QuestionPoint glossary

Find a comprehensive listing of QuestionPoint terms accompanied by definitions.

A C D E G H I K L M P Q R S U V W

A

24/7

Digital reference service or feature that is always available to patrons (24 hours per day, 7 days per week), for example always-available live chat.

Administration module

QuestionPoint system area used by the administrator of an institution or cooperative group to implement and manage the use of QuestionPoint for the institution or group.

Administrator

Person who leads the implementation and management of QuestionPoint for an institution or cooperative group.

Answer

Response to a question believed to meet the need expressed by the question.

Ask a librarian module

QuestionPoint system area used to manage questions: view questions and monitor their status, send responses to patrons, assign questions, refer questions, close questions, and prepare scripts.

Assign a question

An administrator designates a librarian in his or her institution to answer a question.
Chat
Communication by computer in real time between a librarian and patron in different locations. They type and send messages and URLs. The messages, URLs and related Web pages appear on both participants’ computer screens.

Chat form
Form that an institution adds to its Web site to let patrons request chat sessions. See also Local files; Question form.

Chat monitor
QuestionPoint system area used to watch for, and respond to, patron requests for chat sessions.

Chat transcript
Record of the messages and URLs sent during a chat session. In QuestionPoint, the transcript is sent to the patron in an Email message after the chat session and stored in the Ask a Librarian module for librarian follow-up.

Clarification request
Follow-up response from a librarian to a patron requesting additional information needed to answer the patron's question.

Collaborative reference
Reference service that lets librarians from different institutions share resources and expertise with each other and with their patrons.

Contribution
Assistance provided to all QuestionPoint institutions by one institution. An institution contributes by:

• Submitting questions and answers to the global knowledge base.
• Editing questions and answers for the global knowledge base.

See also knowledge base.

Cooperative coverage
Shared effort by a group of institutions to respond to chat requests and Web-form questions submitted by their patrons. When an institution in the group is unavailable to respond, the system automatically refers chat requests and questions to other institutions in the group. See also Chat; Web-form question.
Cooperative group

Two or more institutions working together to answer questions for their patrons using one or more of the following methods:

- Referring questions among themselves.
- Providing cooperative coverage for chat requests.
- Providing cooperative coverage for Web-form questions.

See also Cooperative coverage; Public subscription group; Subscription group; Virtual group.

Cooperative reference

See Collaborative reference.

Customization

Modification by an institution of aspects of a digital reference service to meet the institution’s individual specifications. Customizable aspects usually include local files and messages for patrons. See also Local files; Scripts.

Digital reference

Using computer and communications technology to provide reference service to patrons anytime and anywhere. Types of digital reference include:

- Asynchronous digital reference, such as Email and Web-form questions, in which the patron submits a question and the librarian responds at a later time.
- Synchronous digital reference, such as chat and voice over IP, in which the patron and librarian communicate in real time.

See also Chat; Email question; Web-form question.

Email question

Question submitted to an institution by a patron in an e-mail message. Such questions may be added manually to the institution’s digital reference service. See also Web-form question.
Group

See Cooperative group.

Home module

QuestionPoint system area used to select the options, change the password, and view the privileges for an individual librarian or administrator account within an institution.

Host

Server that stores a software application and its data. Some applications, such as QuestionPoint, use a remote host maintained centrally for all its users. Others use local hosts maintained by each user.

Integrated reference management

See Question Management.

knowledge base

Database of questions and answers and descriptive metadata that can be searched or browsed to help answer questions.
QuestionPoint institutions build and access two types of knowledge bases:

- The global knowledge base is available to all institutions that participate in QuestionPoint.
- A local knowledge base is available to each full subscriber, either individually or as part of a subscription group. A local knowledge base is also available to each global-only subscriber that joins a public subscription group.

See also Public subscription group.

knowledge base editor

Person who reviews questions and answers submitted to a knowledge base, edits them as needed and makes them available for searching and browsing by librarians and administrators. See also Contribution.

knowledge base module

QuestionPoint system area where knowledge bases are searched, browsed, viewed, and edited.

A C D E G H I K L M P Q R S U V W

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Librarian

Person who answers and manages questions and searches and browses knowledge bases.

Local files

Web pages, forms, images, download pages and other computer files that an institution adds to its Web site to inform patrons about its digital reference service and to let patrons submit questions and request chat sessions and enhanced communications sessions. Although some aspects of these files are required for proper operation of the service, an institution may customize other aspects to request additional information from patrons, provide information for patrons, and integrate the reference service into the institution's Web site. See also Chat form; Customization; Question form.

A C D E G H I K L M P Q R S U V W

M

Management, question

See Question Management.
Monitor chat

Watch for, and respond to, patron requests for chat sessions.

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Patron

Person with a question or a need for information.

Patron form

See Local files.

Patron interface

QuestionPoint system area where patrons can check the status of questions they have asked and view their chat transcripts.

Patron survey

See Survey of patrons.

Profile module

QuestionPoint system area where profile information is entered, submitted, approved, and updated.

Public subscription group

A QuestionPoint subscription group that opens its membership to other institutions so they can join it online. See also Cooperative group; Subscription group.

Question

Statement of a patron's information need.

Question form

Form that an institution adds to its Web site to let patrons submit questions. See also Chat form; Local files.
Question management

Ability to use a digital reference service to receive, store, answer, clarify, assign, refer, find, monitor, count, and delete questions no matter how or where they are asked, and to maintain, provide and use status information about them. See also Digital reference.

Refer a question

Request that another institution or an expert outside of an institution provide an answer to a question.

Reference librarian

See Librarian.

Referral partner

Another institution in its cooperative group to which an institution may refer a question.

Scripts

Frequently used information stored in a system so it can be easily selected and inserted into messages to reduce typing time and to speed communications.

Statistics

Numerical data about an institution or group's use of a digital reference service.

Subscription group

Cooperative group formed when multiple institutions subscribe to QuestionPoint together.

Survey of patrons

Survey form sent to patrons with answers and chat transcripts to gather information about patron satisfaction and service usage. Also, reports containing summaries of patron responses to the survey form.
URL sharing

Synchronization of the Web browsers of a patron and librarian. When the librarian or patron uses his or her browser to go to a URL, the other's browser goes to the same URL.

Virtual group

Cooperative group formed when multiple institutions join the group online in QuestionPoint, rather than at the time of subscription. See also Cooperative group; Subscription group.

Virtual reference

See Digital reference.

Web-form question

Question submitted to an institution by a patron through the use of a Web-based form on the institution's Web site. The answer to a Web-form question is sent to the patron by e-mail from the digital reference service. See also Email question; Question form.