



L-net 2006-07 3rd Quarter statistics

January 1-March 31, 2007

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Introduction

L-net is Oregon's statewide virtual reference service. The service is funded by a grant from the Oregon State Library under the Library Services and Technology Act. The fiscal agent for the grant is Multnomah County Library. L-net connects all of Oregon's citizens, students and workers to Oregon librarians 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through live chat and e-mail reference service.

In the third quarter of 2006-07, we served 6,403 patrons. 6,119 visited us in chat sessions and 284 asked e-mail questions.

L-net participates in OCLC's 24/7 cooperative reference service. Oregon librarians answer reference questions for cooperative member libraries in exchange for those members answering questions for us. Unless otherwise noted, all statistics reported represent Oregon patrons asking questions, regardless of who answered.

Summary	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q3 Total	YTD
E-mail	115	102	67	284	852
Chat	2,146	2,048	1,925	6,119	12,581
Oregon Total	2,261	2,150	1,992	6,403	13,433
Chat sessions answered for cooperative libraries	304	281	294	879	2,689
Grand Total	2,565	2,431	2,286	7,282	16,122
Total chat sessions	2,450	2,329	2,219	6,998	15,271

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Progress on objectives for 2006-07

L-net set 3 specific objectives for the 2006-07 fiscal year.

Increase usage by at least 10%

Usage in the first half of 2006-07 has increased by 33% over the same period in 2005-06. This goal is on target.

Receive an overall 80% satisfaction rating from patrons

So far this year, 86% of patrons surveyed reported they were satisfied or somewhat satisfied with our service. 95% said they would use our service again. This goal is on target.

Increase the number of hours Oregon librarians staff L-net to 70 hours per week

During the week of November, 2006 (Nov 25-Dec 2), we staffed L-net with 70 hours from Oregon librarians, including 58 from partner libraries and 12 from volunteers. In the 3rd Quarter of 2006-07, Oregon librarians staffed L-net an average of 66 hours per week.

Who asked the questions

On the general L-net chat queue and e-mail service, patrons are asked to choose one of five *Response levels*: *General Interest*, *Elementary/Middle School (K-8)*, *High School (9-12)*, *College/Research* or *Professional*.

On the schools L-net chat queue, patrons are asked to choose either a grade or *Educator*. Students are also counted in the *Response Level* table in the appropriate grade category. *Educator* is included below with *Professional*.

On the academic L-net chat queue, patrons are asked to choose a college. All questions from the L-net academic queue, the OSU L-net queue and the PSU L-net queue are included with *College/Research* on the *Response Level* table.

Patrons did not choose a grade, a college or a response level are included in the *Response Level* table in the *None selected* category. This information is usually required before the patron connects to chat or sends an e-mail message, but technical problems sometimes prevent us from enforcing the requirement.

Chat response level	Q3	YTD	% of known (YTD)
None selected	95	102	
College/Research	544	1429	11%
Elementary/Middle School (K-8)	3,492	6,099	49%
General Interest	863	2,446	20%
High School (9-12)	836	1,877	15%
Professional	289	628	5%
Total	6,119	12,581	

E-mail response level	Q3	YTD	% of known
None selected	29	149	
College/Research	26	115	16%
Elementary/Middle School (K-8)	22	43	6%
General Interest	119	361	51%
High School	9	29	4%
Professional	79	155	22%
Total	284	852	

By grade

L-net continues to be most popular with late elementary and middle school students. L-net is not typically used by students below 4th grade, so the high number of patrons choosing 'grade K' may indicate that students are savvy about managing their identities online and the dangers of disclosing too much personal information.

Grade	Q3	YTD
educator	86	158
grade K	199	305
grade 1	22	36
grade 2	42	54
grade 3	56	70
grade 4	280	449
grade 5	619	1,113
grade 6	408	962
grade 7	651	909
grade 8	487	719
grade 9	132	313
grade 10	101	187
grade 11	80	150
grade 12	117	255
Total	3,280	5,680

By academic status

L-net is most popular at large institutions that have promoted it heavily. Librarians at Oregon State University and at Portland State University have offered local L-net queues. Even though OSU has stopped offering the local queue, OSU patrons continue to use L-net. Success with patrons of Central Oregon Community College may be attributed to librarians discussing L-net in bibliographic instruction sessions and giving L-net related assignments.

College and status	Q3 None selected	Q3 Faculty / Staff	Q3 Graduate Student	Q3 Undergraduate Student	Q3 Total	YTD
Central Oregon Community College	2	4	3	59	68	104
Eastern Oregon University	0	0	0	1	1	4
Klamath Community College	0	0	0	0	0	2
Northwest Christian College	0	0	0	1	1	1
Oregon Health & Science University	0	0	0	0	0	2
Oregon Institute of Technology	0	0	0	6	6	23
Oregon State University	0	10	23	43	76	184
Other	4	0	7	18	29	69
None selected	18	0	0	2	20	98
Portland Community College	4	1	1	33	39	73
Portland State University	1	7	19	33	60	203
Southern Oregon University	0	0	0	2	2	2
University of Oregon	0	1	0	1	2	4
Western Oregon University	1	2	1	15	19	33
Total	30	25	54	214	323	802

By county

County	Q3 Chat	Q3 E-mail	Q3 Total	YTD
Unknown	641	90	731	2,034
Baker	2	1	3	10
Benton	49	3	52	168
Clackamas	620	11	631	1,381
Clatsop	25	3	28	36
Columbia	36	1	37	73
Coos	3	3	6	22
Crook	1	0	1	4
Curry	1	1	2	6
Deschutes	103	5	108	217
Douglas	32	2	34	99
Gilliam	41	1	42	62
Grant	5	3	8	13
Harney	20	0	20	89
Hood River	6	5	11	49
Jackson	127	24	151	392
Jefferson	2	0	2	9
Josephine	13	2	15	37
Klamath	14	2	16	35
Lake	2	2	4	16
Lane	174	13	187	370
Lincoln	88	2	90	119
Linn	39	8	47	94
Malheur	2	0	2	10
Marion	48	7	55	147
Morrow	5	0	5	14
Multnomah	1,095	28	1,123	2,511
Polk	19	1	20	45
Sherman	1	1	2	4
Tillamook	28	3	31	64
Umatilla	49	3	52	117
Union	43	5	48	106
Wallowa	1	1	2	2
Wasco	25	3	28	44
Washington	2,298	44	2,342	4,219
Wheeler	28	1	29	29
Yamhill	110	5	115	209
Total	5,796	284	6,080	12,856
Academic	323		323	802
<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>6,119</i>	<i>284</i>	<i>6,403</i>	<i>13,658</i>

We record a Zip code for each patron who submits a question to our e-mail service, general chat queue or schools chat queue. We interpolate a County for each Zip Code.

Unknown locations

We record a Zip Code for each patron, but since changing software in January 2006, we no longer restrict the service to patrons with Oregon Zip codes.

We have recorded many Zip Codes for areas outside of Oregon, as well as postal codes for other countries, usually Canada.

We have also recorded a few Zip Codes that appear to be inside the state of Oregon but do not match the United States Postal Service records.

We require that the patron enter something so the Zip Code field cannot be left blank.

Zip Codes aren't necessarily collected for e-mail questions initiated by an Oregon library that has already begun work on a question. Below, these are labeled '2nd level reference'.

E-mail unknown	Q3
International	6
Other US States	67
Blank	4
2nd level reference	13
Total	90

Chat unknown	Q3
Other US States / unknown	614
Unknown Oregon Zip Code (starts with 97)	27
Total	641

What time of day do chat sessions arrive?

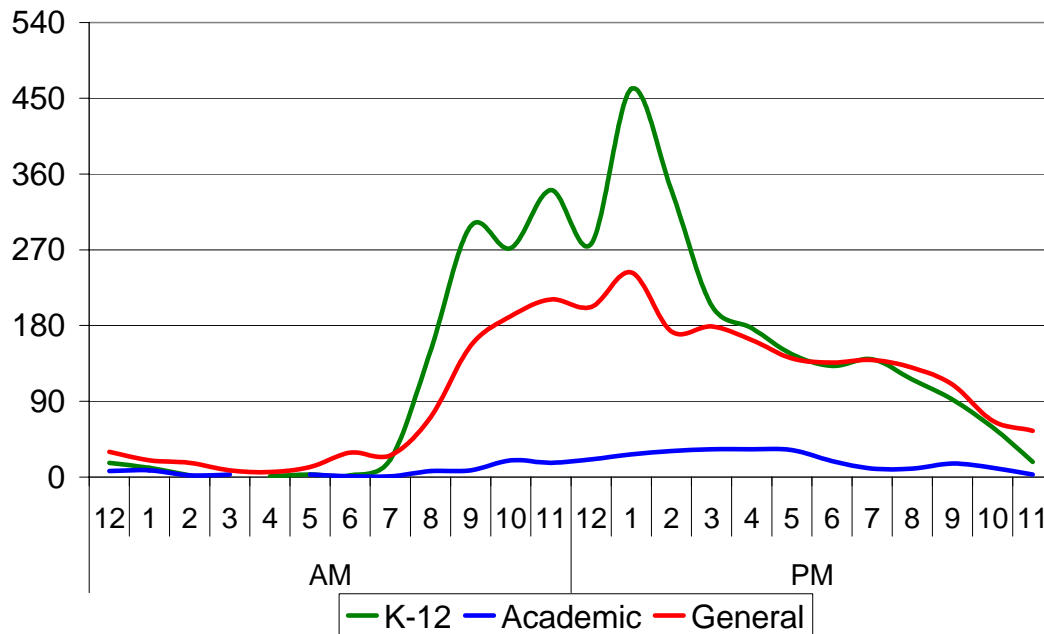
We record the time of day that each chat session arrives.

L-net offers three *queues* for our chat service. Queues define who the patron will be connected to and enable us to collect different information about different patrons. There is a queue for K-12 students, a queue for academic library patrons and a queue for general questions.

From the L-net website, www.oregonlibraries.net, patrons choose which queue they wish to connect to. Some libraries link directly to the general, K-12 or academic queue.

The chart below represents the average number of questions that arrived during the 3rd quarter of 2006-07 during each hour of the day for each queue. An hour begins at minute 0 and ends at minute 59, so the hour for 11am begins at 11:00am and ends at 11:59am.

3rd Qtr 2007-07 chat sessions by hour by queue



Gridlines are set at 90 questions to indicate the number of days in the period. Lines above the 90 question mark indicate that on average, at least one question was asked during that day.

The school day, 9am – 3pm is the busiest time for K-12 students, but significant use continues after school until, especially 3-6pm. The academic queue is slightly more active in the afternoon, but never enough to be able to predict accurately.

Staffing

L-net offers both a live chat service and an e-mail reference service. Both are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Chat service

In-kind contributions are calculated at \$40.12 per hour scheduled. This represents the salary and benefits for a librarian at Multnomah County Library. Included in the table above are summary statistics for chat sessions answered by cooperative and QuestionPoint back-up staff, who are online when Oregon librarians are not.

Answering Library	Chat sessions		Hours		In-Kind contribution	
	Q3	YTD	Q3	YTD	Q3	YTD
Albany Public Library	136	341	52	156	\$ 2,086.24	\$ 6,258.72
Central Oregon Community College	49	98	15	33	\$ 601.80	\$ 1,323.96
Corvallis-Benton County Public Library	80	157	22	54	\$ 882.64	\$ 2,166.48
Deschutes Public Library System	142	396	50	142	\$ 2,006.00	\$ 5,697.04
Eugene Public Library	117	351	48	148	\$ 1,925.76	\$ 5,937.76
Hillsboro Public Library	25	115	10	54	\$ 401.20	\$ 2,166.48
Jackson County Library System	206	480	51	151	\$ 2,046.12	\$ 6,058.12
L-net staff	59	272	0	1		
L-net Volunteers	305	442	172.5	270.5		
Multnomah County Library	338	871	112	312	\$ 4,493.44	\$ 12,517.44
Newport Public Library	102	319	33	103	\$ 1,323.96	\$ 4,132.36
Oregon Institute of Technology	36	93	18	54	\$ 722.16	\$ 2,166.48
Oregon State Library	95	228	26	77	\$ 1,043.12	\$ 3,089.24
Oregon State University	83	242	25	75	\$ 1,003.00	\$ 3,009.00
Portland Community College	23	64	17	29	\$ 682.04	\$ 1,163.48
Portland State University	95	303	36	106	\$ 1,444.32	\$ 4,252.72
Salem Public Library	98	298	52	138	\$ 2,086.24	\$ 5,536.56
Southridge HS	18	56	11	26.75	\$ 441.32	\$ 1,073.21
Tigard Public Library	54	109	26	56	\$ 1,043.12	\$ 2,246.72
Tualatin HS	63	114	12	30	\$ 481.44	\$ 1,203.60
Washington County Cooperative Library Services	124	284	22	64	\$ 882.64	\$ 2,567.68
West Linn Public Library	61	134	24	57.5	\$ 962.88	\$ 2,306.90
Western Oregon University	47	111	25	77.5	\$ 1,003.00	\$ 3,109.30
Unknown	125	142				
Oregon Total	2,481	6,020	859.5	2,215.25	\$ 27,562.44	\$ 77,983.25
Cooperative Librarians	2,255	4,324				
QP Backup	2,262	4,927				
Grand Total	6,998	15,271				

Who are L-net volunteers?

Volunteers for the L-net chat service are Oregonian library school students, retired librarians and part-time librarians. Volunteers are required to have some reference experience and to have a broadband internet connection at home. They staff the service on evenings and weekends when no Oregon libraries are available to cover our chat service.

Volunteers receive valuable reference experience and professional satisfaction. L-net is able to connect more Oregon patrons with Oregon librarians than would otherwise be possible. Typically, our volunteers answer fewer questions per hour than more experienced L-net librarians. For an example, compare the volunteers to the experts at the Deschutes Public Library System – volunteers received about twice as many sessions, but it took them three times as long to answer them.

Ten volunteers have contributed to L-net so far this year. Their sessions are reviewed for quality assurance and feedback by the L-net training coordinator, Emily Papagni.

E-mail service

Elsewhere in this report, e-mail statistics refer to the number of questions *asked*. In the 2006-7 2nd Quarter report, we reported the number of questions *worked on* by each partner library. Unfortunately, close examination of this data has shown it to be unreliable. I hope to be able to report this information again in the near future.

Chat follow-up

Questions that aren't able to be answered in live chat may be sent to follow-up if a patron has given us an e-mail address through which to contact them.

Below is a table of all chat sessions, including questions answered by Oregon librarians for cooperative libraries, that were sent to the follow-up system.

Follow-ups	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q3 Total
Total Chat sessions	2,450	2,329	2,219	6,998
Total follow-ups	579	474	489	1,542
% follow-up	24%	20%	22%	22%

A significant number of questions are sent to the follow-up system and summaries of who is working to fully answer these questions will follow in future reports.

Was our service satisfactory?

At the end of each chat session and at the bottom of each e-mail answer sent, the patron is asked to fill out a survey about our service. The vast majority of survey responses are to live chat sessions. A link to the survey is buried at the end of an answer set over e-mail, but it is not often followed.

The confidence interval represents the margin of error for our survey results based on the number of exit surveys received out of the entire group of sessions. There is a 95% probability that answers to questions on our exit survey reflect the experiences of all of L-net's patrons within the number of percentage points given for each time period.

Summary	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q3 Total	YTD
Survey responses	178	121	81	380	812
Questions	2,261	2,150	1,992	6,403	11,251
Response rate	8%	6%	4%	6%	7%
Confidence interval	7.0%	8.7%	10.7%	4.9%	3.3%

1. *Were you satisfied with the answer you received to your reference question?*

Satisfied?	Q3	YTD
blank	28	61
Satisfied	242	673
Somewhat Satisfied	64	163
Not Satisfied	46	133
Total	380	1,030
% satisfied or somewhat satisfied	87%	86%

We set the goal that 80% of our patrons should say they are satisfied or somewhat satisfied. We are meeting that goal.

2. *Is this the first time you have used this service?*

First Time	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q3	YTD
blank	1	2	1	4	5
No	66	60	50	176	423
Yes	111	59	30	200	606
Total	178	121	81	380	1,034
% Repeat	37%	50%	63%	47%	41%

A poll posted to the www.oregonlibraries.net website in January, 2007, asked users how often they connected to our service gives different results to this question. Only 36% were first-time visitors.

This suggests that repeat users are less likely to fill out the exit survey, though that figure matches the results for March, 2007. Surveys that reach a more diverse group of users will be needed in the future.

3. Will you use this service again?

Use Again	Q3	YTD
blank	9	14
Maybe	72	184
Never	14	46
Very likely	285	788
Total	380	1,032
% not never	96%	95%

These responses are consistent with what we have recorded in the past and show a willingness to use L-net again even when answers might not be satisfactory.

3. How did you find out about this service?

How did you find out?	Q3	YTD	YTD%
Library Website	122	442	43%
School Teacher/School Librarian	125	268	26%
Surfing the net	39	108	10%
Friend/Relative	33	84	8%
Librarian Public Library	28	66	6%
Librarian Academic Library	13	26	3%
Bookmark/Flyer	8	16	2%
Newspaper/Radio/TV/Billboard	6	9	1%
blank	6	15	1%
Total	380	1,034	

A plurality of patrons find L-net through a library's website, but recently, the number of patrons hearing about L-net at school has increased significantly.

Data collection and conventions

When a patron connects to L-net through our main chat queue or e-mail service, she fills out a form that includes their name, e-mail address, library, Zip Code, level of information and question (see below).

For the question “What level of information are you looking for”, the patron is allowed to choose *General Interest*, *College/Research*, *Elementary/Middle School (K-8)*, *High School (9-12)*, or *Professional*.

The patron’s name, Zip Code, level of information and question are required.

In our schools queue, instead of asking for a *response level*, we ask “What grade are you in”, with a range of Kindergarten to 12th grade, plus *Educator*.

In our academic queue, we ask the patron to indicate which college they are associated with and if they are undergraduate students, graduate students for faculty/staff.

This information is used by the librarian to quickly determine where their home library is, and how best to serve them. L-net administrators also use this data to create reports.

E-mail reference questions on L-net are initiated with a web form that collects this same information. Patrons are also allowed to choose which library to send their question to.

Chat reference is counted in *sessions*. A chat session may contain more than one question, or it may contain none. A future study of a sample of chat reference questions could help determine a general ratio of reference questions per session.

E-mail reference is counted in *questions*, with the assumption that each question submitted is unique, even though several e-mails may be exchanged between the librarian and patron to answer it.

We refer to them as e-mail reference because the answer is sent to the patron over e-mail.

We use the following conventions in this report:

- 1st Quarter or Q1:* The period from July 1, 2006 to September 30, 2006.
- 2nd Quarter or Q2:* The period from October 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006.
- 3rd Quarter or Q3:* The period from January 1, 2007 to March 31, 2007.
- YTD:* Year-to-date. The period from July 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007.



Please enter your name (required):

To receive a transcript of this session, please enter your email address:

Which library do you regularly use?

Please enter your zip code (required):

What level of information are you looking for (required)?

How may we help you (required)?

To remain an anonymous user check this box:

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