

6-21-2022

## **Proactive Librarians, an Annoying Chat Widget, & a Global Pandemic: Analysis of how an existing pop-up chat widget delivered point of need reference services during a global pandemic at a major academic institution**

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### **Recommended Citation**

Jimenez, Christopher M., "Proactive Librarians, an Annoying Chat Widget, & a Global Pandemic: Analysis of how an existing pop-up chat widget delivered point of need reference services during a global pandemic at a major academic institution" (2022). *Works of the FIU Libraries*. 118.  
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# Proactive Librarians, an Annoying Chat Widget, & a Global Pandemic<sup>1</sup>

Analysis of how an existing pop-up chat widget delivered point of need reference services during a global pandemic at a major academic institution

## Introduction

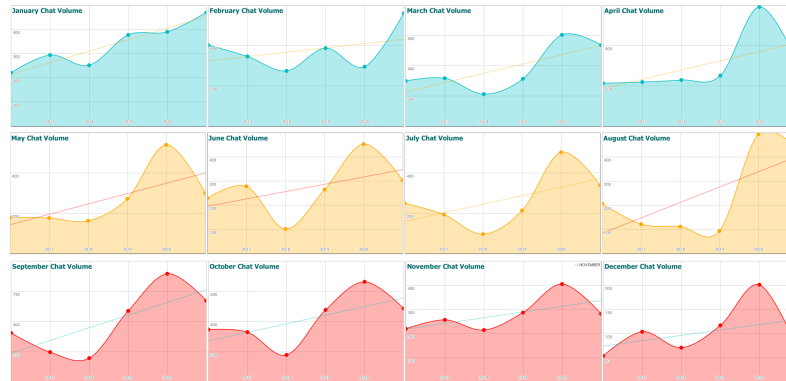
In 2019, the librarians at Florida International University in Miami, FL, implemented a pop-up chat widget using Springshare's LibChat to drive more traffic to virtual reference services. This led to a major shift in our public services.

Affectionately called the Annoying Chat Widget, the ACW also enjoyed the unintended success of increasing the percentage of quality research & info queries, improving the efficient use of librarian time and effort.

This established service proved vital when transitioning to fully remote services in March 2020, when librarians provided all services via virtual modalities.

The poster presents a statistical analysis of the intricacies of the platform and some of the data-driven policy decisions made by the Information and Research Services department at FIU.

## Monthly Chat Volume Comparison



## Lessons

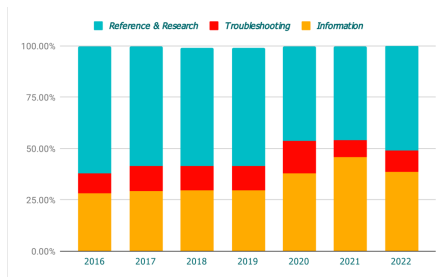
In 2019, **chat interactions increased by 36%** compared to the previous 3-year average. This primed users & librarians to use chat as the primary mode of interaction.

There was **no change in the share of research questions** via ACW in 2019.

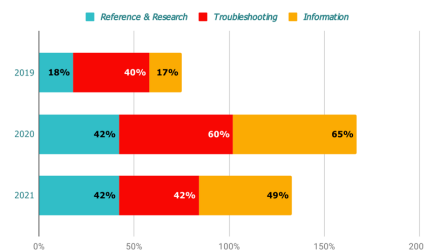
In 2020, the share of **chat research questions dropped 10%** while the share of **chat info questions increased 8%**. This is likely due to the increased load placed on post-pandemic chat librarians. The type of chat info questions ("about" questions: procedural) is different than in-person info questions ("where" questions: directional), this represents a more efficient use of a librarian's time.

The share of **chat troubleshooting questions increased 13%** & has not returned to pre-pandemic levels. In response to the data, we clarified escalation routing, created a troubleshooting guide, implemented a ticketing system & held chat troubleshooting workshops.

## Yearly Reference Analytics Comparison<sup>2</sup>



## Semester Trends After ACW Relative to 2019<sup>3</sup>



**FIU** Libraries

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<https://library.fiu.edu/gjmnzDC>

## Notes

1. Dialog vector created by freepik <https://www.freepik.com/vectors/dialog>
2. 2022 stats only include Spring Semester
3. Represents % increase in each category

## References

Full references for the project: [https://go.fiu.edu/ACW\\_Literature](https://go.fiu.edu/ACW_Literature)