

All Audiences - 10/31, 10:30-11:30am

Intros: Name, Pronouns, Library, favorite snack or treat (if you'd like to share)

Attended: Heidi Senior (U of P), Veronica Vichit-Vadakan (PCC), Pat Love (Linfield), Peggy Braly (Vol), Will McCall (WCCLS), SD DeWaay (Clackamas CC)

- What do you see as the purpose of Answerland?
 - Connect patrons to resources they need
 - Some references questions, but a lot of directional “are you open?”
 - But it's important to be there to help with any kind of question. Access for students when they are actually available/need help (not 9-5 only)
 - Instantaneous answer - people sometimes log-off if you don't answer right away, bridges the gap for people who can't come in but need help online
 - Helps patrons feel less alone - students are dispersed online or in-person and getting a connection to someone who can help is a big deal
- What does Answerland do well?
 - Non-intimidating way to ask a reference question - might not feel comfortable coming up to a librarian in a physical library
 - “Many hands make light work” provide better support for people of Oregon if multiple institutions doing the same thing
 - Scheduling mostly works well
 - Provided by the state, allows libraries to use \$ for something else (instead of paying for LibAnswers)
- What is challenging
 - “Are you a bot?” People expect immediate answer on complex topics
 - These things take time!
 - False sense from other chat experiences (or google, AI etc.) that quick answer is possible
 - People who don't have a library card number and want to access local resources
 - Account questions you can't answer

- Scheduling issues are tough - taking time and energy to facilitate between librarians and Answerland - so just go through Springshare
- FAQs - how it works - are there two different kinds? Hard to figure out where to update - [Geske can follow up]
- Would be helpful to have more structure, required info for FAQs
- Question - about how many hours to commit to?
- When does it work well/poorly to have librarians from all over answering questions? When is it helpful to have an Answerland librarian instead of one from the global cooperative?
 - Lot of questions it doesn't matter if it's regional or not
 - But customer service can be facilitated by being close - connect that way
 - Generally chat librarians forward us things well
 - Mostly answering global chats - rare to get Answerland chats and rarer to get academic questions that way
 - Global is great, they jump on and help with Academic questions
 - Not always perfect - but appreciate that there and trying to help
 - We can't be there 24x7
 - FAQs is hardest part, hard to help patrons if libs don't offer you access to databases and catalog - end up turning to own resources
 - Is there a way to tell as chat is coming in to know if it's answerland or not? [Geske following up]
 - Kind of nice to have local connection - know about local area
 - Different philosophies about how reference takes place
 - We concentrate on teaching - showing process vs. just sent them an article, not everyone's approach (also given time constraints)
- What gaps do you see in reference support or access to information in the communities you serve? What kinds of information needs aren't being met?
 - Mostly local issues
 - People don't know what they don't know, don't know when to ask questions
 - How do people even know that there is a chat service?
 - How can we reach people who aren't coming to library or chat?

- Systemic issues
 - People who don't have access to the internet
 - Don't know how to use a device
 - People who don't want to ask questions
 - Shared resources on Digital Literacy
 - Northstar Pilot - Clackamas CC continued, is helpful for basic computer things as long as can get first set-up piece
 - Leverage relationships between academic and public libraries - what resources do we all have?
- How can we make Answerland better?
 - More patient patrons - but hard to know how to achieve that - setting expectations
 - Understanding a little bit better about how and when Spanish support is available - and understanding if this is a service people would like to use in Spanish
 - Growing need that aren't able to support a lot locally
 - Roll over process for these chats - if they come in Spanish how to go to the right place
 - Is there a way to call in back-up? [Geshe to follow up]
 - Discord or slack or something?
 - Way to share resources within Answerland
 - LibGuide potentially
- Any other feedback that you would like to share?

Public Library Focus - 10/24, 2-3pm

Intros: Name, Pronouns, Library, favorite snack or treat (if you'd like to share)

Attended: Rebecca Stuebe (MCL), Ruth Headley (Newburg Public Library)

- What do you see as the purpose of Answerland?
 - An extension of info services/reference provided in the library
 - Being able to point patrons in the right direction
 - Warm hand-off, refer to local library or other resources

- Rewarding to be able to help patrons after hours/when they can't connect with their own library
- What does Answerland do well?
 - Having enough staff is helpful - other people are there who can help
 - Depends on how many people are on during your shift - it can be only one on Answerland but others on global cooperative
 - Juggling other chats can be challenging
 - Canned messages are helpful!
- What does Answerland struggle with?
 - Patrons think it is just extension of their library
 - "Can you help with resetting my password?" People don't know it isn't their library
 - Shared chat can be challenging - not having updated FAQs or none at all - behind the scenes info that's specific to their library
 - Other side is staff from other places not checking our FAQ - hard if you can't follow up with patron and they may have the wrong info
- When does it work well/poorly to have librarians from all over answering questions?
 - Mostly works well
 - Confusion sometimes about when to pick chats up if someone from that library is on there
 - If goal is to provide answers/direction for patrons doesn't necessarily need to be someone from OR specifically
 - What people can contribute varies
 - Academic specific support on weekends could be helpful, lots of students reaching out and it can be trickier to get them what they need as a public librarian. That's the area where it could be helpful to have more academic folks—PSU, PCC, CCs in general
- What gaps do you see in reference support or access to information in the communities you serve? What kinds of information needs aren't being met?
 - Tech help is super needed, hard to help online – hard to get info on those technologies via those technologies
 - Retirement communities
 - Library has cut a lot of services to adults

- A lot has gone back to in-person, but some people still could use online, elderly, disabled, more barriers to come into a physical library
- Zoom for chats to be able to do tech stuff
- Spanish Queue
 - Preference vs. promotion - if we promoted it more would more people use it? Or is this not a preferred way to get info for many Spanish-speakers?
 - Getting input from Reforma, maybe MCL bilingual Spanish
- How can we make Answerland better?
 - More support, information....kind of took on haphazardly without a lot of support...tutorials...here's how you respond to a chat/send a ticket
- Any other feedback that you would like to share?

Academic Focus - 10/21, 10am-11am

Attended: Andrea Marshall (vol), Robin Shapiro (Portland CC), Michele Burke (Chemeketa CC), Isabella Fidanza (vol), Richenda Hawkins (OSU), Jeanette Wessel (OIT), Mark Richardson (WCCLS)

Intros: Name, Pronouns, Library, favorite breakfast food (if you'd like to share)

- What do you see as the purpose of Answerland?
 - Need for ready reference, reference interview
 - Provide reference 24/7...collectively, so people who can't get to the library/don't come in/don't want to talk face to face can get help, another way to provide access.
 - More ref questions on Answerland than in lib, which is more reader's advisory...enjoy that.
 - Accessibility, what people are comfortable doing, cognitively/emotionally...prefer to get help online
 - Helps us deliver on promise that remote/online education will be same as in person

- Often we provide a connecting link between the asker and their local library...they aren't yet confident in connecting with their library.
"Somebody there wants to help you!"
- Help students understand that the library is here to help and we want to help! Come ask us questions!
- Be able to say "we've got you 24/7"
- What does Answerland do well?
 - Screenshare is helpful
 - 24/7 availability...being there...someone is there. Can cover for each other, make sure someone is available
 - Useful model of cooperative service that we can take back to institutions...where else could we use that model?
 - Libby or other resources are the same everywhere, so we can all help patrons with them
 - Things have improved in terms of some of the international libraries, easier to figure out what students can do
 - British U's more clear on citation issues
- What does Answerland struggle with?
 - Finding open source resources that can solve a quandary in a shorter amount of time
 - Marketing, getting more WA Co libraries involved...get a decent amount of questions, but could use more support
- When does it work well/poorly to have librarians from all over answering questions?
 - Concerns from an academic point of view when questions picked up from librarians from far away weren't always integrating instruction into encounters as much as we would like...less of an issue now, review transcripts each morning and follow up as needed.
 - When reference need is still influx, helping a patron define their question instead of just answering the first question they ask...support for topic exploration support
 - Account questions
 - Students need help selecting topic/narrowing down...don't just assume this is their topic...ask questions...maybe used to working with students at different levels

- What gaps do you see in reference support or access to information in the communities you serve? What kinds of information needs aren't being met?
 - Spanish
 - Other languages
 - Prison education program, re-entry
- How can we make Answerland better?
 - (not a priority) - scheduling software with shifts assigned individually can make it hard to pivot and cover things last minute
 - More promotion, more libraries involved
 - I think the occasional in-person meeting would be useful -- but I'm not sure everyone would agree. The opportunity to sit together and talk about what we do and exchange ideas seems really valuable to me.
- When is Answerland important instead of 24x7 cooperative?
 - Physical materials
 - Kids/young students
- Any other feedback that you would like to share?
 - Useful to look at other lib's websites, see how they've organized, resources
 - Instructor's want to further embed Answerland into courses, assignments where students have to go to Answerland...assignment is to go into Answerland
 - Way to share assignments that other colleges/schools are working well...create a meaningful interaction for the student, pitched at the right level. Could be a research assignment to get a glimpse of service or they could need real help. It's tricky if the assignment is to ask the Librarian for help, even if you don't need help. Could be a topic for a meeting to learn about what has worked well at other institutions for this type of assignment.