

In the News

How quickly are you able to respond to the users waiting in line at your information desk? The authors of "Benchmarking waiting times" did a study to determine the average time a user waits to speak to a librarian and then compared it with data in other industries. It is important to compare library waiting times to those of other service providers because to those waiting, any wait is a delay in service. And few people like to wait. To see how the approximately two-minute wait at Memorial University of Newfoundland's reference desk compares with software customer service phone lines see page 693.

Not only do users not want to wait, they expect to have access to all the library resources, whether they are at their home terminal, their dorm, or on sabbatical in France. Patrick Yott and C. H. Hoebeke address the issue of how to validate users from remote

sites in "Improving valid access to site-licensed resources" on page 698.

Also in this issue are two conference reports. Hannelore Rader keeps us up-to-date on what is going on at the International Federation of Library Associations (page 709) and Barbara Halporn briefs us on the "Scholarly monograph in crisis" (page 706). And speaking of scholarly monographs, Jinnie Davis shares with us a report on what North Carolina State University is doing with its new scholarly communication center (page 701).

In "The Way I See It," Felix Chu examines staffing of the reference desk (page 713) and Sandra Weingart looks at the teaching versus doing role of the librarian when assisting with the information-gathering process (page 711).

Watch for ACRL's Annual Report next month.

—Mary Ellen K. Davis
Editor & Publisher



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