

**Survey Results
& Analysis**

for

UC Digital Reference Staff Survey

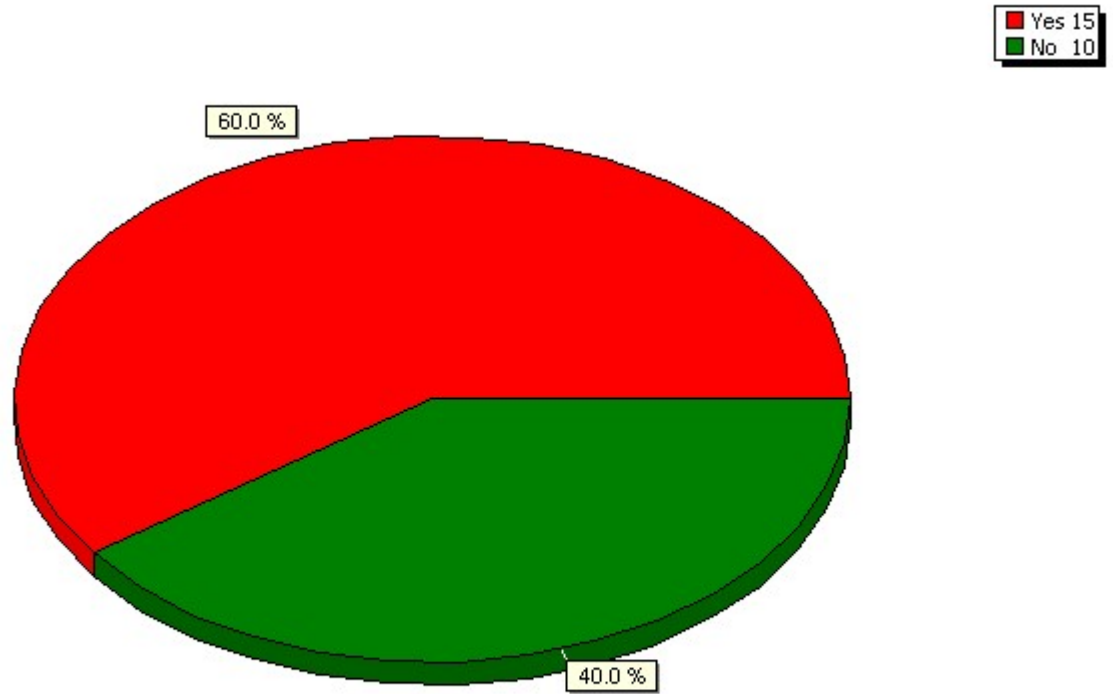
Tuesday, April 17, 2007
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Executive Summary

This report contains the statistical results of the survey titled *UC Digital Reference Staff Survey*. It includes answers from all respondents who took the survey in the 5 day period from Monday, April 9, 2007 to Monday, April 16, 2007. Twenty five responses were received. One incomplete response was submitted early by accident. Thus, there are 24 different responses. The UCDIGREF list has 39 members. Using that as an indicator of the number staffing the survey, there is a 62% response rate.

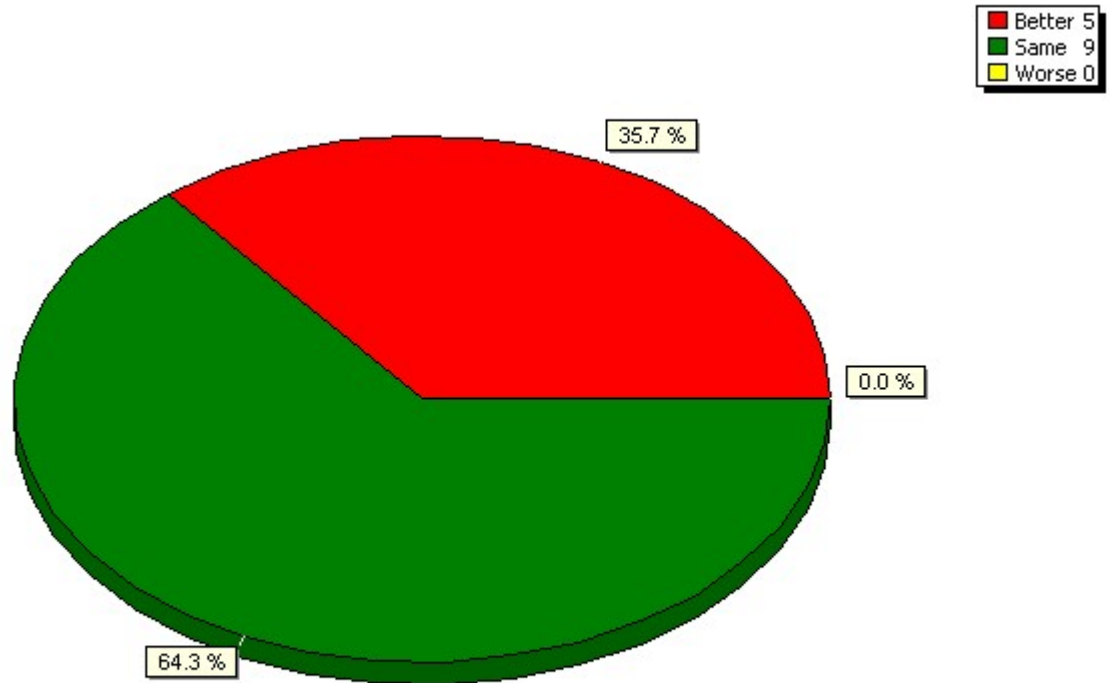
Are you on a UC campus that offered an ongoing chat reference service before the collaborative (select one)?

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If your campus has offered an ongoing service, compare the level of service you think your patrons received before and after the collaborative began (select one):

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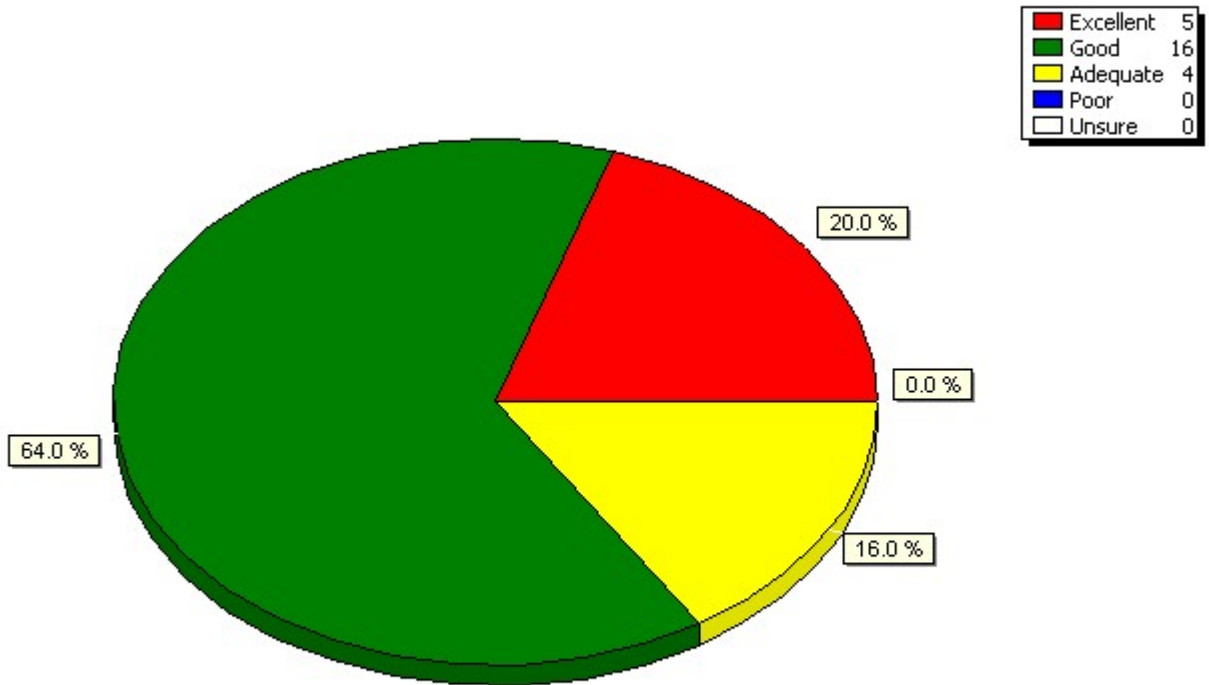


Comment Responses:

I don't really know, not having read through the transcripts. I would guess slightly better, perhaps
more service hours are offered; can share service tips and strategies; helpful discussion of service problems
did not have before
We used co-browse before, but that function was so erratic that it really didn't improve the service.
longer hours of service
Collaborative service expanded hours for patrons
Maybe better, if only because it seemed to be used more.
I'm guessing that the UC libns now participating in the Ask a UC Libn are the "better" at this than their peers. With our solo-campus service the reference libns providing this service were from a wider range: so-so, OK, pretty good, and really good

In general, the quality of service patrons received has been (select one):

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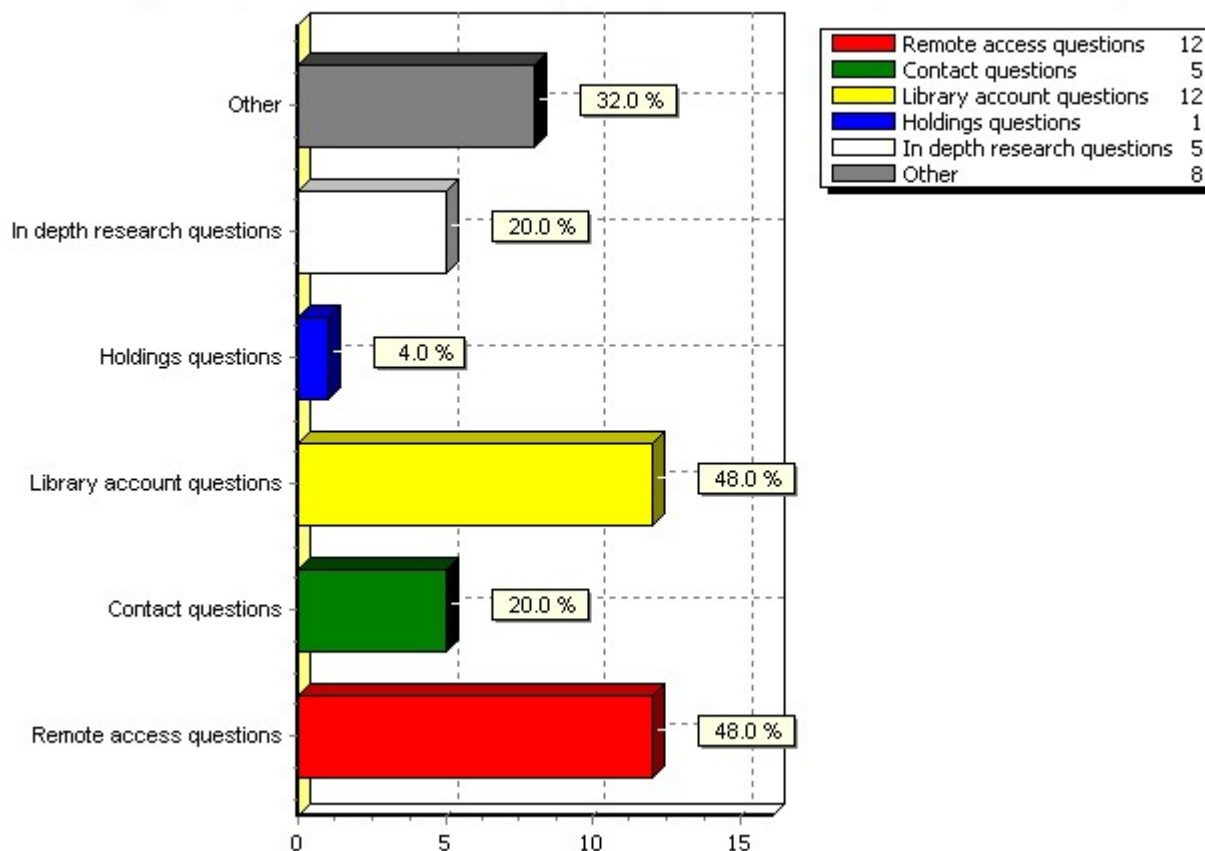


Comment Responses:

I think the speed of the software leaves a lot to be desired.
It is still difficult to be sure that the patron understands what you are trying to communicate.
offering this service helps us extend our outreach, learn new programs at other campuses; however not being at other campuses can be more challenging
Less knowledge of local assignments and locations
The chat service provider itself is somewhat slow, so it impedes our ability to give the best service possible.
very good
It's my sense that the libns covering Ask a UC Libn want this service to succeed.
Actually VERY good. We're still learning about each other's libraries & campuses, so we're not as good/fast as a local librarian would be.

What two types of questions were most challenging for you to answer from patrons of other campuses?

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Other Responses:

UCSD Reserve
Local policies, such as availability of study rooms.
Difficult to find contact information on other libraries' web pages sometimes; for in-depth questions, would like guidelines about how far we should answer and when refer to the home library
Facilities or local-type questions -- where is __ room/building & how to reserve it/get there? who do I talk to about __ (non-library probs)?
I haven'
n/a for me..administrator

In-depth reference is always hard, while account info is often buried.

Since I have never received a question from my own campus (UCM), I can't really answer this question. My feeling is that hard questions are hard questions, easy questions are easy, and the campus someone is from has nothing to do with it.

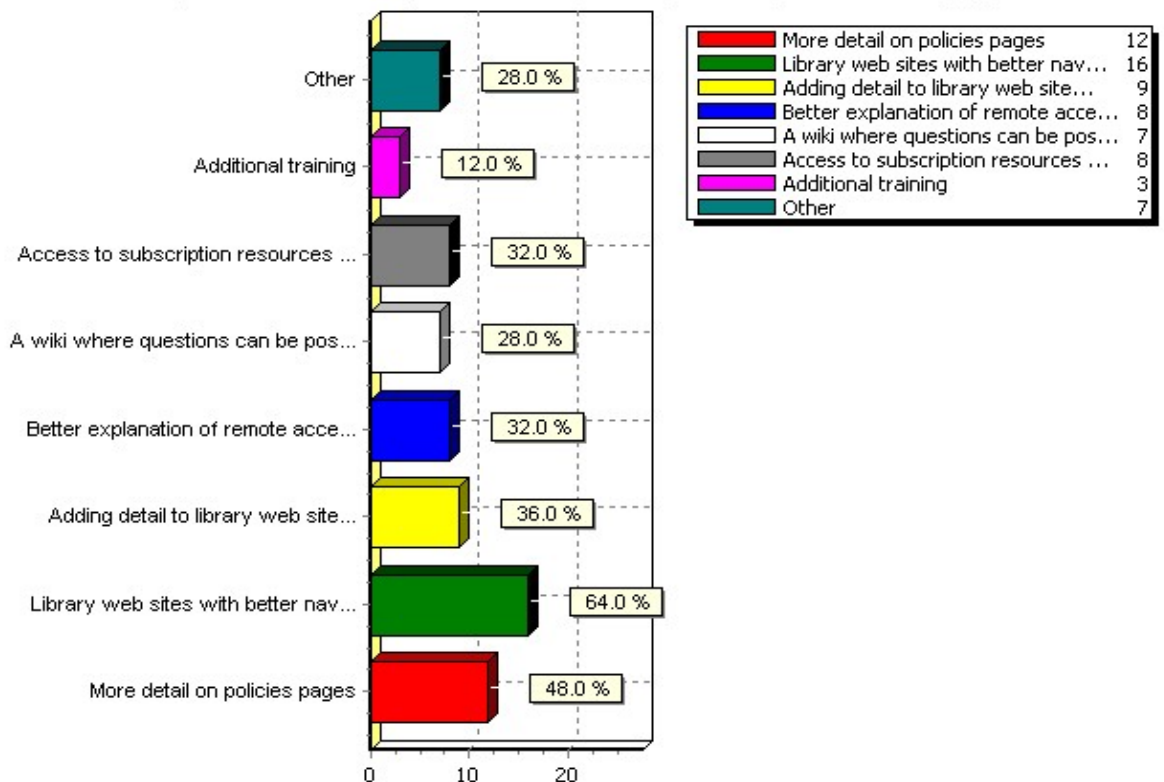
Electronic reserves

2 types: questions that were way outside of my core areas of expertise, although I'm a decent generalist, and questions whose answers required a detailed knowledge of campus--greater than our policies page give us easy access to

Physical location issues. I've had a couple of calls where I could have really used a floor map of the library.

What would help resolve the challenges in answering these questions (select all that apply)?

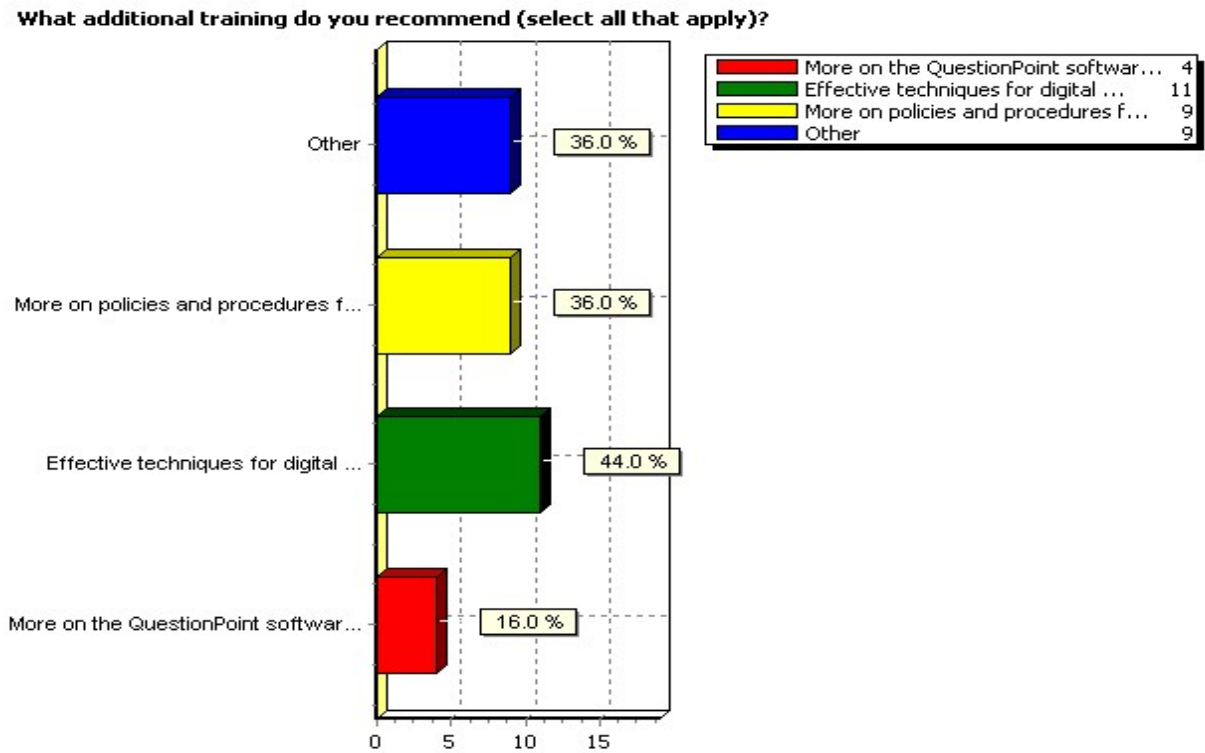
What would help resolve the challenges in answering these questions (select all that apply)?



Other Responses:

Clarification on policy about how in-depth we answer questions
just need to figure out where things are - not sure it can be totally solved
in- person workshops for better service provisions/training
Anything to make the remote access and account info more accessible would be better. I often found it only via Google.
Again, I don't see campus affiliation as a big deal.
More consistency among the library websites.
Policy pages that are similar across the campuses and that include information about the libraries (who they serve and the subject focus) and specific telephone numbers for departments (e.g. Circulation) or people (the map librarian, or gov docs)
When I was part of the southern-UC collaborative evening pilot, we emailed each other when we didn't think we answered a caller with enough information. Libns from the caller's home campus readily weighed in with details that I always found useful.
More experience.

What additional training do you recommend (select all that apply)?

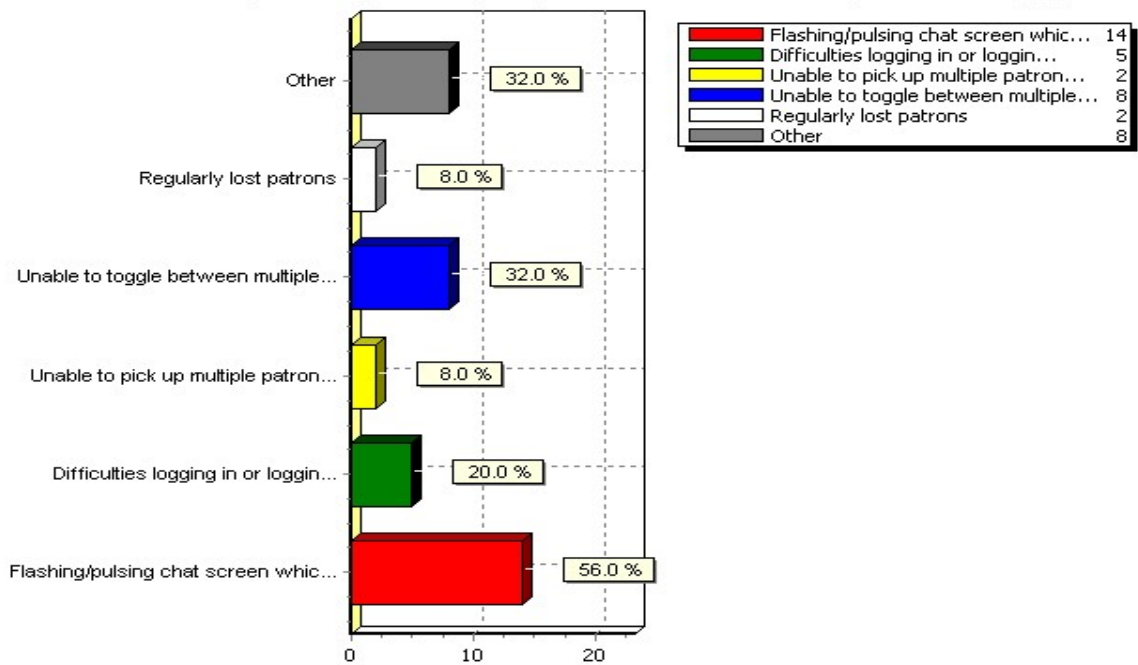


Other Responses:

More on policies of other campuses.
Perhaps short sessions on each UC Library website
a uniform policy or standards for our responses
teleconference workshops to enable better understanding of libraries/resources/services
a digital conference where each library could walk the others through their sites
I'm not big on training. If any info is important for us to know, it's important enough to state clearly in an easily discoverable place on the web.
I think the training has been fine.
Discussion of depth of reference we should go to
Typing; many of the librarians seem flustered by the number of questions that can be asked within an hour -- I think they would be less flustered if they were more confident in their typing and were able to conclude easy questions more quickly.
Are follow-ups automatically emailed via QP
See the contributed paper at the recent ACRL (Baltimore) conf.: Virtual Reference Teams: Collab. & Knowledge Sharing...(3/31 at 4:30pm)
More about the other campus' libraries.

Please checkmark any technical problems you experienced with the software (select all that apply). Add brief comments regarding frequency of difficulties or other technical issues.

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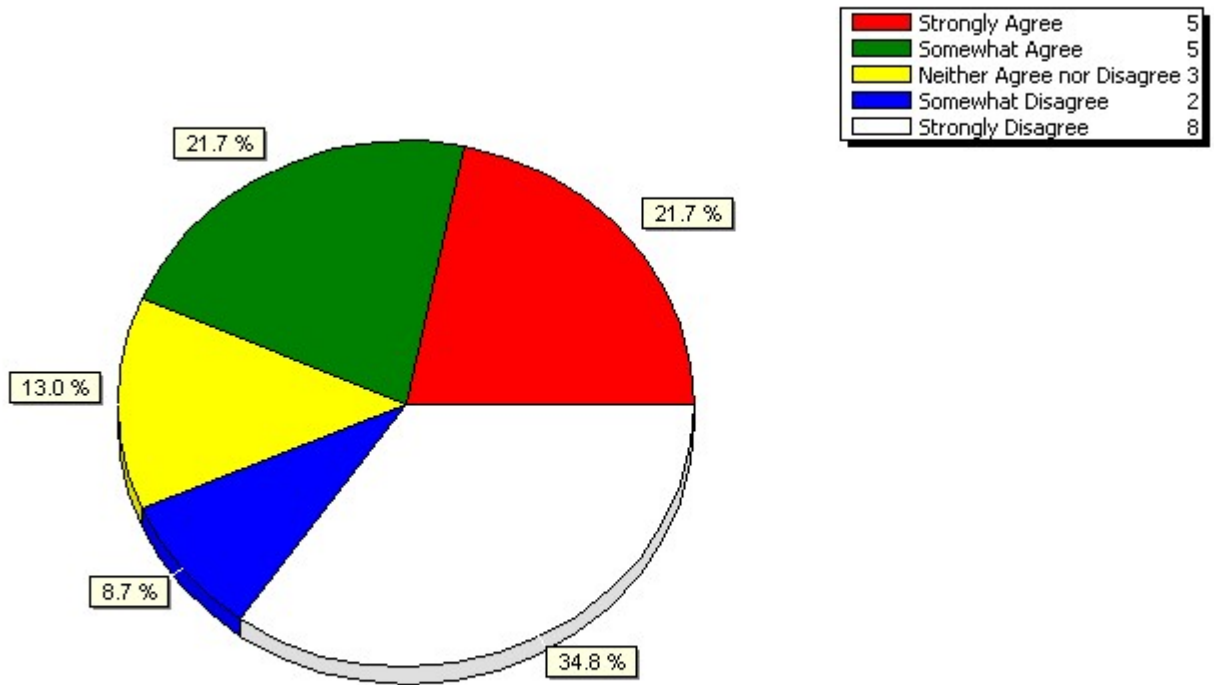


Other Responses:

The flashing/pulsing thing only happened once; I logged off and on and it was fixed. I find that picking up patrons and toggling back and forth works, but it's frustratingly SLOW.
I got dropped once, but cannot remember why. Luckily, when I logged back in, I think the patron was still there.
My responses get "eaten" -- I type in an answer, hit 'send' & nothing shows up. I have to retype!! Sloooooow toggling between patrons.
all the browser settings that have to be reset are a pain
occasionally patrons would log off prematurely - before I could complete the responses and instructions
delay in toggling between patrons, problems with the flashing screen at 2 or 3 shifts, sometimes feels like I'm losing patrons regularly
Infrequent
Slow response time makes chatting and switching between users problematic, especially when compared with the speed and simplicity of commonly used free chat software.
occasionally
sometimes qp is really slow
Sending responses did not always work; very slow toggling
In reviewing transcripts to choose "good" and "how to improve?" ones for training, I was surprised to see so many with patrons who went silent (lost). The IM w/in QP is too slow.

Staffing digital reference has lessened the amount of you can spend on other work (select one):

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Comment Responses:

You spend time on chat, you're obviously not spending that time on something you were before online chat. I don't mind it though, it's just been asked and therefore answered honestly.

It gives me time to work on other things (such as collection development or reference email) since i am doing it on Sunday evenings.

We've been able to drastically reduce the number of staff hours devoted to digital reference because this is collaborative; also we work in our offices and when it is not busy can work on other projects

Since activity is fairly slow & I do most of my work at my desk, I have time to do my usual work.

Providing digital reference services was extremely time intensive, more training was essential; some patrons were not UC (a lower priority to me) we have very high collections and instruction demands, balancing all assignments is very challenging
Chat reference takes longer than other forms of reference.
Digital reference has been a boon because we are able to provide extended service with only a small commitment of our time.
After busy chat sessions I often spend extra time on follow-up
I have had some busy shifts, but many are so quiet that I get lots of other work done at my desk.

If you could implement one change to this service or its technology, what would it be?

Improve the speed in toggling between patrons. 4 seconds is too slow.
Voice. Some patrons type so slooooooowly that I wonder if they've gotten lost. It's hard to ask the patron a question and get a response so that I can offer better service to them.
Speed of the software - too much lag time
I would like it to be faster - there is too much of a delay between the time you send a message and when it appears to the patron (and vice versa).
Speed it up!! Ditch the awkward switching between patrons (somehow get each their own box in the same window or multiple boxes on a screen). Allow audio option somehow.
specify in service announcement that Librarians may be from another campus; the Digital Reference Interview takes time to conduct and learn patrons real questions and library needs, so be patient in awaiting a response; encourage UC primarily to use service (refer others to public libraries, etc)
I wish the technology was more reliable. For some campuses, I find that the remote access information is not clear.
Faster, more fluid chat.
Use AIM, Yahoo Messenger, MSN Messenger, and/or other commercial software. They're faster, more robust, have useful features like seeing when the other user is typing, are familiar to our users, and would increase the service's visibility. We don't use expensive, clunky, specially-designed phones to do phone reference, so why are we doing the equivalent for chat reference?
I would look strongly at going to a straight IM-type technology rather than using QuestionPoint. Students are comfortable with IM and it seems to me that the QP software creates more problems than it solves.
A queue for patrons waiting for service, that automatically notifies them regarding patrons ahead of them and an approximate wait time.
Improve patron expectations of what we CAN do and what we CAN'T
Have all 10 campuses participate

Faster technology -- the lag time is a direct impediment to our being able to provide an excellent service.

Faster toggling between patrons.

Give me voice-over in real time with co-browsing that works. I don't need to hear the caller's voice, but I would love to have the caller hear mine while looking at a co-browsing screen together.

Do you have any other comments?

I think the cost/benefit of the service needs to be explored. The majority of the questions I got were proxy server related. Perhaps better webpage design for libraries would help in that area.

I suggest you label this librarian personnel survey (NOT STAFF); How will librarians be evaluated in provision of this service - will evaluators use patron comments not available to librarians? this is a very time intensive process and uses great creativity to serve; thanks for opportunity to give suggestions

I would still like remote access to resources my campus does not subscribe to. If librarians know of assignments that are assigned to multiple students that require the same information, being able to indicate recommended resources somewhere would be great.

I enjoy virtual reference. It is a very helpful research medium, for those so inclined.

I would suggest testing other technologies available for digital reference as well as utilizing a cooperative of digital reference academic librarians outside of the UC system; allowing us to expand our hours and help with our current staff shortages.

Overall since we were already doing chat it has not been a hard transition. I wish Questionpoint made it easier to use policy pages. I often have 5 windows open at once if I have multiple patrons. I will have policy page for a specific campus, the policy menu, a free browser window for other topics, a chat window, and the Questionpoint page.

All campuses need to participate

The surveys are generated when the patron closes the session. Perhaps a survey should be delayed if the librarian indicates a follow-up is forthcoming.

UCI always double-staffs its Collab Chat hours, and I always use IM to contact my same-hour partner (e.g, "Do you want this caller, or shall I take it?" "OK if I dash to the loo?"). It would be great if I could IM other UC Collab Chat libns, such as those about to leave, those just coming on, and those covering the same hour I am. THE IM within QP is hopelessly slow. I'm itchin' to ditch QP and try something better.

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