

News

1. Conferences

1.1. The VRD 7th Annual Reference Conference: Recognizing the Success of Reference, San Francisco, November 14–15, 2005

The VRD conference explores all aspects of reference service in a broad range of contexts, including libraries and information centers, government, business, education, and other industry sectors or organizations. The theme of this year's conference, "Recognizing the Success of Reference," examines the challenges, accomplishments, and perhaps pitfalls of integrating digital reference into the traditional reference environment. With technologies such as SMS, Podcasting, voice over IP (VoIP), and more becoming increasingly mainstream, the potential to provide instant, on-the-go reference is limitless. Papers will examine issues, identify practices, and propose organizational and technological systems, standards, and procedures that advance the state of reference librarianship as practiced in a variety of environments and mediums.

Proposed themes:

Administrative Issues

- Training solutions and models for service staff.
- Planning for technological evolution.
- Performance measures, evaluation approaches, and quality standards.
- Cooperative efforts with other organizations, such as museums and archives.
- Marketing services to potential users.
- Best practices.
- Planning for equipment and space.
- Reference outsourcing.
- Staff motivation and buy-in.
- Distance education issues.
- Copyright and licensing issues for resources, such as pricing, legal ramifications, etc.

General Reference Issues

- Special services for special needs users.
- Patron privacy.
- Emerging trends.

- Legal issues and liability.
- Archiving/tracking questions and answers/FAQs.
- Commercial and fee-based services.
- Case studies (experiences from different ways of providing reference service in all contexts).

Digital Reference

- Evaluation of digital reference software.
- Reference via cell phone text messages (SMS).
- Standards for digital reference technology, including NISO standards.
- Policies and standards for consortia and cooperative reference.
- Training and education for staff.
- Models for funding/pricing.
- Policies and the law – liability, privacy, ethics, copyright, licensing.
- Question negotiation in the digital environment.
- Providing reference services for kids and teachers.
- Technology and tools, such as:
 - * Workflow software (for question/answering).
 - * Wireless technology.
 - * Question-answer archiving tools/knowledge bases.
 - * Web contact center software.
 - * Customer relationship management software.
 - * Networking/routing solutions.
 - * Voice over IP (VoIP).

Reference Resources

- Search engines.
- Reference meta-sites.
- Collection development.
- Online and print resources.
- Intermediary search services vs. end-user systems.
- Locally-mounted digital resources vs. remote resources.
- Evaluation of reference resources.

For more information regarding the VRD 2005 Reference Conference, please contact Blythe Bennett, vrldconf@vrd.org, (315) 443-5445. For hotel and other information, please see the VRD 2005 Conference Web site at <http://www.vrd2005.org/>.

1.2. The Second International Conference on Environmental, Cultural, Economic and Social Sustainability, Hanoi and Ha Long Bay, Vietnam, 9–12 January, 2006 <http://www.SustainabilityConference.com>.

This conference aims to develop an holistic view of sustainability, in which environmental, cultural and economic issues are inseparably interlinked. It will work in

a multidisciplinary way, across diverse fields and taking varied perspectives in order to address the fundamentals of sustainability.

As well as impressive line up of international main speakers, the conference will also include numerous paper, workshop and colloquium presentations by practitioners, teachers and researchers. Papers submitted for the conference proceedings will be fully peer-refereed and published in print and electronic formats in the new International Journal of Environmental, Cultural, Economic and Social Sustainability.

Full details of the conference are to be found at the conference website.

Emily Edwards
Pacific-Asia Observatory for Cultural Diversity and Human Development
Australian National
University On behalf of the Sustainability Conference Organizing Committee.