

2008 Information Services Web and Telephone Help Survey

October 13-24, 2008

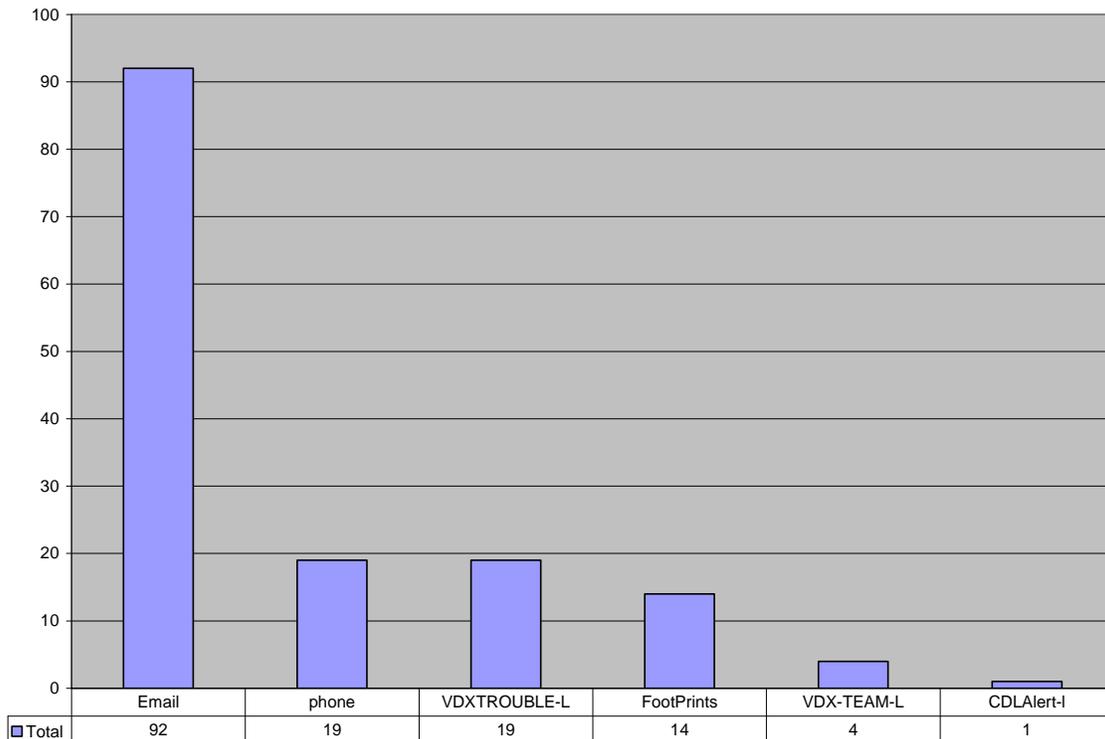
Ellen Meltzer and Alison Ray

The CDL Information Services unit conducted its annual 2008 survey, capturing and analyzing comments, questions, and feedback to the CDL from end users, for the 2 weeks of October 13-24. (Earlier survey data were gathered over a 1 week period. Our plan is to conduct another 2 week survey in April, 2009, and again in fall, 2009.) In addition, we offered our users contacting us by email the opportunity to fill out a very brief user satisfaction survey. While we have a sense of how satisfied *some* of our users are, we wanted to gather data based on fact. In addition to quantitative metrics, we wanted to be able to gather some qualitative measures of how users perceive the service. This also provided us with the opportunity to collect some demographic information that is usually difficult to gather. The Information Services help services are ably staffed by Alison Ray and Jayne Dickson.

Mode of contact

During this 2 week period, all activities pertaining to help queries, incoming and outgoing, totaled 149. These include queries coming via email (92), telephone (19), the VDX troubleshooting listserv (19), Footprints (14), VDX team listserv (4). One CDLALERT was sent out in that 2-week period. In this October 2008 survey, we captured queries pertaining to VDX for the first time. In previous years, those questions had been handled elsewhere in CDL.

Figure 1: Mode of contact

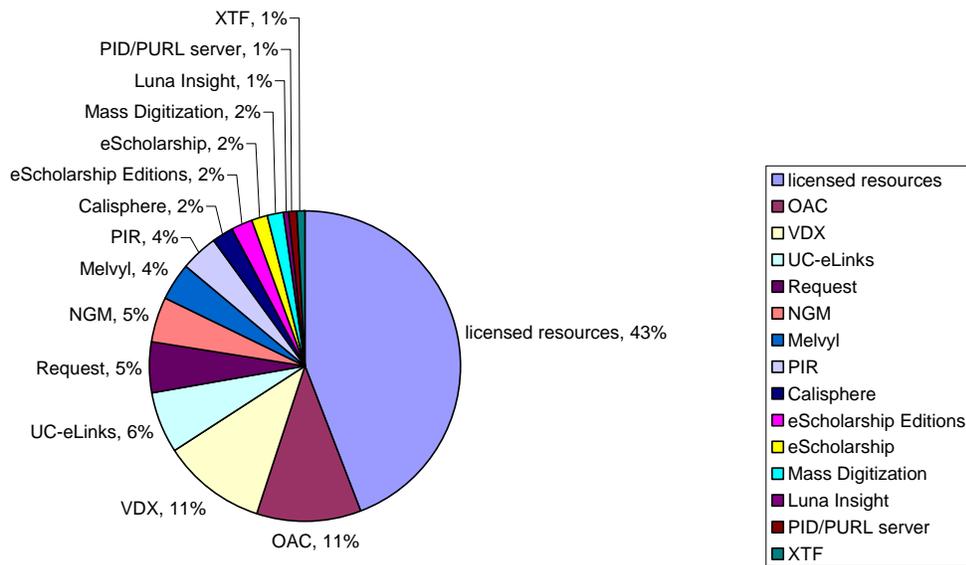


Queries by program

In 2007, responses to questions about Request and Licensed Resources generated the highest traffic during the week followed by questions about UC-eLinks. Changes in Request, such as the addition of the Z-portal whereby users monitor their own ILL requests, generated more questions than usual for this service. In 2008, there were no questions on this service since it had become routinized. In 2007, UC-eLinks produced the majority of our questions, followed by Calisphere, a Web site and service that had recently launched with much publicity.

The services generating the highest number of queries in 2008 included licensed resources, the Online Archive of California (OAC), the VDX system (all questions from library staff), UC-eLinks, Request and the Next Generation Melvyl Pilot. Mass digitization questions started to appear this year and we anticipate that in the future as mass digitized items appear in the Melvyl Catalog and Next Generation Melvyl Pilot these queries will increase.

Figure 2: Count by CDL Project



Response time

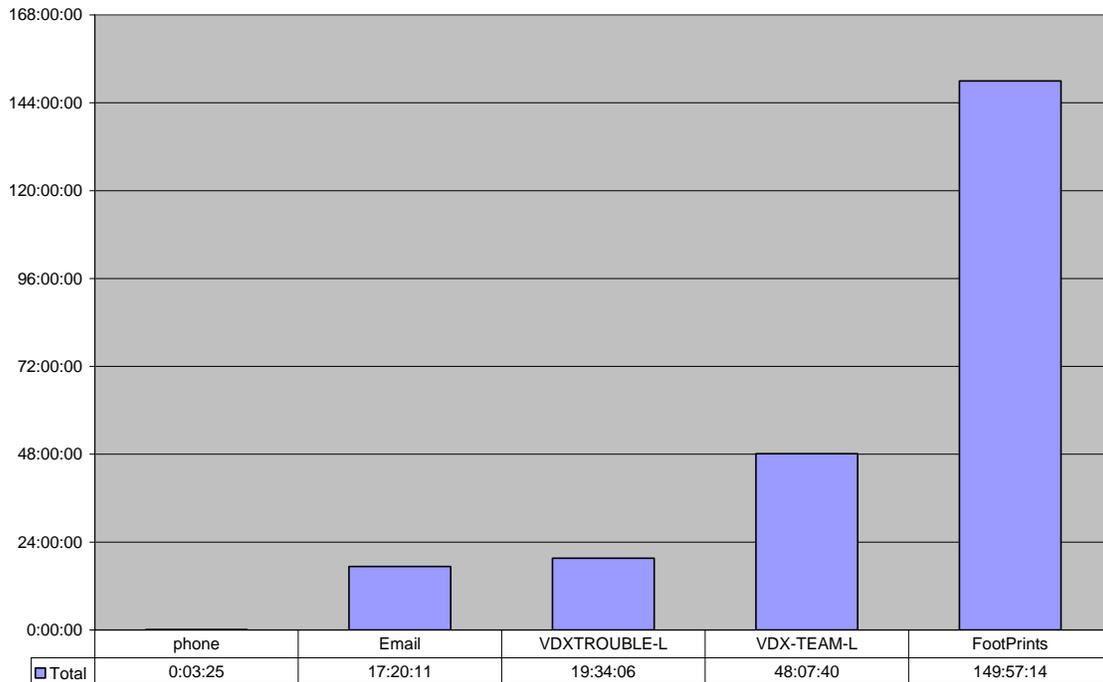
While CDL's response time for phone queries is very rapid, it is less so for other modes of contact. Email queries arriving during the week are answered rapidly, but those on the weekends naturally take longer. Even so, average response time for these was less than

24 hours. Footprints tickets take the longest to respond to because they involve contacting a vendor, who can take several days (or longer) to respond, and so remain in the system.

Another reason for delays is that we often need to consult with others or make referrals in order to deliver a satisfactory response. In descending order, the following are among those we consult with or refer to most in responding to queries: vendors; campus VPN/Proxy server support; contributing repositories; UC-eLinks administrator; campus library staff; and the eScholarship team, followed by others.

Two users, both faculty, were dissatisfied with our response time, so we need to improve our services in this area by providing a quicker initial response, and/or by explaining why a satisfactory response might take longer than desired by the user.

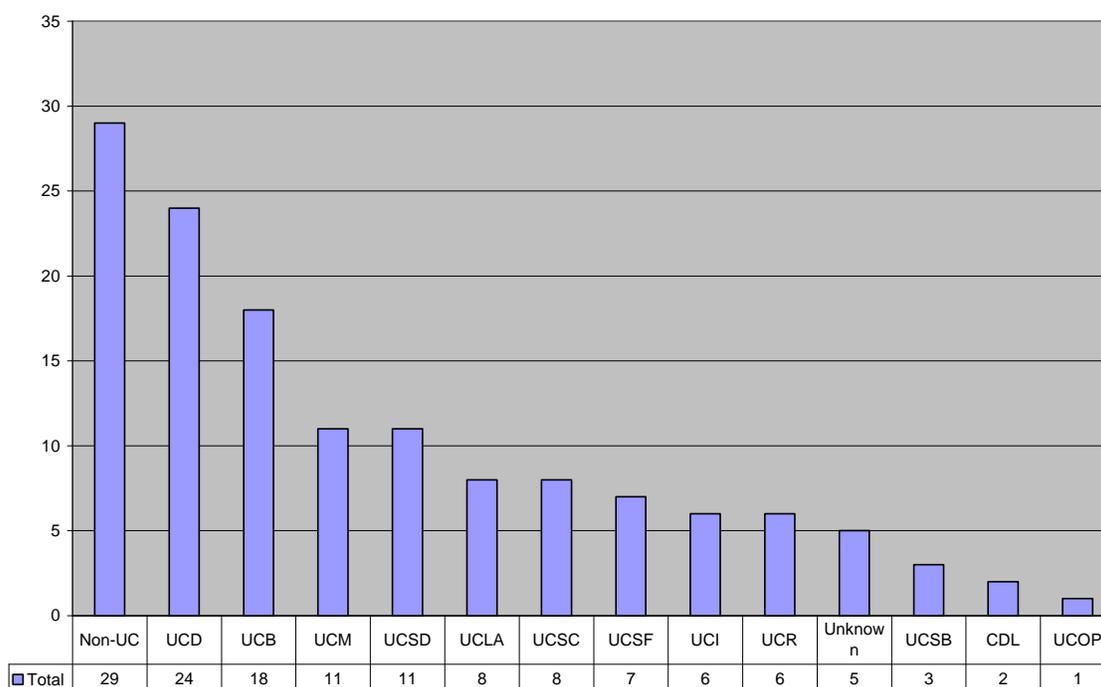
Figure 3: Response time



Campus Affiliation

This year, we received queries from all campuses except UC Santa Cruz. Twenty-nine of our queries were from non-UC users, with twenty-four coming from UC Davis. The rest of the participants are reported below. We learned from the voluntary users satisfaction survey of our users that unaffiliated users include a third year architectural student from Clemson University, a professor emeritus writing from overseas, 2 researchers, and 2 post-doctoral scholars.

Figure 4: Affiliation



Categories

Each year, we analyze the queries we receive by categorizing them according to the ways in which issues arise. We have changed these definitions slightly over previous years.

Problem sources fall into the following categories:

Access to Electronic Content – Authentication/authorization (how to get a password, current password expired, where to renew passwords; proxy server questions); specific questions about how to access materials remotely; user requests electronic item.

Access To Physical Content – A user has found a physical resource (e.g., book, film, dissertation) and would like a copy sent to her/him (e.g. Interlibrary Loan (ILL)); or, the user wishes to visit the repository or library where the item is held.

Errors in Content – Includes missing content; full text that is not yet available, such as latest journal issues; changes in journal availability not yet applied to catalog/SFX; incorrectly indexed/cataloged articles/books.

Feature/Function – Related to the use of a feature, NOT content; user has questions about how to use a feature/function.

Suggestions – Suggestions for material for help screens, comments on usefulness of help or suggestions of modifications that would improve a feature.

Interface/Usability – Comment on aspects of the site that are confusing/misleading; labels that are not helpful; terms used in the interface that are confusing (e.g., acronyms that are not explained); error messages that are confusing, unhelpful.

Other – Refers to random questions/comments; some examples include questions from library staff about how to link directly to the CDL resources, questions about

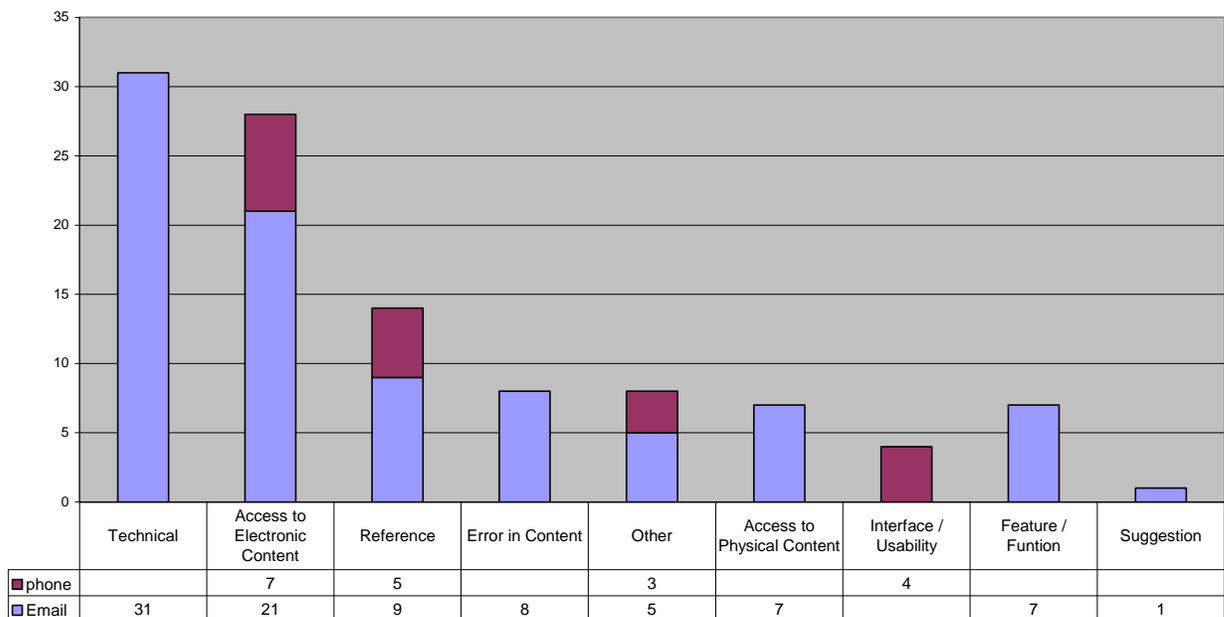
NRLF/SRLF, comments about digital images, and questions concerning copyright status or permission to reprint copyrighted materials.

Reference Help – Questions regarding how to find materials on a particular topic (e.g., I would like to find materials on X topic, can you help me?)

Technical (includes Performance/Reliability) Issues – Problems related to the functioning of the system; when, in the users opinion, something is not working; bugs/errors in the system; reporting down resources; system times out/crashes; broken URLs.

This year, our queries fell into the following categories:

Figure 5: Categories



CDL Helpdesk User Satisfaction Survey Responses

When responding to questions during the 2 week period, Helpdesk staff included a link to a user satisfaction survey with the following sentence:

“During 2 weeks in October, the CDL is conducting a user satisfaction survey of our Help services. Please assist us by answering our brief survey.”

The survey questions included these:

1. For which service(s) did you request Help in your most recent contact with us?
2. Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statement: I received a response to my request in a timely manner.
3. Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statement: My request was resolved to my satisfaction.

4. Please indicate your overall level of satisfaction with the service we provided to you.
5. Please share any additional comments about the service you received or about CDL in general.

Of the 92 written feedbacks that came into the CDL (excluding the VDX queries), 19 people (or 20%) responded to our brief survey.

We then asked for demographic information from our users. In addition to discovering who are traditional users are, we also learned that questions came from a third year architectural student from Clemson University, a professor emeritus overseas, 2 researchers, and 2 post-doctoral scholars. Since we are generally unable to capture this detail, we were especially pleased to uncover this information. The remaining came from the following:

Response	Count	Percent
Undergraduate Student	2	10.5%
Graduate Student	1	5.3%
Faculty	3	15.8%
Library Employee	6	31.6%
Not Applicable	2	10.5%
Other (please specify)	5	26.3%

While there was high satisfaction with response time and overall satisfaction with our services, 2 users voiced dissatisfaction. The dissatisfaction was based on a respondent being referred somewhere else (which, unfortunately we sometimes must do); our not including the CDL staff member's name (which is our practice because we want questions go to a list, not to an individual. It is not always the same person answering different aspects of a question, and so that we do not become personal researchers to those asking questions), and on receiving a slow response. We are reviewing our practices to improve our service.

The positive comments outnumbered the negative. Selected comments:

- All CDL staff are persistent and knowledgeable.
- This was amazing. What a wonderful research tool! I never have found this info on my own.
- CDL is an unparalleled resource for researchers.

Undertaking the user satisfaction survey was a valuable exercise in that we learned that our users value prompt responses; do not always understand the complexity of what it takes to "fix" some of the complex problems that are encountered; we have room for improvement; and that, on the whole, users rate our services highly.