

# Going Where the Users Are: IM at the Reference Desk

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### **Instant Messaging Providers: individual services**

If you want to use a service to monitor multiple accounts (listed below) you will first need to create accounts with the individual providers. The two most popular services are:

**AOL/AIM** <http://www.aim.com>

**Yahoo!/Y!M** <http://messenger.yahoo.com>

Other well-known IM providers include:

**ICQ** <http://www.icq.com>

**Gtalk (Google)** <http://www.google.com/talk>

**MSN Messenger** <http://webmessenger.msn.com/>

### **Services to access & monitor multiple IM accounts:**

If you have accounts with two or more IM providers you may want to use one of the following services to monitor them from a single interface:

**Gaim** <http://gaim.sourceforge.net>

**Meebo** <http://www.meebo.com>

**Trillian** <http://www.ceruleanstudios.com>

### **Services with "widgets":**

A widget is a window you can add to your existing website to allow visitors to chat without signing in to an IM account.

**Chatango** <http://chatango.com>

**Meebo** <http://www.meebo.com>

**Plugoo** <http://www.plugoo.com>

### **How to find people who are using IM for reference:**

The Library Success Wiki ([www.libsuccess.org](http://www.libsuccess.org)) includes lists of libraries who provide IM reference as well as more information about IM providers. If you have (or start) your own IM service you can add yourself to the list!

[http://www.libsuccess.org/index.php?title=Online\\_Reference](http://www.libsuccess.org/index.php?title=Online_Reference)

### **Where you can check out the specific services discussed in the presentation:**

**UO Libraries:** <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/general/im.html>

**Cascades' "instant help":** <http://osulibrary.orst.edu/cascades/chat.htm>

**OSU Libraries (Corvallis):** <http://osulibrary.oregonstate.edu> (for chatango window)  
<http://osulibrary.oregonstate.edu/reference> (for links into Trillian)

### **A few recommended articles:**

Desai, C.M. & Graves, S.J. (2006) Instruction via Instant Messaging reference: what's happening? *The Electronic Library* 24, 174-89.

King, V., Roskoski, S. & Tucker-Raymond, C. (2006) IM: Instant Messaging: an information resource for Oregon libraries. [http://www.oregonlibraries.net/files/instant\\_messaging.pdf](http://www.oregonlibraries.net/files/instant_messaging.pdf)

Shiu, E. & Lenhart, A. (2004) How Americans use instant messaging. Pew Internet & American Life Project. [http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP\\_Instanmessage\\_Report.pdf](http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_Instanmessage_Report.pdf)