

IM Considerations Worksheet for SCLS Libraries

Just to help you get thinking about what to consider before offering an Instant Message reference service...

Administration Basics

Who are the contact people for the service (to be included in discussions, on the scls-im email list, etc.)?

Who will help staff the service (might be same as above)?

What hours of the day will it be staffed?

What computers will be used? At the reference desk? In a staff office?

What will the library's screen name be?

Will we use canned greetings, responses or away messages?

Will we keep chat logs? If so, how, and for how long?

Setup

What IM services should we register with? (Recommended: use Meebo to connect to several at once. MSN, Yahoo, and AIM for sure, and possibly also Google, ICQ, and Jabber.)

Do we want to put "status indicators" anywhere on our web site to let people know whether we're online?

"MeeboMe" is a "widget" that lets people come to our web page and chat, without them having to set up their own IM accounts. Do we want to provide MeeboMe on our web site? If so, on what page(s)?

Publicity

How will we publicize the service?

What can SCLS do to help us publicize it?

Do we want our library's screen name listed in the SCLS directory?

Do individuals at the library want their screen names listed in the SCLS Detailed Directory?