To: Heads of Public Services
From:

In re: Cooperative Texting using Mosio interface

Proposal: create a one-year pilot for cooperative texting service to assist patrons, using Mosio's Text a Librarian (http://www.textalibrarian.com/).

Texting is becoming the norm for most of our undergraduates. Smartphones and pda's are ubiquitous on campus; disciplines like medicine are seeing content being formatted for mobile devices; colleges and universities are beginning to experiment with using mobile devices to stream content such as lectures. We want to be where our patrons are heading, before they get there.
http://www.ecampusnews.com/2010/03/11/classes-via-ipod-colleges-embrace-mp4-technology-for-delivering-instruction/
http://wp.nmc.org/horizon2010/

While most UC campuses that have experimented with texting have not seen an explosion of use, UC Irvine's two years providing text reference reveals a slow, but steady, growth of use. UCI began texting as a reference mode in January 2008. Overall, 2009 statistics show greater use of the service than 2008 statistics, and 2010 started out at a high peak.
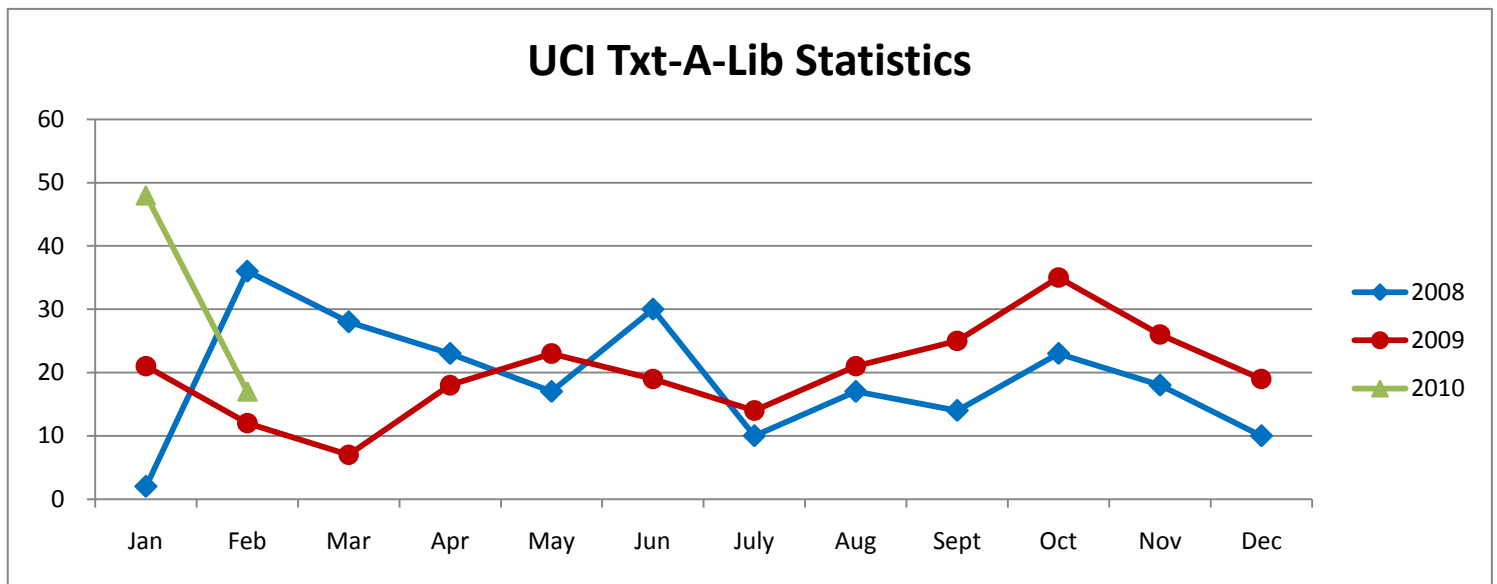
By coming together as a cooperative, the UC libraries will minimize the staff time needed to provide the service, since the cooperative allows librarians from Library A to assist patrons from Library B. As with QuestionPoint, we can assign libraries specific shifts to monitor the texting service. And depending on how the individual library wants to staff the service, and how busy the service actually is, it may be

possible for some libraries to schedule their text reference hours while also providing in-person desk reference. Other libraries may choose to provide their hours in other ways.

Cost:
A minimum of two libraries can become a cooperative. The costs will depend on the subscription each library decides is appropriate: each campus will be able to choose from one of three options, depending on how much use they anticipate:

Pricing Breakdown – Cooperative Plan

Cooperative Lite
    1 Login per keyword
    250 outbound messages/ month / per keyword
    Set up fee: $49 per keyword
    Yearly Cost: $588 per library/keyword ($49 a month)

Cooperative Standard
    2 Logins per keyword
    500 outbound messages / month / per keyword
    Set up fee: $49 per keyword
    Yearly Cost: $708 per library/keyword ($59 a month)

Cooperative Premium
    3 Logins per keyword
    1,000 outbound messages / month / per keyword
    Set up fee: $49 per keyword
    Yearly Cost: $828 per library/keyword ($69 a month)

We propose assessing the usefulness of this service based on the following:

1. How much is service used per month?
2. Does the use of the service grow over time?
3. What impact does providing a new mode of reference have on reference staffing?
4. Are there ways to obtain feedback from patrons about the usefulness/desirability of having text-reference?

If HOPS agrees with our proposal, the next steps would be to:
1. Determine which libraries are interested in participating
2. Have representatives from each library develop a staffing plan
3. Decide on the specifics of the assessment