Staff Perceptions of LibAnswers

Lindsey Main[1, 2]
Kathleen McGraw[2]

Introduction

User Services Department at UNC Chapel Hill Health Sciences Library
- supports Schools of Dentistry, Nursing, Medicine, Pharmacy, Public Health and a teaching hospital
- staffed by 11 librarians, 7 information associates, 3 graduate assistants, 13 students

LibAnswers is a new third-party application
- provides email and text/SMS presentation and tracking tools
- includes an integrated FAQ knowledgebase
- offers a statistics module to record data from other reference interactions

User Services Department launched LibAnswers July 1, 2010

Objective

The objective of this study was to assess staff satisfaction with using LibAnswers as a tool to
- increase staff efficiency answering email and text/SMS questions
- provide users access to stored FAQs
- integrate all public service statistics gathering in one portal
- improve the ability to create public service statistical reports

Methods
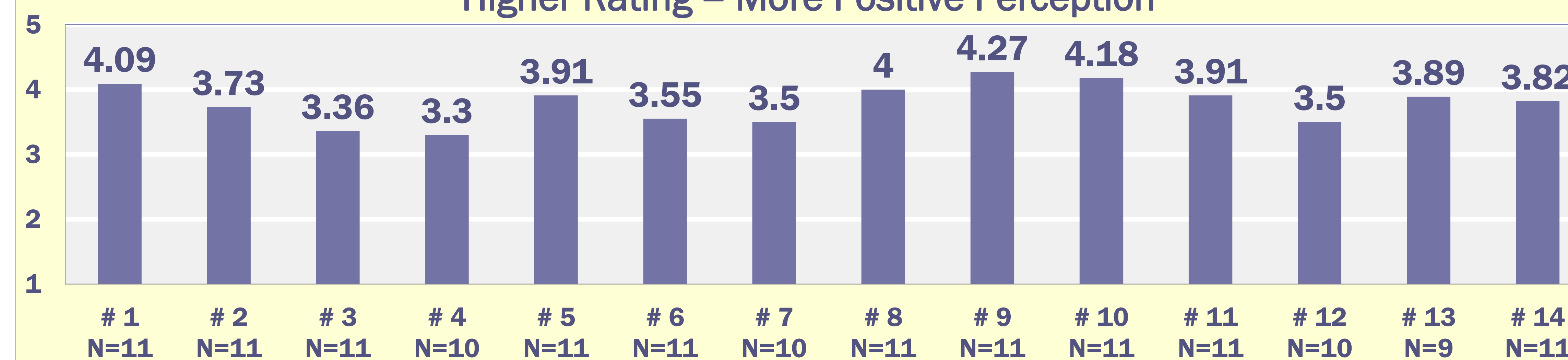
Created an online survey in Qualtrics
- 1 question to determine the person's primary ways of using LibAnswers
- 14 positively worded statements with a 5 point Likert scale and a free text comment box[1]
- 2 open-ended questions asking for the most negative and positive aspects of LibAnswers
- An additional open comment box
- Optional word association task[2]

Request to participate was sent to USD staff in mid-September

1. Lewis JR. 1995. IBM computer usability satisfaction questionnaires: Psychometric evaluation and instructions for use. International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction 7(1):57-78.
2. Davis T. 2008. Measuring satisfaction: Beyond the usability questionnaire. http://www.userfocus.co.uk/articles/satisfaction.html

Mean Satisfaction Ratings
Average Ratings for Survey Statements #1 to #14
Higher Rating = More Positive Perception

	# 1 N=11	# 2 N=11	# 3 N=11	# 4 N=10	# 5 N=11	# 6 N=11	# 7 N=10	# 8 N=11	# 9 N=11	# 10 N=11	# 11 N=11	# 12 N=10	# 13 N=9	# 14 N=11
Rating	4.09	3.73	3.36	3.3	3.91	3.55	3.5	4	4.27	4.18	3.91	3.5	3.89	3.82

> "I lose many of my interactions--not always enough time to get into it and deal with it then and there--so losing much data compared to hash marks on paper."

> "I think the system is really useful. Sometimes it is a little tedious entering desk questions but other than that, I am really happy with the transition."

Negative Aspects

Time needed to learn new system

Data entry takes more time

Categories (too many, not right ones, not enough...)

Difficult to figure out how to find and edit entered information

Need a better alert when a new question comes in

Positive Aspects

Web accessible anywhere

Easy to find/use previous answers

Flexible data entry, add as little or as much as you know

Nice to use the same system for all kinds of transactions

Easy to know when questions are claimed/answered

Results

Return rate
- 11 responses of 22 invites; 4 people completed the optional word association task

Statement #4 (lowest mean rating of 3.3)
- The information (such as on-line help, on-screen messages, and other documentation) provided with LibAnswers is clear.

Statement #9 (highest mean rating of 4.27)
- Being able to record and read some content about the questions/answers from desk, phone, online and liaison user interactions is useful.

Statement #14 (mean rating of 3.82; 3 of 11 responders rated this statement as Disagree)
- Overall I am satisfied with LibAnswers

The average of responding staff member's ratings is more positive than negative.

Statistics Reporting

Reports were not included in the survey because only a few people have used them.

Standard LibAnswers reports
- select by time period for any range of days, who entered the data, categories, keywords
- generate online charts and graphs
- export data and data analysis to Excel

User Services supervisors think the new reports are successful because they
- offer both global and specific reports
- are easy to produce in minimal time

Conclusions

Survey responses
- show an expected overall satisfaction mixed with some dissatisfaction
- identify revisions that can be addressed by local changes or by the vendor
- are positive enough to support USD's continued use of LibAnswers

We plan to expand our evaluation by studying user satisfaction with HSL's LibAnswers.

[1] School of Information and Library Science
[2] Health Sciences Library, UNC-Chapel Hill