

Virtual Reference Advisory Committee Meeting
September 16, 2003
Tampa, Florida
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Attendees:

Pat Barbier (St. Petersburg College), Judy Born (Manatee Community College), Andrew Breidenbaugh (Tampa-Hillsborough PL), Brenda Ferris (CCLA), Andrea Ginsky (Sarasota County Library System), Lucy Harrison (CCLA), Dan Lhotka (State Library), Vince Mariner (CCLA), Ramona Miller (Santa Fe CC), Tina Neville (USF, St. Pete), Barbara Roberts (Miami-Dade College), Diana Sachs (TBLC), Beth Watson (TBLC).
Absent: Leslie Jones (Pasco County Library System), Olga Koz (Largo Public Library), Rhonda Smith (Lake Sumter Community College),

Welcome – Beth Watson welcomed the group and introduced Vince Mariner as the Statewide Coordinator for Ask a Librarian.

Where are we now? – Lucy provided the committee with an update of the service. Lucy discussed service hours, participation goals, training, year two grant approval, marketing, and the year one annual report.

Ask a Librarian Software -- Lucy Harrison/Diana Sachs

Many changes have been made to software since the first RFP response from Docutek. One of the reasons for selecting Docutek as the vendor was because they offered the ability to customize and set it up the way we needed to. Many changes have been made to the software over the last year. Items that will be coming up with the next update and items that are envisioned for future development were discussed. Detailed information was provided about the software.

Knowledge Base – Diana Sachs

Diana discussed the interface and how to build the knowledge base.

Staffing, Holidays & Hours – Diana Sachs (brainstorming)

Diana discussed the problem of staffing the evening hours, having libraries elect to staff “undesirable” shifts and various ways to require libraries to staff “x” number of hours. The committee discussed holiday hours and decided that the service should remain open as often as possible (Thanksgiving through New Year’s for limited hours) and should reflect the federal holiday schedule.

Future of the Committee – Vince Mariner

Discussed the initial project and how the group was formed and expressed that reorganizing the committee should be delayed to see if FLNC would play a role in restructuring the committee. There was also a concern as to how being a component of the Florida Electronic Library might impact the committee restructuring. Many ideas were discussed as to how to restructure the committee. Most committee members were willing to continue sitting on the committee until a restructure plan could be formulated.

Working Groups

“Head” of working groups will be from the advisory committee participants

1. Quality Assurance
Tina Neville
Pat Barbier
2. Policy/Procedures
Andrea Ginsky
3. Knowledge Base
Olga Koz
4. Promotions (publications, promotions)
Leslie Jones
Ramona Miller

Charge/description/purpose of what each of these groups will be doing. Vince and Diana and the group head will come up with the purpose of the group

Support materials and Website – Diana Sachs

Sachs reviewed the Website and the support materials for site coordinators.

Marketing and Recruitment – Vince Mariner

The purpose of a plan is to provide a publicity and marketing plan to support the Ask a Librarian service. The goals are to provide our primary customers, the librarians and the users with materials to support and enhance their use of the service. Promotion has focused on the librarians up to the this point and a wider marketing campaign to coincide with and continue after the launch of the Florida Electronic Library would consist of sample press releases and talking points informational handouts. Vince also discussed the plans for Ask a Librarian’s participation in the launch of the Florida Electronic Library. Local marketing ideas were also discussed.

Recruitment

Purpose is to develop strategies to recruit new Ask a Librarian participants in 2004. The focus is to get all of the “major players” on board. The focus on special libraries is to develop partners for anticipated “subject desks”. Establish and retain relationships with LIS schools.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.