Who helps the help desk?

Evidence-based troubleshooting support for desk staff

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Presentation outline

Institutional profile
Problem statement
Issues reported
Existing support resources
Identifying unmet support needs
New support resources
Conclusions
Q&A
Institutional profile: Utah State University

Student Enrollment: 22,000 FTE / 28,500 headcount

Carnegie Class: R2

Unique Features:
- Land grant;
- Regional campuses;
- Prominent programs in engineering, education, folklore
Institutional profile:
Merrill-Cazier Library

Library Materials Budget:
$6 million

Library Staff:
80 FTE

E-Resources Staff:
3 FTE
Institutional profile: The Information Desk

Total desk staff: 29
- 16 faculty (7 from Reference & Instruction)
- 2 professional
- 7 paraprofessional
- 4 student

Desk hours:
Monday–Thursday 9 a.m.–7 p.m., Friday 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
PROBLEM STATEMENT
Problem statement

Desk staff do not always have the knowledge to troubleshoot e-resource problems on their own
Desk staff do not always know when they need to refer e-resource problems to us
As e-resource staff, we want to be more proactive, less reactive
ISSUES REPORTED
All e-resource issues
All e-resource issues

Issues raised at the Desk
All e-resource issues

Issues referred to e-Resources
Issues reported to e-resources team: Trello
Reviewing 262 issue reports from August 2013 to January 2016, we found that the source or origin of most reported issues fell into 4 broad categories.
Issue origins: Library technical problems

46% of problems reported involved technical problems on the library’s end.

The most common problem reported was inaccurate holding information listed in USU’s Serial Solutions knowledgebase.
Issue origins:
Vendor technical problems

33% of problems reported involved technical problems on the vendor’s end.

The most common problem reported was website crashes and glitches on vendor websites and link-resolver / metadata problems.
16% of reported problems involved a form of user education.

The most common problem was users not going through the library website to access electronic resources and the issue of paying attention to date ranges of access to serials.
Issue origins: User technical

5% involved technical problems on the user end

The most common problem was users needing to clear their browser cache and cookies and trying different browsers
Issues reported to information desk: LibAnswers
Issues reported to information desk:
LibAnswers

We searched the full database of issues reported to the Information Desk from **July 22, 2013, to February 29, 2016, (33 months)** for all tickets containing any of these terms:

- Access
- EBSCO
- Error
- Proxy
- Database
- Ejournal
- Login
- Jason
- Ebook
- E-journal
- Off campus
- Rosie
- E-book
- Electronic
- Off-campus
- Robert
Issues reported to information desk: LibAnswers

1,870 (87%) were resolved OR did not pertain to e-resources

120 (5.6%) were referred to us

160 (7.4%) were not resolved properly or fully OR it was unclear whether they were resolved


Resolved or irrelevant 87%

Not fully resolved 7%

Referral to E-Resources 6%
Issue type: Did not pertain to us

1,870 (87%) tickets were resolved OR did not pertain to e-resources

“Access” problems
  “Trouble accessing ILL account”
  “Information on publishing in Open Access journals”
  “I need to access a USU dissertation”
All e-resource issues

Issues raised at the Desk

Issues referred to e-Resources
Issue type: Referred to us

120 (5.6%) tickets were referred to us

These include:

- The patron was told to contact us
- The librarian found out we were already aware of the issue and working on it
- An e-mail or phone call was forwarded to us
Issue type: Improper or unclear resolution

39 (24%): Resource/feature awareness
34 (21%): Not referred
38 (24%): Referral path unclear
19 (12%): Policy awareness
30 (19%): Resolution unclear

Issues Reported to Desk but Unresolved

- Resource/feature awareness: 24%
- Referral path unclear: 24%
- Policy awareness: 12%
- Resolution unclear: 19%
- Not referred to E-Resources: 21%
EXISTING SUPPORT RESOURCES
Existing support resources: Overview
Existing support resources: FAQ

FAQ:
http://asklibrary.usu.edu/

As of 04/01/2016, we had 14 questions in the “Accessing Library Material” topic and 3 in “Off-Campus Access”
Existing support resources: Quick How-Tos

Quick How-Tos: http://library2.usu.edu/howto/im-having-problems-accessing-material
Existing support resources: Quick How-Tos

Based on a logical hierarchy, pages will get more specific within a set category.
Existing support resources: Quick How-Tos

Related DIY links provide additional assistance
Existing support resources: LibGuides

LibGuides: [http://libguides.usu.edu/](http://libguides.usu.edu/)

USU Libraries has subject guides for 40 subjects

27 LibGuides deal directly with aspects of accessing library material, ranging from finding articles and journals for research.
IDENTIFYING UNMET SUPPORT NEEDS
All e-resource issues

Issues raised at the Desk

Issues resolved
Identifying unmet support needs: Methodology

Reviewed Trello board history

Reviewed desk transaction logs

Reviewed existing support materials

Surveyed information-desk staff about how we can better help them
# Identifying unmet support needs: Findings

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NEW SUPPORT RESOURCES
New support resources: Policy awareness

Having problems logging in to online library resources?

Are you a student?    Are you staff?    Are you faculty?

1. If you're not currently enrolled...
   1. If you work at USU or USUW and don't have a USU email address,...
   1. If you're an alumnus, you should have access...
   Otherwise, you should have access...

2. Otherwise...

1. If you're a student...
   1. If you're a former student, you should have access...
   Otherwise...

1. Otherwise...

Utah State University
UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
## New support resources: Resource awareness

### 01/2015 – 05/2016 E-Resource Report

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(07/06-07/22/2015)
(05/01-05/22/2015)
(05/03-08/05/2015)
(07/06-07/29/2015)
(08/31-10/15/2015)
(09/14-10/06/2015)
(10/26-11/21/2015)
(11/05/2015-01/04/2016)
New support resources: Feature awareness

### Accessing E-Resources: E-books

#### Home | E-books | Databases | E-journals

**Accessing e-books**

Library-owned e-books are found by searching in the library catalog. See detailed instructions below.

The library also has e-books from many different publishers (not always found in the catalog), and different publishers have different restrictions and methods for reading and downloading their books. Below you will find general instructions for finding and viewing e-books through these various platforms.

**OverDrive**

OverDrive is a distribution platform through which users of our library can download a variety of popular e-books and audiobooks.

All current USU faculty, staff, and students may access the OverDrive collection to borrow up to four items (ebooks or audiobooks) at a time. Public and alumni patrons are not eligible for access through the USU library. However, public libraries in Utah, including the Logan City Library, provide OverDrive access to patrons through Primo, Utah’s online library.

You never have to worry about returning your ebooks and audiobooks on time, because they will automatically expire at the end of the lending period. You also have the option of choosing between the default 14-day checkout period or a 7-day checkout period.

For more information about OverDrive see the [guide](#).

**ebrary**

ebrary contains academic books on science, arts, humanities and social sciences.

In ebrary you may print or download portions of ebrary e-books (single pages, a chapter, or section, up to 60 pages). You will need to create a free account with ebrary to save and download the books, chapters, etc. When printing, you can choose to send your pages to a printer or save as a PDF file.

For more information and step-by-step instructions see the [guide](#).

**Safari Books Online**

The Safari Books Online collection contains over 4,000 e-books on computer science and information technology topics.

We have access to this collection through a cooperative, state-wide arrangement. As part of this arrangement, the titles in the collection may vary from year to year, and access is limited to 15 simultaneous users throughout the state of Utah. Therefore, you may notice that a book you were once able to access is no longer available, or a book you would like to access is not currently available.

Safari books are listed in our library’s catalog, and you may find them when you are searching for books on computer science or IT-related topics. When searching for a particular title or subject and want to limit your search to ebooks, perform an advanced search in Encore or the regular library catalog. In Encore, limit the format to “Electronic Book,” or limit the type to “ebook” in
New support resources: Referral path

Simplified to single point of contact for troubleshooting issues

Announcement to the subject librarians group

Incorporated into ongoing training for student workers
CONCLUSIONS
Conclusions

The body of support resources is still complex

Ongoing assessment of support needs and maintenance of support resources

Regular iteration of this analysis process

Helping the help desks helps users!
Q&A
Questions or feedback? Contact us!

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