



Reference & Information Services Newsletter

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Note from the Chair

Dear members of the Reference and Information Services Section,

It is a great pleasure to greet you through this Newsletter issue. It seems that it was only yesterday that I was writing last year's column, time seems to rush. This makes me reflect a bit on the notion of *time* and the fact that we never seem to catch up. "Time is a scarce phenomenon today," someone said, and I would think that many of us would agree.

Quite recently, in Helsinki at the 5th Nordic Virtual Reference Conference, there was a presentation entitled *Loneliness – the Price of the Online Society*. The speaker, **Tarja Cronberg**, was reflecting on the concept of time and loneliness as negative products of the internet community with all the online services. Physical meeting points such as Post Offices tend to disappear concurrently with the growing number of new net-based services. Elderly people do not have such places to visit anymore. She also noted that we tend to be more productive, we do more work, there is not enough time anymore to do everything that we want to do, and we are busier than ever. For example, parents no longer have time to share with their children.

What will the effects be on society in the future? One of her hopeful thoughts for the future was that libraries could serve as an important meeting-point where people could get help and at the same time not feel so lonely with technology. A place where children could meet friends while using computers and playing net-games. Can the library building and librarians serve as providers of that kind of social human touch that is so important to all of us? This might be one of the marketing issues in the future.

Our section will bring up the issue of marketing the year's conference in Seoul. The theme for our open program is Marketing of Reference Services in Today's Libraries - On-site and Virtual. There will be several aspects on this important issue from different parts of the world. Furthermore, we are collaborating with two other sections on a Satellite meeting prior to the conference on **Resource Sharing: Reference and Collection Development in a Digital Age – a practical approach**. Please find information on both events in the newsletter, as well as the Annual Report, minutes from the SC-meetings in Oslo and other bits and pieces. As usual, I would like to remind you to send us thoughts, ideas on topics for sessions, projects and other issues that would help develop and fulfill the scope and mission of this section.

Please visit our website for current information at <http://www.ifla.org/VII/s36/index.htm>

Sincerely,

Annsophie Oscarsson, Chair
June 2006





Fly into Newark Airport! It is quite close

March 2007 Mid-winter RIS Meeting New Brunswick, NJ & New York City Wednesday, March 7 – Friday, March 9

Schedule

Wednesday: Lunch in Princeton. Tour of Princeton Libraries, including a sneak peak of the new science library designed by Frank Gehry.

Thursday: RIS committee meeting at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. Morning meeting at Douglass College Library will include a brief tour of the new information commons. Lunch will be at the faculty dining hall on the Busch Campus. Afternoon meeting, at the Alexander Library, will include a short meeting with the university librarian and his management team.

Friday: Reference symposium at Columbia University. Registration fee is \$30. Please consider submitting a paper. There is definitely interest in submissions from our committee. During lunch there will be table topics for discussion. One of the topics will be globalization and reference. Hopefully, one of our members will facilitate a table discussion.

Saturday: Optional visit to Woodbury Commons Shopping Outlet for High End Designer Bargains. We will lunch at the Gasho Japanese Restaurant, a 15th century farmhouse brought over piece by piece from Japan.

Accommodations: Rutgers University Inn and Conference Center on the Douglass Campus. The price is \$84 for 1 person or \$97 for a double room (including breakfast and all taxes and fees). There is also a Hyatt within walking distance.

Transportation: Fly into Newark Airport! It is quite close. From Newark there are infrequent shuttles to New Brunswick (approx. \$20), taxis (approx. \$45), and very frequent train service (less than \$10). Taxis from the New Brunswick train station are approximately \$5 or you can take the free campus bus.

SC Members: Please see Annsofie's email for more details from Marty.



Reference and Information Services Section Open Session World Library and Information Congress 2006 Seoul, Korea

Marketing Reference Services in Today's Library – On-Site and Virtual

By Amanda Duffy

Utilization of reference services increases with marketing, publicity and promotion. Marketing allows us to find out and respond to what users want, including publicity and promotion that may raise awareness of what we have to offer. In selecting our speakers for this session, we considered both geographical diversity and experiences from a range of libraries.



World Library and Information Congress 2006 (continued)

Our moderator, **Gitte Larsen** (The Royal School Of Library And Information Science In Copenhagen), began the session by setting out some of the challenges reference librarians face in this area – the assessment of user needs and expectations, the production of successful marketing strategies, the presence of sufficient marketing competencies in our staff, and the development of marketing action plans and budgets. Above all we must remember that our users want a quality service, whether the service is on-site or virtual.

Li Yanru (Harbin Municipal Library, Harbin City, China) spoke on **Marketing the Reference Services of Public Libraries in Developing Regions**. Harbin Public Library was the only provider of reference services from 1876 - 1984. After 1984, other providers, specifically commercial and not-for-profit organizations entered the field and this led to a decrease in the use of the service offered by the public library. This, together with the fact that in this area the level of information literacy and awareness amongst the population was low, presented the library service with a serious problem. As a response, the library did two things. First, they began an intensive program of information literacy training for their customers utilizing on-line and face-to-face methods. Second, they joined a collaborative digital network made up of several library authorities of varying sizes across China. Using their own in-house expertise and resources and linking in with those of their colleagues, they were able to offer a far more comprehensive and higher quality service than previously. The local population became more information conscious and the number of reference enquiries received increased by over 100%.

Marketing partnerships in Greece between libraries, archives and museums was the topic covered by **Antonia Arahova** (Library and Archives, Office of the Greek Delegate at the European Parliament, Athens, Greece). Like most places, libraries, archives, and museums used to operate independently with no overall co-operation or guidance. Gradually, a number of collaborative projects were developed. The Educational Triangle Project brings the formal and informal learning processes of these institutions together. The Greek Virtual Reference website targets distant patrons of any age and nationality. From these collaborative projects, a modal program of co-operation and collaboration is being developed. It is in its early stages, but a marketing plan and initiatives to promote communication between libraries, museums and archives are already being developed.

While there are many barriers to overcome and it still seems easier for the three to work together on specific projects, progress is being made towards an all-encompassing plan.

The need for marketing abilities is widely acknowledged but does not appear in many LIS curricula. **Sophia Kaane** (University Librarian, US International University, Nairobi, Kenya) has undertaken research in this area. Her talk, **Marketing Reference and Information Services in Libraries: A Staff Competencies Framework**, identified the competencies needed: market research techniques, communication skills, promotional ability and assessment skills.

Dr. Kaane undertook a survey of colleagues in Kenya – mostly from academic libraries – who see marketing as an essential skill for librarians in the electronic age. She found that it is not sufficient just to teach marketing in the library and information schools. There also needs to be a parallel continual learning program covering ICT skills, user needs assessment skills, and above all, marketing skills. She hopes that these skills will be incorporated into the training and updating of librarians' skills in Kenya.

“Above all, we must remember that our users want a quality service.”



Committee in Seoul: Bodil, Beth Annsophie, Marty, Frank, Petra, Amanda

World Library and Information Congress 2006 (continued)

Marketing analysis of reference & information services in Korean libraries

Heesop Kim (Kyungpook National University, Daegu, Korea) discussed his *Marketing analysis of reference & information services in Korean libraries*. He recently investigated the role of information services in Korea by surveying 197 libraries (public, academic, special, and school). He asked libraries what they called their "information service" with these results:

Reference Service	37%
User Services	24%
Information Services	22%
Reference & Information Services	10%
Reference Work	3%

He then looked at the results by the type of library.

Reference Service was used by 41% of both public and academic libraries

Information Service was used by 62% of special libraries

User service was used by 31% of school libraries

Kim also discovered that only 25% of the libraries questioned undertook a regular user survey. Generally, the most popular tool for the promotion of services was the library's homepage.

All the open session papers are up on the IFLA website at http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla72/Programme2006.htm#22August_Session_118.

After the presentations, we had a lively discussion.

Several surveys have shown that there is little use of chat reference and a member of the audience wondered whether this was because "chat" had a rather negative, light-hearted image.

On the question of what we should call our service, a delegate from Canada felt that "reference" implies a passive, come-and-get-it service. When trying to market the service, we should use another term.

A librarian from the USA suggested we should stop using "librarian" and "library" -- what other profession names itself after a building? The implication being that we are building-based and therefore not part of the modern, virtual world.

A delegate from New Zealand asked if anyone had tried employing marketing experts rather than librarians to do their marketing. A colleague from USA tried this, but had little success. She also tried to use library staff but found they were either good at writing text or good at doing visuals -- but rarely both.

Sophia Kaane was asked if she had approached the teaching faculties with these. She replied that they set up workshops with members of the academic faculty and librarians, but the most successful approach had been sessions for the students.

Satellite Meeting Held in Seoul August 2006

Satellite Meeting Held in Seoul on August 17-18 Resource Sharing, Reference and Collection Development in a Digital Age - a practical approach

A Seoul satellite conference was sponsored by the Acquisition and Collection Development Section, Document Delivery and Resource Sharing Section, and Reference and Information Services Section. Our section's contribution to the satellite meeting was chaired by **Isabel Stirling**. Committee members **Bodil Wohnert** and **Beth Fisher** were also part of the program, which included the following presentations.

The virtual librarian: a presentation of IFLA Digital Reference Guidelines and how they can be used. Bodil Wohnert (Central Library Esbjerg, Denmark).

Collaborative Reference Database Project. Tomoko Kitagawa (National Diet Library, Japan).

Preparing for Chat Services in library homepages. Hwicheol Kim (Hanyang University, Korea)

Providing bibliographic software across campus -- merging reference, resources and teaching. Isabel Stirling (UC Berkeley, U.S.A.) and Beth Fisher (Virginia Tech University, U.S.A.).

Reference & Information Services Section Annual Report 2004-2005: Excerpts

Submitted By Annsofie Oscarsson, Chair

Mission statement according to Strategic Plan 2004-2005

The Reference Work Section addresses all aspects of reference work, in all types of libraries, in all regions of the world with emphasis on unrestricted availability of information. The Section's aims are to bridge the gap between the physical and the digital library, to promote life-long learning and information literacy in all aspects of the knowledge sharing process, and to support library staff around the world with standards and guidelines for reference service.

Areas of special interests are as follows:

- User-centered reference services
- Organization and staffing of reference services
- Ethics of high quality service
- Provision of high quality service
- Impact of the digital environment on reference services
- Reference collections in a digital world
- Continuing education and training of library staff
- Marketing/Visibility of library reference services
- Provision of an information forum on the nature of reference work in different parts of the world
- Democracy-building role of reference services

Name change of the Reference Work Section

With regard to the changing information environment, the Standing Committee found

that the concept "reference work" was no longer the most relevant label for the issues that our section covers. In order to better reflect the multifaceted user services component of our work and also to facilitate translation into other languages, the Standing Committee applied for a name change for the section. The section's name was changed to Reference and Information Services Section.

Midwinter meeting, Rome March 11-12, 2005

A Midwinter meeting was held in Rome on March 11. The main issue on the agenda was strategic planning for the next two years. The Standing Committee discussed the strategic goals for the period 2006-2007 and created a draft Strategic Plan to be discussed at the Oslo meetings. On March 12, attendees participated in a joint Workshop on Digital Reference Services hosted by the Italian Library Association (AIB). Committee members shared information on digital services in their own countries and **Paola Garagiulo** talked about preservation in Italian libraries. After the Workshop, the participants enjoyed a delicious lunch, hosted by the AIB. During the Rome visit, SC-members also had the opportunity of visiting the Vatican Library.

Satellite Meeting in Oslo Why is the Physical Library Building Still Important?

Prior to the Oslo conference, a satellite meeting in Järvenpää, Finland was held in cooperation with IFLA Library Building and Equipment Section and the Finnish Library Association. With the great number of library resources and services available remotely, why is the physical library building still important?

The physical library no longer needs to be just a

warehouse of information, it can become a place for interaction, learning and a community meeting area. This workshop explored some of the new and exciting ways library buildings focus on user needs such as an information commons, cybercafé, and self services. The program, ***The Physical Library and Beyond - Library as Place and the Library in Cyberspace***, was held on August 11-12, 2006.



World Library and Information Congress: 71st IFLA General Conference and Council Libraries - A Voyage of Discovery August 14 - 18 2006, Oslo, Norway

The Open Session included presentations about reference and information services from different points of view and from a variety of countries. The six speaker panel engaged the audience in a lively discussion on topics such as user satisfaction, staffing, management, staffing and training, and visions for the future. The program papers are listed below, and the full papers are on the conference website.

Virtual Versus Face-2-Face Reference and Information Services - A Personal Service Delivered To The 'Invisible' User Via Library Portals

Moderator: Gitte Larsen (The Royal School Of Library And Information Science, Copenhagen, Denmark)

A Question About Switzerland?
Swissinfodesk, Jean-Philippe Accart (Swiss National Library, Bern, Switzerland)

Utilizing Virtual Reference To Serve Multitype Library Patrons, Eva Lunneborg (National Library Of Sweden, Stockholm, Sweden) And **Vince Mariner** (College Center For Library Automation, Statewide Coordinator - Ask a Librarian (Florida) Tallahassee, Florida, USA)

People's Network Enquire: Virtual Reference in England, Linda Berube (Co-East, Cambridgeshire, UK)

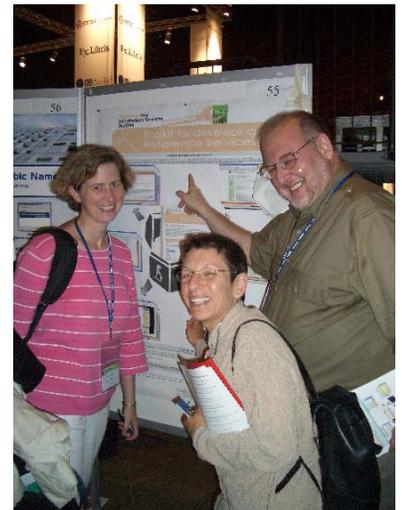
Virtual Versus Face-2-Face Reference: Comparing Users' Perspectives On Visits To Physical And Virtual Reference Desks In Public And Academic Libraries, Kirsti Nilsen (University Of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada)

Utilizing Virtual Reference To Serve Multitype Library Patrons, Vince A. Mariner (College Center For Library Automation, Tallahassee, USA)

The Re-Invention of The Reference Enquiry Service: A Case Study Of The National Library Board, Singapore, Francois Raju Buddharju (The National Library Board, Singapore)

The attendance at the program was more than 450 people.

**Oslo conference
Poster session:
Toolkit for
developing
reference services
Presented by
Martin Kesselman,
Sarah Watstein and
Linda Hartley**



Poster Session: Toolkit for Developing Reference Services

A wealth of information, including science and health information is available, and sometimes freely available, to developing countries. A major gap exists in some countries where library staffs do not have the reference skills needed to provide access to information that can directly benefit their countries economically and socially. Where services do exist, there is often a lack of standards and guidelines for library responsibilities and services.

To assist librarians and decision makers in developing countries and elsewhere, the IFLA Reference and Information Services Section, through an IFLA project, has developed a toolkit. A toolkit is comprised of tools; in this case these tools are important web resources for libraries. The toolkit includes links to websites dealing with the needs for reference, planning a service, training, marketing, collaborations, and assessment. The poster highlights these elements with examples of resources and also identifies areas where resources are lacking to support reference in developing countries.

Newly Completed Projects

IFLA Digital Reference Guidelines

Translations of IFLA Digital Reference Guidelines into Swedish and German were added to the IFLA website. There are now eight available versions. Other versions include English, Chinese, Dutch, French, Italian and Spanish.

Reference Toolkit for Librarians in Developing Countries

To assist librarians and decision makers in developing countries, IFLA has funded a small project to develop a web-based toolkit that brings together existing and freely-available guidelines and other materials that can be utilized to develop reference services. The project was carried out by **Martin Kesselman**, Rutgers and Secretary of the IFLA Reference

Work Section, together with **Sarah Watstein** UCLA. The project was finished and presented as a Poster Session at the Oslo conference. The toolkit will be available from the Reference and Information Services Section's website.

<http://www.ifla.org/VII/s36/rw.htm>

Collaborative E-reference Services

A worldwide survey on collaborative e-reference services was made on behalf of the section and was compiled by the Department of Continuing Education & Consultancy, The Royal School of Library and Information Science in Denmark.

***As of August 2005
there were 55
members registered
for the Reference and
Information Services
Section.***

Reference and Information Services Section Check Out Their Website For Ongoing Activities and Projects

The Reference & Information Services Section addresses every aspect of reference, including all types of libraries throughout the world with an emphasis on unrestricted availability of information. The Section aims at bridging the gap between the physical and digital library, to promote life-long learning and information literacy in all aspects of the knowledge sharing process, and to support library and information services staff around the world with standards and guidelines. For more information about the section's activities and projects, please visit the website:

<http://www.ifla.org/VII/s36/rw.htm>



RIS Committee in Oslo: Isabel Stirling, Francis Kirkwood, Sarah Watstein, Concha Lois Cabello, Raymond-Joseu Sekel, Gunila Häkli, Amanda Duffy, Uwe Schwersk, Jieyn Feng, Bodi Wohnerl, Franceen Gauget, Petra van den Born, Annsophie Oscarsson, Marty Kesselman, Cathy Wojewodzki and Birgitta Fogelvik



World Library and Information Congress 73rd IFLA General Conference and Council

Libraries for the Future
Progress, Development and Partnerships
August 2007

Call for Papers

Reference and Information Services Section

Reference and Information Services Section invites the submission of proposals for papers to be presented at our two-hour open session in Durban

Theme

"Getting and Keeping Ahead: educating for reference and information services for the future"

Subjects of interest

- What skills and competencies are needed?
- Advocacy directed at the staff: the need for skills and their continuous updating.
- Advocacy directed at educators and employers.
- Normal teaching in library schools.
- Learning in the work place.
- How library staff can aid students.
- Continuing education.

Proposals

Deadline for submitting a detailed one-page abstract and full author details is **January 22, 2007**. Late submissions will not be considered. The selected presenters will be notified by end of February 2007.

Papers

Must be original, written in English, or with an English translation attached, and should be no longer than 5,000 words + an abstract of 350 words.

Selected papers will be published on the IFLA website prior to the conference.

Papers must be submitted no later than **May 1, 2007**.

Presentations at the open session will be a summary of the paper in English and should not exceed 20 minutes in length. There will be an open forum to allow audience interaction with the speakers, who should be fluent in English.

Please send your abstract via e-mail to:

Bodil Wöhnert
Central Library in Esbjerg
Norregade 19
DK 6700 Esbjerg, Denmark
Phone (+45) 76 16 19 61
Fax. (+45) 76 16 20 03
E-mail: bow@esbjergkommune.dk

Future Conferences

World Library and Information Congress

74th IFLA General Conference and Council
Québec, Canada
August 2008

World Library and Information Congress

75th IFLA General Conference and Council
Milan, Italy
August 2009



How Do You Say “Reference” in Korea?

By Myoung Chung Wilson

When I was asked to contribute to this column I initially hesitated for two reasons. First, although I was born in Korea and was educated there, I have not lived in Korea for many years. Second, although I have practiced reference librarianship in the United States for more than three decades, I have never provided reference services in Korea and have little recollection of seeking reference assistance while growing up in that country. However, some 30 years after leaving Korea I returned as a researcher and availed myself of one of the best reference services that I have ever encountered. This experience taught me a significant lesson in how to provide reference services.

As reference librarians around the world are keenly aware, reference service is always a two-way transaction between the librarian and the user who is seeking assistance. “Reference,” in Korean, is translated as “chamgo”— meaning “referral” or “consultation” (or “consideration”). The reference services that I encountered in Korea directly represented these twin concepts. Indeed, the librarians who provided me with reference assistance were invaluable consultants in the areas of their expertise. Let me elaborate.

In 1997 I was on sabbatical leave, conducting extensive research on Korean government publications. I worked intimately with the librarian at the Korean Government Publishing Office and reference librarians at the Korean National Assembly Library. Their assistance in re-educating me about Korean official

publications helped me track down many elusive citations. Indeed, their assistance was indispensable for the ultimate publication of my book ([Korean government publications: An introductory guide](#), Scarecrow, 2000). In this book, I acknowledged Yim Yoon Sook, the librarian at the Korean Government Publishing Office and other colleagues at the Korean National Assembly Library as among the finest information professionals that I have encountered in both the West and the East.

This experience begs the question as to whether there are differences in the quality of reference services in different cultures, whether cultural differences fundamentally affect the type and degree of service that is provided. Cultural sensitivities, however, can become extremely important factors in leading to successful reference interview processes. Korea is a society that is heavily influenced by Confucian ethics; personal relationships are important and hierarchy is a marked feature of every day life as evidenced by the respect that is accorded to elders and scholars. At the same time, Korea is a nation that is highly networked. Ubiquitous internet access gives society a marked “flat” or horizontal caste. Reference librarians in Korea thus have the task of working within the context of traditional Confucian values while delivering information services in an increasingly networked flat society. How they provide exceptionally high quality reference service while navigating between these polar cultural imperatives is a tribute to their personal flexibility and the high standards that are imparted to them in their education as librarians.

*Myoung Chung Wilson is
an Information Services
Librarian at Alexander
Library, Rutgers-The State
University of New Jersey.
She can be reached at
169 College Avenue,
New Brunswick, NJ
08901-1163 USA
or
mywilson@rci.rutgers.edu*
