VIRTUAL REFERENCE SERVICE OR TO SERVE VIRTUAL REFERENCES? RBI Library Experience

Rudjer Boskovic Institute Library (http://knjiznica.irb.hr/hrv):
- founded in 1950
- special library with the biggest collection in the field of natural sciences in Croatia
- holdings in 2007: 21682 books, cca 1200 titles of printed journals (82 titles subscribed in 2007), more than 20000 e-journals
- first library in Croatia with its own web site – since 1994
- patrons: 581 RBI academic staff (362 researchers + 219 Ph.D. and others in 2007)

RBI Library Holdings in 1997 and 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Print journals (current subscription)</th>
<th>Print books (total)</th>
<th>E-journals</th>
<th>E-books</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>27894</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>21682*</td>
<td>&gt;20000</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Number of books in 2007 is smaller than in 1997 because of the book inventory in 2006, in which a great number of books was written off.

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PERO
- e-journals search engine developed by RBI Library
- searches all e-journal collections (22) available to Croatian academic and research community

VIRTUAL REFERENCE COLLECTION
- collection of various information web resources (encyclopedias, dictionaries, statistical sources, libraries' OPAC's, maps, newspaper etc.)

LIBRARY'S BLOG
- news service with several implemented RSS feeds (from Scopus, Library's account on del.icio.us and science news)

SEND – Electronic Interlibrary Loan Service
- Web application developed by RBI Library for interlibrary lending and loan services

CENTRE FOR ONLINE DATABASES
- portal which offers access to more than 70 online databases and e-journal collections available to Croatian academic and research community

SCIENCE ON THE INTERNET
- systematized collection of useful links from different scientific fields (astronomy, biology, computer sciences, chemistry, ecology, earth sciences, LIS, mathematics, medicine, physics)

REFERENCE DESK
- face-to-face
- telephone
- e-mail: Ask Library, individual contact with library staff, mailing lists (library mailing list, RBI mailing list)
- leaving comments/questions on Library’s Blog