AskNSDL
A “Revelatory” Case?
A Revelatory Case

- “a revelatory case is a case for which there is a belief or assumption that the problems discovered in a particular case are common to other cases as well” (Moen, 1995, p.127)
Part of a Digital Reference Network

- AskNSDL
- AskERIC
- AskACM
- QuestionPoint
The Story

- 2nd Round Funding - 18 Months
- Software Development
  - “Incubator” Software
- Expertise
  - Digital Reference Services - Virtual Reference Desk
  - Question Answering - AskERIC
The Story, Act 2

- AskNSDL Created
- Incorporated into Core integration as Sub-Contract
- Selected for Initial Launch
The Plot Thickens

- Requirement to Tie-In with Shibboleth Authentication System
- Issues Encountered
  - Shibboleth not Implemented on Windows Platform
  - Incubator Development Team no Encryption Knowledge
  - Implemented NSDL-Only Features
Larger Issues

- Standards
  - Interoperability Framework for Services
    - Otherwise the Definition of Service is Unique Case
  - Standards Do Not Equal Implementation
    - Platform Can Indeed Matter
Larger Issues

- Plan of Transfer/Sustainability
  - Not Every Service Team can Become Part of the Core
  - Does Every Service need to get into the “Shrink-Wrap Business?”
Larger Issues

- Cross-Grant Issues
  - Is there an Obligation to Use a Service?
    - Can a Project opt-out?
  - What is the Obligation of a Service to Preserve the “Look and Feel” of Another Project?
    - Can a Service Designate Interface Elements and Portal Placement?
Services: An Attempted Model

The Provision of Alternative Contexts to a Collection

Context 1
Collection
- Resources
- Services

Context 2
Metadata Repository

Context 3
Portal

Context 4
AskNSDL
Services: Describable

- What is Being Referred To?
- What is Referring?
- What is the Nature of the Reference?
- What is the Method of Reference?
  - SOAP? NISO AZ? HTTP?
A Plug...

- Service Definition an Agenda Item of the Technology Committee