TITLE: Managing Services in the Digital Library: Future of Reference Services
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ABSTRACT: An overview of digital reference in North America and means of integrating reference services into digital libraries.
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Managing Services in the Digital Library: Future of Reference Services

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What is Digital Reference

• “The use of human intermediation to answer questions in a digital environment”

• An Active International Community, Primarily Library-Based, of Practitioners and Researchers
  – Digital Reference as a Peer-to-Peer Library Service

• Philosophy that Every Digital Library needs a Digital Librarian
Digital Reference Initiatives

• Technical Standards
  – QuIP -> NISO AZ

• Quality Standards
  – Quality Study

• Education Initiative
  – DREI

• Research Agenda

• Software Market Place
Models of Integration with DL

- Traditional Model
- Annotation Model
- Accretion Model
Traditional Model

- Information & Referral
- Expert Serves as “Advocate” to the Collection
- Expert can Synthesize and Span Collection Limitations
- Intermediation and Direct Access are Equivalent in Reach
Annotation Model

- Digital Reference Enriches the Collection
- Persistent Annotations
- Annotations Consist of Pointers and Comments
- “Reference Review” as New Form of Quality Assessment
Accretion Model

- Reference Authoring
- Answers are Part of the Collection
- Annotations to Resources Outside Existing Collection Creates Stub Record
AskERIC/EduRef as Example
Accretion Process
• Will the Collection Cluster or Build on the Edges
Issues

• Or do Users Ask at the Edges of their Knowledge
The Next Frontier: Knowledge Bases

• Possible Utility of Knowledge Bases
  – Alternative Source of Answers
    • Help Desk Model, Saturation
  – Resource for Expert
    • “Brain Box”
  – “First Order” Resource
    • Disconnected from Reference Process
Current Approaches

• All or Edit
  – Either all transactions are searchable or services use an extensive deductive editing process

• Primarily Deductive
  – Context Dependencies
  – Metadata Creation
  – Chunking
  – Fact Shifting and Temporal Dependencies

• Seed and Weed
  – Edit them in, then have to weed the archive
Conclusions

• Digital Reference has a Proven Place in Digital Libraries
  – Different Levels of Integration of Human Expertise
• Digital Reference is Increasingly Institutionalized
  – Standards (technical and quality)
  – Software
  – Research
  – Community
Digital Librarians

• Librarians, not the Collection make a Library