How are you keeping up with trends in virtual reference?

If we want to attract and serve new online users, we have to be where they are online.

- Did you know that many libraries are offering instant messaging (IM) in addition to more established chat reference software? See “Explore a Chat Reference Option—Instant Messaging.”

- Did you know that Trillian is a chat client that supports AOL IM, Yahoo Messenger, MSN Messenger and others?

- Did you know that Google has a Short Message Service (SMS)? Using your cell phone, you can receive answers to brief questions via text messaging.

- Did you know that JYBE (Join Your Browser with Everyone) is a plug-in that allows you to create browsing sessions that others can join?

- Did you know that Library Success has a wiki on “best practices” in online reference?

Sarah Houghton, Librarian in Black blogger, explained these alternatives to traditional virtual reference products in a presentation at the 2005 VRD Conference.

These are some of the places where library users (and potential users) can be found today.

Where will they be tomorrow?