1-1-2012

Paper “Improving our Reference Desk Management and Training or "I wish I had an answer to that because I'm tired of answering that question." Yogi Berra”

Kelly A. Thormodson  
*University of Iowa*

Shane Wallace  
*University of Iowa*

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Improving our Reference Desk Management and Training

Kelly Thormodson and W. Shane Wallace

Hardin Library for the Health Sciences

May 21, 2012

MLA Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA
Or....as Yogi Berra said

“I wish I had an answer to that because I’m tired of answering that question.”
The 4-1-1

- UIowa/Hardin Library
  - Faculty and staff of five health sciences colleges
  - 734-bed research-and-teaching hospital with 700+ residents
  - Professional and general student population over 30,000

- Dual Reference/Circ Desk staff (desk staffed 105 hours per week)
  - 5 library assistants
  - 7 librarians
  - 4-6 students of the graduate program of the School of Library and Information Science
The Dark Ages

- Binders with printed instructions (some up-to-date and some out-of-date)
- Reference email account and the Meebo IM account
- Wiki
- No structure or requirements for reporting issues
- Trading shifts
- Paper and pen statistics
- iGoogle account for shared documents
Mission

- Improve training/orientation
- Improve communication
- Improve consistency
- Improve data practice
- Improve service
Our TA-DA! Moment
Let’s use SharePoint

- Institutional subscription
- Audience familiarity
- Technical strengths of SharePoint
  - Data retention
  - Versioning
  - Reporting
  - Back-up
  - Alert function
  - ITS support
  - Page-level access control
What’s the plan?

- Create a Task Force – what do we need/want
  - Announcements
  - Desk shift log
  - Desk shift trade board
  - Knowledge Base of information (both popular and esoteric)
  - Statistics
Our new site 2/14/11: ❤️
SharePoint upgrade January 2012
New feature: Log

Log

Title
Alex has all three staff laptops downstairs for updating
Nothing special to report
Nothing special to report

Created
4/4/2012 3:14 PM
4/4/2012 1:58 PM
4/4/2012 12:58 PM

Add new announcement

Title *
Nothing special to report
What happened during your shift?

Body

Expires


New feature: Trade Board
New feature: Announcements

Announcements

- Circulation Information - long
- PubMed's new 'citation manager feature'
- National Library Week
- HLHS Reference Desk front page “Knowledge Base Index” removed
- Nevermind -- Please keep
- Public color laser printer
- Books being renewed for
- New Reserve book

Title
- Things that all staff need to know at the desk. (For example: down services, technology issues, facility or safety events)

Body

Expires

Category
- Critical
- Standard

Date Created
- 4/11/2012 12 PM

Posted By
-
New feature: Statistics
New feature: Searchable Knowledge Base
1. Do you consider the reference desk website (since its launch in February 2011) to be more useful than the old toolset?

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>9 (90%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>N/A (I didn’t use the previous toolset)</td>
<td>1 (10%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A (Other)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
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</tbody>
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Total: 10
Conclusion

- We are aware of some other library SharePoint users and their implementations.
- The creation and use of this website represents a step towards the removal of obstacles between patrons and proper service.
- We expect to continue to refine and revise the tool in an ongoing process in order to meet the needs of our patrons and staff.
Questions?
Comments?
Crazy ideas?
Offers to buy us drinks?
Bibliography

Thank You!

kelly-thormodson@uiowa.edu
shane-wallace@uiowa.edu