Distributed Reference

Sue Davidsen
Lisa Raymond
Walden University



Walden University

- App. 31,000 students
- Degrees in
 - Health
 - Public policy
 - Education
 - Psychology
 - Management and technology

Walden University

- Completely online
- Accredited by North Central
- Walden began in 1971 as a way for educators to earn doctorates
- Mission of social change
- First distance ed institution to be categorized as research intensive by Carnegie Foundation
- Purchased by Laureate Education, inc in 2004

Walden University Library: 1991

- In 1991 the Walden Library was established at Indiana University
- Students are mainly in the U.S.
- Only PhDs and Master's degrees
- 5,000 students
- 2 librarians, later 6 students at IU's school of Information

Walden University Library: 2009

- Students and faculty are globally distributed
- 31,000 students
- B.S. degrees added
- 3 Librarians (Director, Information Literacy librarian and Reference Coordinator), one library tech (document delivery) in Minneapolis
- Reference staff of 6 part-time librarians is distributed throughout the U.S. and Europe

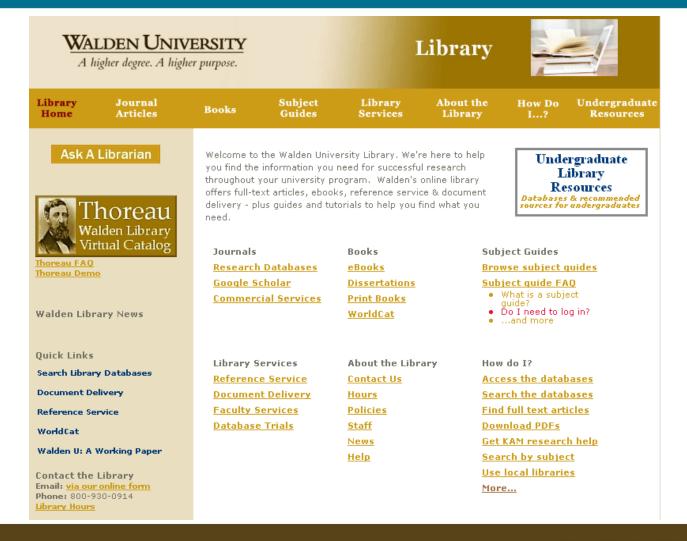
The Walden Library

- Completely online
- Reference
- Document Delivery
- Information Literacy, including residencies
- Tutorials and help

Walden Library

- 31,000 full-text periodicals
- 14,000 ebooks
- 144,000 dissertations
- 43 databases
- Meta-search using Webfeat
- 360 Link Open URL Resolver

Walden Library Home Page



Reference Services

- Average 300 questions a week
- 70% of questions
 library instruction
 full text retrieval
 research

Reference Services

Open 113 hours a week

Monday: Friday 8am – 1am

Saturday: 10am – 1am

Sunday: noon – 1am

Virtual staff works 3-4 four hour shifts per week

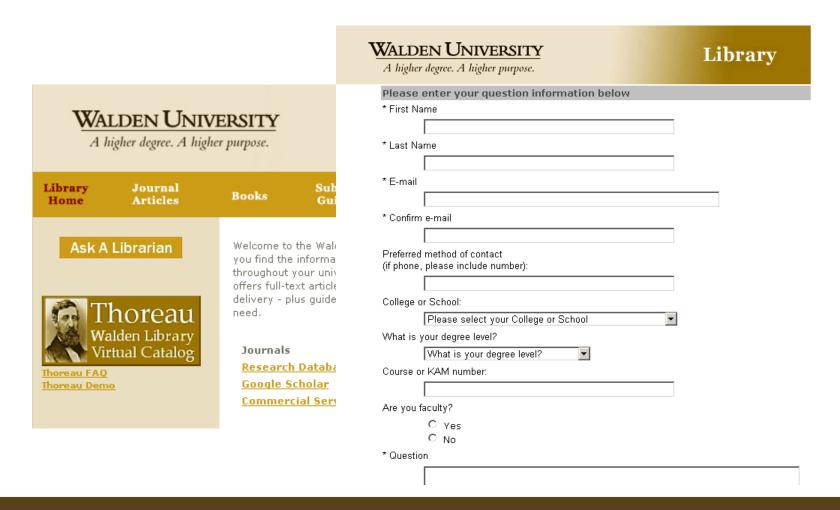
Reference Services

- Ask A Librarian web form
- Phone
- Email
- Chat (trial in April)

Reference Technologies

- OCLC's Question Point
- Ring Central VOIP
- PB Wiki
- Google Calendar
- Yahoo IM

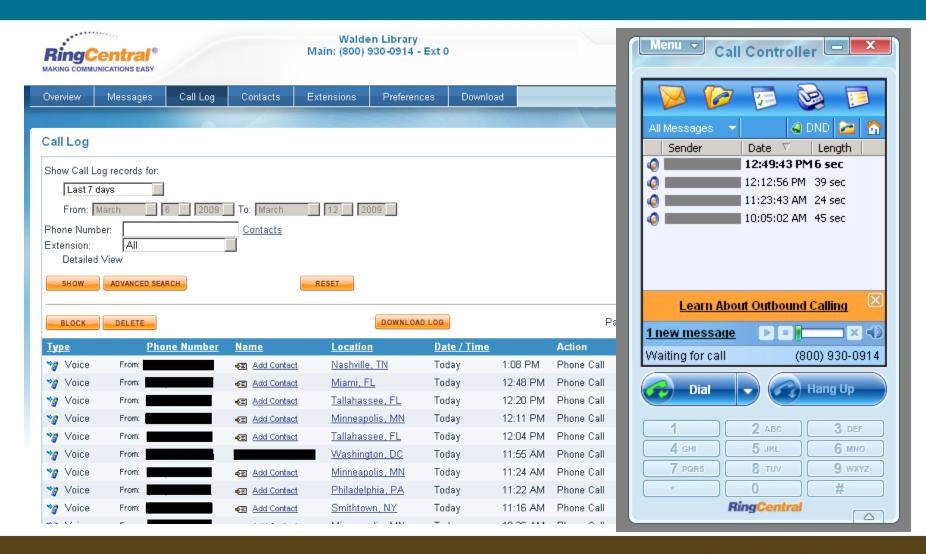
Ask A Librarian



Question Point

QuestionPoint Ask a Librarian							Supp F	oort lelp	OCLC.		
Que	stia	ns My Questions	Add Question	Settings	Review Transcripts	Service History	8.				
Acti	ve	New Pending Re	ferred Answer	ed Closed	d All	**	1				
Vev	N C	Questions						Find ID	•		
1	Refi	esh List]						Re	cords 1 - 16 of 16		
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П	?	4302977: I'm trying to look up the article BOyne, G.A. Public and private management. Journal of Management Services. I am in attempt to looking this information up from the accession number but an unable to f Received: 2009/03/12 12:19:34						Unassigned Patron:			
	?	4302797: I tried to get into the New Resources window. I received the response, "It is not available". When will the windows be available. Received: 2009/03/12 11:39:07 Updated: 2009/03/12 11:39:35							Unassigned Patron:		
	?	4302794: I am trying to use the Article Linker and the system requires a password. I've tried using my Walden email and password but that is not working. Please assist. Thanks Received: 2009/03/12 11:38:37							Unassigned Patron:		
	?	4302757: Article: Sagi, A., Van IJzendoorn, M. H., & Koren-Karie, N. (1991). Primary appraisal of the strange situation: A cross-cultural analysis of preseparation episodes. Developmental Psychology, 27(4), 58 Received: 2009/03/12 11:31:19							Unassigned Patron:		
П	?	4302694: How do I know that after downloading a journal or article that it is "peer reviewed"? Received: 2009/03/12 11:18:45						Unassigned Patron:			
П	?	4302303: HELLO AND THANKS FOR HELPING ME WITH KAM#1 DEVELOPEMENT. I HAVE TWO QUESTIONS. 1. MY THEME F ALL KAM'S WILL BE TO SHOW THE IMPACT OF ALCOHOL HAVING A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE CHILDS DEVELOEMN Received: 2009/03/12 09:49:43						R Unassigned Patron:			

Ring Central



Document Sharing





- Reference Resources and Documentation
 - Reference Desk Log
 - Information for Reference Staff- staff contact list, staff usernames and passwords, staff sul specialties, browser bookmarks
 - 2009 Reference Desk Schedule
 - New URL for database access issues- replaces direct database password list
 - Troubleshooting Access Issues
 - Standard Operating Procedures
 - · Common Reference Questions
 - Document Delivery Service Information

- Managing people remotely
 - Walden does everything from hiring to holding meetings remotely
 - Monthly phone meetings
 - Weekly check-in emails
 - -IM
 - Projects
 - Laptop from Walden with Lotus Notes

- Sheduling
 - Part-timers are harder to schedule
 - Looking into scheduling software
 - Second job limits daytime availability
 - Covering shifts due to illness and vacation

- Time zones
 - Eastern
 - Central
 - Pacific
 - Germany (EST +6)

- Maintaining a sense of community
 - Few social activities that work
 - Wiki more business related
 - Facebook page do you really want your employees or coworkers to know what you did last weekend?
 - FTF at residencies

- Training
 - Training remotely is different
 - Scheduling training is difficult
 - Asynchronous communication takes more time
 - Extra review of reference questions

What Works Well

- Productivity has gone up
 - Our inbox is often empty
 - We can now do collection analysis projects and add to our subject guides

What Works Well

- Can cover our student and faculty time zones
- One day we'll go 24/7 to cover our international students better

What Works Well

- Save significant budget \$
 - No offices, no benefits

Broadens our job pool

- Work from home, no commute
- Flexible staffing can add hours when needed

Virtual Staff: Benefits

- "Without someone standing right in front of you, you can take some more time to explore alternative sources of information, and try to formulate a better answer for the patron."
- "I enjoy working independently, yet still being a part of a team."

Virtual Staff: Challenges

- "You are completely dependent on technology all working right for you all the time. There are quite a few pieces to the puzzle and one going wrong can be frustrating."
- "In virtual reference it is not immediately apparent to patrons that there are other patrons being served when they call. They don't understand delay as easily and can become frustrated."

Questions?

