OMG I can IM the QEII: Networking With Chat

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Agenda

- Basic terminology
- What the literature says
- QEII experience
- Looking ahead
Virtual Reference

- “initiated electronically”
- “often in real-time”
- “without being physically present”
- “channels include: chat…e-mail…”

- RUSA Guidelines for Implementing and Maintaining Virtual Reference Services
IM & Libraries

- “the internet has become the medium of choice for adolescents, and adolescents strongly integrate internet communication into their social lives”
  - Peter & Valkenburg, 215
Appeal to Users

- Controllability
  - Choose when to respond

- Anonymity
  - Reduced intimidation factor
  - Absence of social status clues

- Convenience
  - Can chat anywhere

- Informal
Performance Guidelines

- Approachability
- Interest
- Listening/inquiring
- Searching
- Follow-up
  - RUSA Guidelines for Behavioral Performance of Reference and Information Service Providers
QEII Experience

- The setting
- Delivery
  - Training
  - Publicity
  - Webpage
  - Schedule
  - Launch
What Was Asked?

- Fall 2006
  - 122 total
  - 66% directional
  - 34% reference

- Winter 2007
  - 161 total
  - 61% directional
  - 39% reference
Questions Asked Weekly
## Questions Asked Daily

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
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Who Asked What

- 342 contacts in total
- 312, or 92%, use MSN
- Largely anonymous
  - Widget
Feedback

- “Ahh, makes sense! Thank-you once again”
- “Thanks a lot. I really appreciate this.”
- “thank you soooo much”
- “awesome, thank you i really appreciate it”
- “this is great”
- “thank you very much!”
- “excellent, thanks very much for all the help!”
- “fabulous. Thanks again”
- “perfect. Thank you so much : )”
- “thanks a tonne”
Identity

- Head hurtssssSTUDYING!
- Do Not Disturb: Exam Time!
- 2 down 3 to go
- Studying psych all day!
- Studying 2500/Germ today
Looking Ahead

- Physical reference desk
- Distance education
- Hours of operation
- Continuous promotion
- Province wide potential
- Remote user centered services
- Value of marketing/selling services
Bibliography

- Handout