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Providers' Assessment of Library Chat Services

Kimberly Loper
University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, kloper@med.miami.edu

Carmen Bou-Crick
University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, CBou@med.miami.edu

JoAnn Van Schaik
University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, Jvanschaik@med.miami.edu

Shidan Hemmat
University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, sxh2751@med.miami.edu

Providers' Assessment of Library Chat Services – Feedback from Reference Librarians

Kimberly A. Loper, MLIS, AHIP; Carmen Bou-Crick, MSLS, AHIP; Shidan Hemmat, MLIS, and JoAnn Van Schaik, MLS, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine

Background

Instant messaging is often preferred to emails and phone calls. In 2017, Calder Library implemented a chat service.
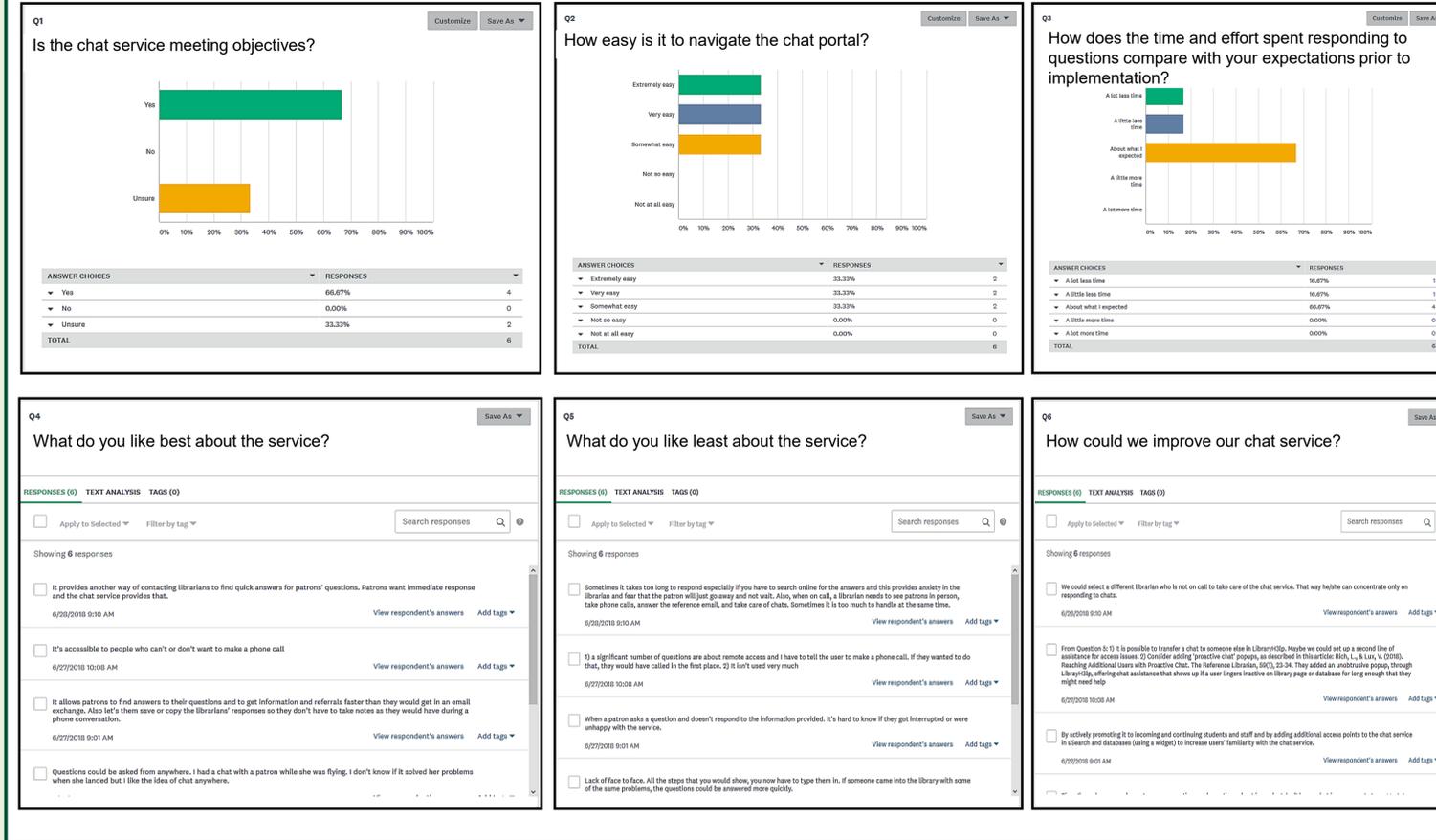
Objective

This poster analyzes the impact of the Library's chat service by focusing on provider perspective and usage data.

Methods

A short survey was developed to determine librarians' impressions of the chat service. Additionally, data on numbers and peak chat times, response time, length of conversation, and type of questions were analyzed.

Chat Box

Survey Results

Survey responses indicated that **all librarians found the portal easy** to navigate and the time/effort spent responding met their expectations. **Two benefits of the service were (1) patrons received immediate responses and, (2) librarians could create canned responses and greetings**. Librarians least liked the time it took to compose responses that required searches prior to answering. They worried that patrons would tire of waiting and leave the session without an answer.

Analytics

started	wait	duration	operator
6/25/2018 13:27	0:01:00	0:01:24	kelsa_bartley
6/22/2018 15:43	0:00:24	0:25:52	kelsa_bartley
6/19/2018 10:54	0:00:51	0:04:40	zsuzsanna_nemeth
6/5/2018 15:54	0:00:18	0:05:07	kelsa_bartley
6/1/2018 11:21	0:00:35	0:39:03	zsuzsanna_nemeth
6/1/2018 10:15	1:02:14	0:00:01	zsuzsanna_nemeth
5/29/2018 16:39	0:00:55	0:05:25	kelsa_bartley
5/24/2018 14:56	0:01:42	0:02:47	zsuzsanna_nemeth
5/24/2018 14:49	0:01:00	0:00:01	zsuzsanna_nemeth
5/24/2018 9:27	0:00:54	0:26:36	john_reynolds
5/16/2018 15:12	0:00:19	0:09:57	john_reazer
5/16/2018 12:44	0:00:36	0:05:14	erica_powell
5/9/2018 13:28	0:00:19	0:20:05	john_reazer
5/9/2018 10:07	0:02:15	0:00:01	zsuzsanna_nemeth
5/7/2018 13:34	0:00:33	0:13:36	zsuzsanna_nemeth
5/7/2018 12:07	0:00:48	0:06:07	erica_powell

Analytics

Over a year, the chat service was used **143 times**, with an **average response time of 1m:17s** and an **average conversation length of 7m:45s**.

The busiest day of the week was **Wednesday, which had 25% of all activity**. Furthermore, the number of chat sessions held on Wednesday was 76% higher than the number of chat sessions held on the **least active day of the week--Friday.**

By grouping chat hours into four equal sessions throughout the day (9:00-11:00am, 11:01am-1:00pm, 1:01-3:00pm, 3:01-5:00pm), the **9:00am -11:00am session was most active (30%)** and the **11:01am-1:00pm session was least active (22%).**

Sessions were also assigned two categories, directional or reference; **66% of the questions asked were reference.**

Conclusion

A year post-implementation, the chat service is functioning well and liked by the librarians. **Librarians suggested** several ways to improve the service, including **assigning two librarians simultaneously** and implementing a '**proactive chat**' popup.