</td>
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The steps to creating a desk statistics tracking tool are simple:

- 1. Create a Google account (if needed)
- 2. Log into Google and open Google Docs
- 3. Create a form
- 5. Add/format questions and customize form
- 6. Create an access point
- 7. Start recording
What did we learn?

Pros

- Easy to use
- Accessible from anywhere (back and front ends)
- Revealing
- Easy to record results from experiments

Cons

- Not everyone uses notes
- No controlled vocabulary for notes
- When the desk is busy, our recording is delayed, which alters analysis
- Google restrictions or future changes???
Bubble Chart – Fall 2011 & Spring 2012
All Ref Desk Transactions

Days of the week
(1=Sun; 2=Mon; 3=Tues; 4=Wed; 5=Thur; 6=Fri; 7=Sat)

Hours of the day
(24-hour clock)
Bubble Chart – Fall 2011 & Spring 2012
Reference Transactions

Days of the week
(1=Sun; 2=Mon; 3=Tues; 4=Wed; 5=Thur; 6=Fri; 7=Sat)

Hours of the day
(24-hour clock)

Series1
Statistics by Day
(Fall 2011 & Spring 2012 only)

All Transactions/Day:
- Highest: Monday with 47.68 transactions per day
- Lowest: Saturday with 8.20 transactions per day

Reference Transactions/Day
- Highest: Monday with 22.32 reference transactions per day
- Lowest: Saturday with 4.67 reference transactions per day

% Reference Question by Day:
- Highest: Saturday with 57% of the questions being reference questions
- Lowest: Wednesday with 44% of the questions being reference questions
Statistics by Hour
(Fall 2011 & Spring 2012 only)

All Transactions/Hour:
• Highest: 11A-12PM, 10-11AM and 1-2PM with 4.54, 4.21 and 4.12 transactions per hour
• Lowest: 8-9PM, 6-7PM and 5-6PM with 2.43, 2.55 and 3.03 transactions per hour

Reference Transactions/Hour:
• Highest: 11AM-12PM, 1-2PM and 3-4PM with 2.04, 2.02 and 1.90 reference transactions per hour
• Lowest: 8-9PM, 6-7PM and 9-10AM with 1.19, 1.25 and 1.32 reference transactions per hour

% Reference Questions by Hour
• Highest: 3-4PM, 5-6PM and 7-8PM with 53%, 52% and 51% of the questions being reference questions
• Lowest: 9-10AM, 10-11AM and 12-1PM with 41%, 45% and 45% of the questions being reference questions
Question: Is a 9-10PM shift necessary?

Spring 2012

24, 9-10PM shifts were randomly added

Preliminary results:

* 4th highest transaction/hour at 3.83 (after 11AM, 10AM and 1PM; the 9AM spot held the #8 position with 3.25)
* 1st place in terms of reference transactions/hour at 2.13 (the 9AM spot held the #11 position with 1.32)

Preliminary data incorporates all statistics generated from 9-10PM, even if it was not a scheduled 9-10PM shift. Further analysis of data is warranted.
Thanks to Tom Ambrosi, Sarah Beaubien & Rory Litwin.

Thanks to the UMD Reference Team.

Questions?

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UMD Library

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