

# Why Wufoo? Collecting Data About Reference Desk Transactions Using an Online Form Builder

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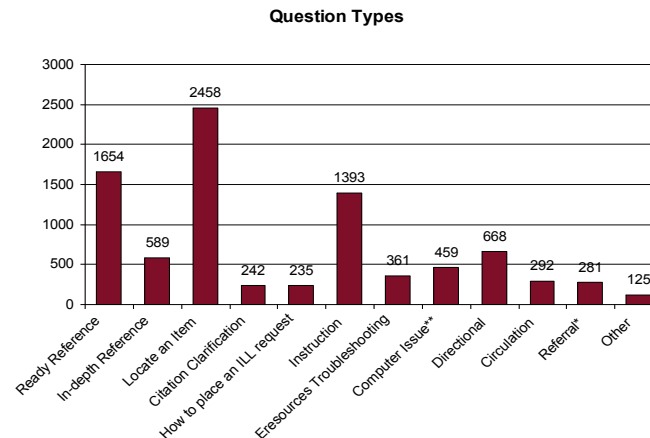
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## BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

- Previously, reference statistics were extrapolated from biannual week long samples. Staff felt that this sampling method was not accurate enough to inform staffing and service decisions.
- Wufoo ([www.wufoo.com](http://www.wufoo.com)) is a free, online form builder application. Using Wufoo, we easily created forms for collecting data while staff found Wufoo expedient for entering data.
- Library staff record data about all types of reference desk transactions (phone, in-person, instant message), the length of the transactions, question types, and optional notes or comments.

## DATA COLLECTION & RESULTS

- Between March 2007 - March 2008, we logged 7509 total transactions at the Bio-Medical Library. The vast majority of questions were asked in-person (5494), with phone questions next (1964).
- Length of transactions:
  - 0 - 5 minutes (5204)
  - 6 - 15 minutes (1897)
  - 16 - 30 minutes (310)
  - 31 - 60 minutes (98)



## CONCLUSIONS

- Since adopting Wufoo, the Bio-Medical Library has altered reference desk staffing on evenings and weekends due to the data we collected.
- Wufoo's strength lies in its ease of use for form building and data collection. The weakness of the product lies in its lack of robust and flexible reports, requiring the use of Excel to analyze data.
- A companion wiki page that provides more information about Wufoo and other reference tracking options is available at: <http://whywufoo.pbwiki.com/>