LibAnswers @ WSU
Eliminating Service Silos
What We’re Going to Talk About

• Why/how we chose LibAnswers
• How we implemented our knowledge base
• Knowledge base use & growth
• What we’ve struggled with
• Benefits we’ve seen so far
• Future possibilities
Why Did we Choose LibAnswers?

• Background
  ▪ Website
  ▪ Old FAQ

• Pre-implementation Process
  ▪ Beta testing
  ▪ Feedback
Our Website
The Metaphor of the Fridge

In the beginning, our website was like a clean refrigerator –
But after time, our refrigerator became more like this -
And then there was our old FAQ

- Originally updated twice annually by members of the Web Working Group
- Moved to an RSS feed that was created in-house to make it easier to update and maintain
- But the RSS feed had some maintenance issues that meant the FAQ section of it was actually more difficult to maintain
- So it was no longer updated twice annually, and…
Didn’t keep up with new library resources and important changes

Q: Where can I find information on how to search the library catalog?

A: The Griffin Tutorial provides a comprehensive set of information about Griffin functionality. An access and search guide on Griffin is also available.

Great! Our main catalog isn’t mentioned, but users can take a tutorial on the old catalog we rarely use now!
Didn’t keep up with new library resources and important changes

Q: Where can I find information on how to search the library catalog?

A: The Griffin Tutorial provides a comprehensive set of information about Griffin functionality. An access and search guide on Griffin is also available.

Great! Users can take a tutorial on the catalog we hardly ever use now!
Included some questions that were no longer frequently asked

Q: “Do the libraries have phone books for other cities in the United States? Canada?”

Q: “Does the library have a typewriter that I can use?”
“We are drowning in information but starved for knowledge.”

— John Naisbitt, Megatrends
Pre-Implementation, Beta Testing

• December, 2010: questions from the old FAQ (and updated answers) were loaded into a LibAnswers test instance.

• Library testers were encouraged to view the LibAnswers FAQ, create questions & answers, and play with the LibAnswers interface.

• Feedback was solicited from library testers.
Selected Feedback

“It would be a great improvement from the old FAQ file. Also, it would be easier to suggest and create q/a’s—there are many times I looked at FAQ and didn’t find something I thought should be there.”

“I think LibAnswers would be great for the Circ staff to use. It would make an excellent learning aid for our students as well as helping with ready reference questions.”

“I think the look and feel of the LibAnswers service is user friendly and informative. Placing the search/”type your question” box at the utmost top of the page is helpful and should catch the eye of users.”
The Feedback Made Us Feel Like This!
Implementation

Timeframe

- Fast, summer project, took a lot of time from implementation team
- Purchased May 2011, Soft rollout 7/27/2011

Short timeline = Hard work (whew!)
Implementation Team

- Zinthia Briceño-Rosales (Project Manager/Admin)
- Linda Crook (Ref Content/Stats)
- Erica Carlson Nicol (Admin/Content)
- Jane Scales (WSU Online Content/Old FAQ)
- Mark O’English (MASC/Email Ref/Content)
Pretty easy to use!
Training!

• Learning break 08/01/11
• One-on-one sessions offered
• VRS Bootcamp, January 2012
• VRS Guidelines: http://libguides.wsulibs.wsu.edu/reference libanswers

Ongoing training was crucial for making sure everyone knew how to use the tools and understood our workflow, and also because…
Scale of Librarian Reactions to New Technology

Ooh, a new tool to improve the user experience! Shiny!

Well, this might work, but it might be a lot of work.

Nooooo! Isn’t it enough that I learned how to use Windows 2003?
Training, contd

Training also helped highlight initial questions/problems

- Do we have to write down every question we answer?
- Some confusion about the differences between RefAnalytics and the LibAnswers knowledge base
- When do I make a question public/add it to the FAQ?
Taking the Plunge

In August, 2011, we went live!
Knowledge Base Use and Growth

Who is using it?
• In the Libraries
• Outside the Libraries
In the Libraries
Reference Desks!
Circulation Desks!
Librarians in offices!

• Great for locating library policy information
• Useful for finding out who to contact for what
• Helps keep track of new services and procedures
• Reminds us of all the people who contribute to serving users
Outside the Libraries

Our USERS!

• When a new question starts showing up repeatedly, we know to add it to our FAQ
• The “Query Spy” and statistics features in LibAnswers help us see what questions are really being asked frequently
• When users start typing a question at our Ask a Question or LibAnswers pages, similar questions are suggested by the system.
Sample Query Spy View

**Query Spy: Real Time Query Analysis**
View what the visitors are asking and searching for, on your site.

*Note:* Query Spy data is only kept for 6 months, with deletion occurring on the first of each month. You can back-up the data using the "Export Queries" option below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>IP</th>
<th>Question Query</th>
<th>Result</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Referring URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013-01-2</td>
<td>207.180.117.05</td>
<td>return ill book (add) (mark as reviewed)</td>
<td>Clicked on What's the address or campus zip for returning a book to the Libraries?</td>
<td>Widget</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/ask">http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/ask</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-01-2</td>
<td>69.166.47.115</td>
<td>What is bibliographic management software - such as Zotero, EndNote, ProCite or Reference Manager? How do I decide which one is best for me?</td>
<td>Direct match via auto-suggest</td>
<td>Widget</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-01-2</td>
<td>76.178.155.03</td>
<td>writing dialogue (add) (mark as reviewed)</td>
<td>Question not submitted!</td>
<td>LibGuides</td>
<td><a href="http://libguides.wsulibs.wsu.edu/content.php?pid=922948&amp;sid=687475">http://libguides.wsulibs.wsu.edu/content.php?pid=922948&amp;sid=687475</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-01-2</td>
<td>134.121.166.144</td>
<td>Does the library accept donations of money and/or books, etc.?</td>
<td>Direct match via auto-suggest</td>
<td>Widget</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/24-7/ask.html">http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/24-7/ask.html</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>2013-01-2</td>
<td>99.127.252.197</td>
<td>hello, I was just at <a href="http://libguides.wsulibs.wsu.edu/docs">http://libguides.wsulibs.wsu.edu/docs</a> this is the link for accessing government documents and the link there for a video tour is</td>
<td>Question submitted</td>
<td>Widget</td>
<td><a href="http://libanswers.wsulibs.wsu.edu/widgets.php?m=2">http://libanswers.wsulibs.wsu.edu/widgets.php?m=2</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-01-2</td>
<td>69.166.47.144</td>
<td>Does the library have any reserves that are available electronically?</td>
<td>Direct match via auto-suggest</td>
<td>Widget</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/24-7/ask.html">http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/24-7/ask.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-01-2</td>
<td>69.166.47.201</td>
<td>Major newspaper publication (add) (mark as reviewed)</td>
<td>Question not submitted!</td>
<td>Widget</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/24-7/ask.html">http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/24-7/ask.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-01-2</td>
<td>69.166.47.201</td>
<td>Major newspaper publication electron (add) (mark as reviewed)</td>
<td>Clicked on How do I find Periodicals (journals, magazines, newspapers)?</td>
<td>Widget</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/24-7/ask.html">http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/24-7/ask.html</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>2013-01-2</td>
<td>76.178.152.46</td>
<td>is the library open today (add) (mark as reviewed)</td>
<td>Question not submitted!</td>
<td>System</td>
<td><a href="http://libanswers.wsulibs.wsu.edu/">http://libanswers.wsulibs.wsu.edu/</a></td>
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<td>Id</td>
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<td>Asked on</td>
<td>Views</td>
<td>Topics</td>
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<tr>
<td>-----</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3406</td>
<td>Where can I print a paper?</td>
<td>2010-11-23 15:37</td>
<td>420 (see monthly breakdown)</td>
<td>Printing / Copying, Miscellaneous</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>32634</td>
<td>Where are the study rooms?</td>
<td>2010-11-16 09:44</td>
<td>251 (see monthly breakdown)</td>
<td>About the Libraries, Study Rooms</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>32631</td>
<td>How long can I keep a book?</td>
<td>2010-11-16 09:42</td>
<td>235 (see monthly breakdown)</td>
<td>Loan Periods</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>33972</td>
<td>Where can I get a library card?</td>
<td>2010-11-23 13:50</td>
<td>191 (see monthly breakdown)</td>
<td>About the Libraries, Library Accounts, Circulation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>34120</td>
<td>How do I find journal articles on a particular topic?</td>
<td>2010-11-24 11:11</td>
<td>178 (see monthly breakdown)</td>
<td>Periodicals, Finding Resources</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>34135</td>
<td>Can I access the online catalogs, electronic indexes and full-text electronic journals from my office, dorm room, or home?</td>
<td>2010-11-24 11:18</td>
<td>177 (see monthly breakdown)</td>
<td>Electronic Resources, Finding Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>33991</td>
<td>Does the library have lockers for public use?</td>
<td>2010-11-23 15:00</td>
<td>176 (see monthly breakdown)</td>
<td>About the Libraries</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>33970</td>
<td>What are your hours?</td>
<td>2010-11-23 13:57</td>
<td>169 (see monthly breakdown)</td>
<td>About the Libraries, Miscellaneous, Hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135754</td>
<td>What is the OpenURL and proxy server URL for WSU?</td>
<td>2012-02-02 20:59</td>
<td>169 (see monthly breakdown)</td>
<td>Electronic Resources</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>102828</td>
<td>What is JSTOR?</td>
<td>2011-10-13 11:59</td>
<td>150 (see monthly breakdown)</td>
<td>Databases, Electronic Resources, Finding Resources, Collections &amp; Acquisitions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>33967</td>
<td>Who may use the libraries?</td>
<td>2010-11-23 13:55</td>
<td>146 (see monthly breakdown)</td>
<td>About the Libraries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do you have the textbook for my class?</td>
<td>2014-02-27</td>
<td>141 (see monthly breakdown)</td>
<td>Circulation, Collections &amp; Acquisitions</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Re-using answers

Where are the study rooms?


This answer is linked to the public answer ID #33977. All linked answers are public answers.  Unlink this Answer

The content in the tabs below (except comments and replies) is from the linked answer and is not editable here.
Knowledge Base Use and Growth

What is the Scope?

• Library policy
• Library services
• Technical support
• Research aids
• Ephemeral information
• Information that’s out of scope…but still frequently asked
Ephemeral questions

Q What are four other items besides books at the library?

A Answer

Come in and see! Or for a hint... http://libguides.wsulibs.wsu.edu/MMR

Answered by Linda Crook | Email Answer | SHARE

Q What are your hours for Winter Intersession, 2012?

Will the libraries be open on Christmas or New Year's Day?

Topics: Hours
Out of scope FAQs

Q  I have a print/drawing/painting/piece of fine art. How much is it worth today?

Last Updated: Jan 10, 2013 | 1 Views

Q  How can I find out how much my old stocks are worth?

Topics: Finding Resources

Last Updated: Mar 23, 2012 | 32 Views
Knowledge Base Use and Growth

Who is contributing to it?
• Public Services & Reference Librarians
• Access Services Staff
• Systems Staff
• Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections
Invoke the power of REFERRAL!

Please assign questions to:

Connection Help – Barb Stone
MASC Questions – MASC email (not to an individual)
Circ. Fines, Summit etc – Sue Shipman
ILL, Illiad – Linda Snook
Reserves – Stacie Echanove
WSU Online/DDP – Jane Scales
Subject Specialists – Assign questions requiring subject expertise to the appropriate subject specialist
Ebooks – Lorena O'English
Zotero – Lorena O'English
EndNote – Jane Scales
Angel – Jane Scales, Corey Johnson
AD/Beth Blakesley Questions – During her sabbatical, please send any questions you would have sent to Beth to Bonny Boyan. They will automatically be taken out of the queue.

For more info see the Virtual Reference Guide.
How do I find scholarly sources?

You can find many scholarly articles online via our various databases and e-resources. You can find full tutorials and help on searching this resources on our Databases and E-Resources online guide.

For More Info / Source(s) (Links open in new window):

- Instructional Material By Topic
- Databases and E-Resources
Reference

Why is the library so hard to use?

I'm sorry you're finding the library hard to use. We have a lot of information that we try to organize so that people can find what they're looking for, but figuring out how to navigate the libraries can take a little time. Please let us know if you are looking for something specific, and we'll help you find it.

For More Info / Source(s) (Links open in new window):

- Library Orientation and Services
- Library Anxiety – How to Beat It

Answered by Erica Nicol | Email Answer | SHARE
Circulation

Q  How many books can be checked out at once?

Answer

If you are affiliated with WSU (i.e. Student, staff, faculty), you can have 299 books checked out at one time. Non-affiliates (community borrowers) can have 25.
Interlibrary Loan

How long does it take for requested articles to be processed and sent out?

If we are able to get the article from either one of our libraries or one of our consortial partners, it can be as little as 24–48 hours. If we have to go outside, it can take up to 5 days.
I receive a "Not Found" or "Page cannot be displayed" error message.

A "Not Found" error message is usually due to a Firewall blocking access to the ports that our Database and Proxy Servers use. This error could display as "Page not found", "404 Not Found", "Page cannot be displayed", or "Server Not Found" depending on your browser and settings.

If you are using personal firewall software, such as "BlackIce, Tiny, McAfee, Microsoft Internet Connection Firewall, or Norton Personal Firewall, you may need to configure your firewall as described below. Alternatively you can temporarily turn off your firewall, but we accept no responsibility for any attacks on your system while...
Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections

Q I'm doing genealogical or historical research about the Pullman area. Can you help?

Topics: Finding Resources

A Answer

The Libraries are strongest on the history of WSU, but do carry numerous publications also relating to the history of Pullman and the Palouse. Other resources of note here in the WSU Libraries include the Pullman Herald and the Evergreen newspapers, as well as numerous smaller regional newspapers, all on microfilm (the Pullman Herald is digitized up to 1922; links can be found in our catalog). Additionally, we hold the Bunchgrass Historian (a local history journal) and historical Fussers Guides and business directories in print formats, as well as early maps in both print and electronic formats.

One of the best community resources for non-WSU historical material is the Whitman County Historical Society Archives, located in the Gladish Community Center.

Questions about personal information on WSU students, staff, and faculty will need to be directed to the Registrar’s Office; see their guidelines for what they can/will answer. Legal privacy issues limit what they can answer, particularly for materials dating from the 1970s forward.

For further help with WSU and regional history, contact either the History Librarian, or our Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections (MASC) department.

Answered by Mark O'English
Questions/Considerations/Cons

- Paid product - Price and affordability
- Limited ability to tweak and personalize
- Dependent on outside servers
- Hard to maintain consistent metadata
- Still takes time & effort to maintain the content
- Stats questions
Metadata

**Where is the fiction section?**

Last Updated: Dec 03, 2012. | Topics: Collections & Acquisitions; Finding Resources; Miscellaneous | Views: 30

**Where can I print a paper?**

Last Updated: Oct 03, 2012. | Topics: Printing / Copying; Miscellaneous | Views: 416

**Can I check out a laptop at the library?**

Last Updated: Apr 27, 2012. | Topics: Policies; About the Libraries; Miscellaneous | Views: 43
Benefits

One central place to find and update information
Benefits

Experts can directly contribute instead of going through another party.
Benefits

Easy interface and the knowledge base FAQ can be quickly updated to reflect user needs.
Benefits

Easier to answer questions regarding other units
Benefits

Tweet or share the answer
Benefits

We have a better idea of what patrons want to know.
Benefits – knowing what to add

From: ask@wsu.libanswers.com
To: Crook, Linda
Cc: Nicol, Erica Alice; Crook, Linda
Subject: LibAnswers: New Reply Submitted

Hello,

A reply for private question id 184387 has been submitted and is waiting your attention.

Is this answer listed on your website? If so, can you provide the link please?

Submitted by [Redacted]
Benefits – knowing what to add

Ebooks: Reading/Downloading @ the WSU Libraries

Last Updated: Jan 23, 2013  |  URL: http://libguides.wsulibs.wsu.edu/ebooks  |  Print Guide  |  RSS Updates  |  Email Alerts

- For assistance in reading an EBL, eBray, or EBSCO Ebook Collection ebook online via the Web, look [TBA]
- For assistance in downloading ebooks to a desktop or laptop using Adobe Digital Editions (ADE), see the Downloading Ebooks Using Adobe Digital Editions tab in this guide.
- For assistance with reading an ebook using Adobe Digital Editions on a desktop or laptop, see [TBA].
- For assistance in downloading an ebook that uses ADE to a digital device (i.e. nook, smartphone, or tablet) see [TBA].
- For an explanation of what this Adobe Digital Editions thing is all about anyway (including stuff about digital rights management (DRM) and ebook file formats), look here.

"audiobooks" search in Griffin - to find audiobooks by title, subject or author, add a term, i.e. "audiobooks" philosop*

Finding Ebooks

To narrow a search to show just ebooks in WSU WorldCat, once you have searched your topic (i.e. atlantic salmon) look under the Format filter in the left-hand menu bar, and then select the "ebook" option. Some ebooks are HTML books or freely downloadable online books; others (especially those from vendors such as EBL, eBray or EBSCO Ebook Collection) require the use of Adobe Digital Editions (ADE) software to download and read an ebook offline because the books are wrapped in DRM.
De-siloization
Finis

linda.crook@wsu.edu
eacarlson@wsu.edu

Originally presented at *New Tech for Reference: From the Reference Interview to Roving Reference, Challenges, Benefits and Best Practice*
Friday 1/25/2013, 1-5 pm, ALA Midwinter
http://connect.ala.org/node/190900
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• Messy Refrigerator photo - Submitted by a relative of one of the presenters, whose name is being withheld to prevent embarrassment
• Fremont Troll photo – professor megan on flickr, http://www.flickr.com/photos/profmeg/530781267/
• Star Child photo – Erica Nicol
• Viola the pug photos – Linda Crook
• Toddler photos – Erica Nicol
• Students Playing Beach Volleyball at the SRC – Shelley Hanks, WSU Photos Online. http://kaga.wsulibs.wsu.edu/u/?/photo_serv,1724
• Harney School Basketball Team – Clark County Historical Museum Photographs, Courtesy of WSU Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections. http://content.wsulibs.wsu.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/cchm_photo/id/91/rec/1
• Photo of Linda Crook with Pug – JD Harper
• Photo of Erica Nicol with Daughter – Shelly Rae Clift