Strategies for developing & maintaining a responsive FAQ knowledge base

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Slides

bit.ly/ual-faq2024

Outline

01 Background

02 Creating the knowledge base

03 Adding FAQs to the library website

04 Maintaining content

05 Analyzing usage

06 Recent and future developments

01

Background

Virtual Reference Working Group

Mandated to "map current virtual reference services provided across various service points at UAL, and to propose a more cohesive model that will take advantage of available technologies."

    - VRWG final report, 2022

Two key VRWG recommendations

- Subscribe to LibAnswers as an integrated virtual reference platform

- Generate a publicly available, searchable FAQ database based on real-world questions to enhance our service offerings to users.

Why an FAQ knowledge base?

- It's a self-help resource for library users

- Staff can share entries with users (instead of starting from scratch each time)

- It can be used as a training tool for new staff (e.g., awareness of common questions and how to answer them)

Transitioning to LibAnswers

Slides from "Transitioning to an Integrated Virtual Reference Platform at the University of Alberta Library" by Angie Mandeville, Lindsay Johnston, & Kara Blizzard: **bit.ly/vrwg-neos**

02

Creating the knowledge base

Timeline

July 2022

Formed a subgroup with Chris Bateman, Cody Torkelson, Laurel Warkentin, & Brenda Wolfe

Identified topics to include in the knowledge base

Developed guidelines for writing FAQ entries

Drafted questions and answers

Added FAQ entries to the LibAnswers system

Launched LibAnswers

February 2023

Where we looked for topic & question ideas

- Public Service Portal (frontline staff manual)
- Chat service canned messages
- Chat analysis coding categories
- U of A Library News Blog
- Other libraries' FAQs

LibAnswers uses topics to organize entries

Developing topics & questions

Topic	Questions
Alumni	Can alumni access library databases and e-books off campus? As an alumni, can I still borrow books from the library? Can alumni get a library card?
Citation and Reference Management	Where can I get help with citations? Does the library subscribe to any reference management software? Can you help me pick reference management software? I need help troubleshooting reference management software. What is plagiarism and how do I avoid it?
Collections	How do I recommend that the library buy a book? Can I donate my books to the library?

Guidelines for writing entries

Scope:

- Related to library services, resources, & areas of expertise

Writing style:

- Be concise (1-2 paragraphs)
- Use plain language, avoiding jargon as much as possible
- Explain specialized terminology or link to definition
- Spell out abbreviations (e.g., interlibrary loan vs. ILL)

Guidelines for writing entries

Links and media:

- Link to relevant webpages, guides, etc.
- Embed images or videos to explain concepts

Organizing entries:

- Assign 1 or 2 relevant LibAnswers topics
- Add relevant keywords to help users find the entry. Include alternate spellings and forms of words (e.g., ebook, e-book, online book, etc.)

Full guidelines

Example draft entry

Reuse Answers

| Answer | Files (0) | Links (0) | Media (0) | | Comments (0) | Notes (0) |

Instructions for Spellcheck

Styles | Format | Font | Size | A▾ | A▾ | B I S I×

You can search for e-books using the Search the Library box on the library website. Try entering a specific title or searching for keywords on a topic. To limit the search results to e-books, on the left side of the page under "Resource Type," select "eBooks."

You might find e-books that are only available at other institutions, such as MacEwan or NorQuest College. To limit the search results to the U of A collection, on the left side of the page under "Location," select "University of Alberta Internet."

For some e-books, there will be direct links to view or download the full text. For others, you will need to click on the "University of Alberta Access" link to access the content.

Topics

E-resources ▬

Select Topics to Add ▾ | Add

Keywords

ebook ▬ | electronic book ▬

online book ▬ | ebooks ▬ | e-book ▬

e-books ▬ | kindle ▬ | kobo ▬

Add Keyword | Add

Statistics

Example published entry

How do I access e-books at the library?

Answer

You can search for e-books using the Search the Library box on the **library website**. Try entering a specific title or searching for keywords on a topic. To limit the search results to e-books, on the left side of the page under "Resource Type," select "eBooks."

You might find e-books that are only available at other institutions, such as MacEwan or NorQuest College. To limit the search results to the U of A collection, on the left side of the page under "Location," select "University of Alberta Internet."

For some e-books, there will be direct links to view or download the full text. For others, you will need to click on the "University of Alberta Access" link to access the content.

For more information, visit the **e-books guide** or **ask us** for help.

Topics

E-resources

Last Updated
May 09, 2024

Ask Us

💬 **Chat with Us**

✉️ **Email Us**

📞 **(780) 492-4174**

🏛️ **Visit Us**

03

Adding FAQs to the library website

Featured FAQs on Ask Us page

Email Us
reference / suggestions

Phone Us
780-492-4174

Visit Us
at any service desk

Book a Consultation

Find a Subject Librarian

Chat with Us

Enter your question and click "Submit" to start chatting with a **library staff member**.

Type your message here...

Submit

FAQs

Search & Browse all FAQs

I'm having trouble accessing an article. How can I get it?
Topics: E-resources

What's the best database to start my research?
Topics: Library Research

How can I tell if an article is peer reviewed?
Topics: Library Research

How do I evaluate content from generative AI tools?
Topics: Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Can alumni access library databases and e-books off campus?
Topics: Alumni   E-resources

Full knowledge base on LibAnswers site

193 Answers

Ask Us at UALibrary

Type a question...

Ask

Popular   Recent

How do I find a Journal Impact Factor?
Last Updated: Nov 28, 2023   **Topics:** Research Impact

I'm having trouble accessing an article. How can I get it?
Last Updated: Mar 06, 2024   **Topics:** E-resources

I'm having trouble accessing an article suggested by ChatGPT. Can you help?
Last Updated: Apr 12, 2024   **Topics:** Artificial Intelligence (AI)
Citation and Reference Management   Library Research

If I put a book on hold, when will it be ready for pick-up?
Last Updated: Feb 15, 2023   **Topics:** Borrowing

Ask Us

💬 **Chat with Us**

✉️ **Email Us**

📞 **(780) 492-4174**

🏛️ **Visit Us**

Example search results

Ask Us at UALibrary

how do i download an ebook

Ask

Search Results for: *how do i download an ebook*

Showing 1 - 20 (of 137)   Sort By ▾

1 2 3 4 5 >

Ask Us

Can I download or print an e-book?
Last Updated   May 09 2024, 04:06pm | Topics   E-resources

Why do I have to create an account or download special software in order to read an e-book?
Last Updated   May 09 2024, 04:06pm | Topics   E-resources

Can I read an e-book if someone else is reading it at the same time?
Last Updated   Mar 08 2023, 04:01pm | Topics   E-resources

▾ Topics (most frequent)

☐ Borrowing (30)
☐ E-resources (23)
☐ Library Research (21)
☐ Course Materials (9)
☐ Artificial Intelligence (AI) (6)

💬 Cha
✉ Em
📞 (780

Still haven't found what you're looking for?   **Submit Your Question**

Custom widgets in LibGuides

Using Generative AI Guide

04

Maintaining content

FAQ suggestion form for library staff

What would you like to do? *

- ⦿ Suggest a new FAQ entry
- ◯ Suggest edits to an existing FAQ entry
- ◯ Suggest removing an existing FAQ entry
- ◯ Other

Suggest a new FAQ entry

Please review the FAQ guidelines when you draft your proposed entry.

What is your proposed question?

Your answer

What is your proposed answer?

Your answer

If you are suggesting including any links to relevant information, please add them here.

Your answer

Workflow for FAQ updates

- **Monitor the FAQ suggestion form** on an ongoing basis and update entries *(1 group member)*

- **Review entries** twice a year to identify needed updates or removals *(2 group members)*

- **Use the LibAnswers Query Analyzer** after each term to identify common FAQ searches; use the findings to inform FAQ edits *(1-2 group members)*

- **Use chat transcript analysis** to help inform FAQ edits *(all group members)*

Recommendations from the literature

"Labrake (2019) also emphasized the need for a rich knowledge base; they suggested **using data to focus efforts**, ensure that **FAQ's contain differentiated content**, support advanced learning, are **embedded in several places**, are linked to automated text responses, and are **tagged with metadata to increase discoverability**. They also suggested establishing a peer-review process and **reoccurring quality controls**." - VRWG Final Report (2022)

Labrake, M. (2019). Getting your FAQs straight: How to make your knowledgebase power virtual reference. *Computers in Libraries, 39*(8), 14-19.

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Analyzing usage

Total FAQ views

January–April 2024

Most and least popular FAQs

Top 50 Most Popular FAQs

Export Top 50 Most Popular FAQs

Below is a list of the 50 most popular FAQs by views for the date range selected.

Showing 1 to 10 of 50 entries

Search:

Previous 1 2 3 4 5 Next

ID	Created	FAQ Title	FAQ Group	Views ▼
209805	2022-10-14 20:47:22	How do I find a Journal Impact Factor?	Ask Us	2400
209806	2022-10-14 20:51:10	I'm having trouble accessing an article. How can I get it?	Ask Us	136
211089	2023-04-25 16:42:19	I'm having trouble accessing an article suggested by ChatGPT. Can you help?	Ask Us	130
209905	2022-11-01 15:14:25	If I put a book on hold, when will it be ready for pick-up?	Ask Us	100
211929	2023-11-23 23:11:09	How do I evaluate content from generative AI tools?	Ask Us	97
210020	2022-11-08 22:59:27	Do you have charging cords I can borrow?	Ask Us	96
211928	2023-11-23 23:04:27	Can generative AI help me do research?	Ask Us	94
211930	2023-11-23 23:13:16	Can I use ChatGPT or other generative AI tools for my coursework?	Ask Us	85
210124	2022-12-01 17:02:31	Can alumni access library databases and e-books off campus?	Ask Us	77
212114	2024-01-17 18:54:56	Can I upload library material into an AI tool?	Ask Us	74

Top 50 Least Popular FAQs

Export Top 50 Least Popular FAQs

Below is a list of the 50 least popular FAQs by views for the date range selected.

FAQ searches

September-December 2023

Clicked on question: 42.82%

Not Submitted: 48.24%

Question Submitted: 0.24%

Match via auto-suggest: 8.71%

Query analyzer

Sample entries

Understanding the Olympics (add to FAQs) (mark as reviewed)	Not Submitted
I am a visiting professor but my CCID does not let me use the library online (add to FAQs) (mark as reviewed)	Clicked on What does this error message mean: "Your CCID does not entitle you to use this library service"?

Query Analyzer observations

Excerpt from September–December 2023

Of queries where the user did not click on any results:
- In 28 cases, the FAQ search box seemed to be mistaken for a chat service or search engine
- For 59 queries, there were relevant FAQ entries within the top few results
- 57 queries will lead to the creation of new FAQs or edits to current ones

06

Recent & future developments

Recent & future developments

In progress

- Translating current FAQs into French (many thanks to Kristina Klinge, Spécialiste, service de l'information)

Upcoming:

- Consider removing entries based on low usage
- Starting a workflow for analyzing samples of tickets (emails), which could contribute to FAQ edits

Thanks!

Questions?

Email me at blizzard@ualberta.ca

Thanks to the LibChat Analysis & FAQ Group:
Chris Bateman, Cody Torkelson, Jamie Spivak, Laurel Warkentin, Kristina Klinge (French translation)

And the Virtual Reference Working Group:
Angie Mandeville, April Fodor, Brenda Wolfe, Connie Winther, Lindsay Johnston, Megan Kennedy, Natasha Nunn, & Patti Sherbaniuk