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**INTEGRATING REMOTE REFERENCE INFORMATION SERVICE WITH DOCUMENT
SUPPLY AT THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SINGAPORE**

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Web-based remote reference services have long been a mainstay of reference library services for the last two decades. As libraries continue to experiment and innovate, user demands have also evolved to keep pace and sometimes supersede what libraries can provide. Today's users are often technologically savvy, strapped for time and increasingly demanding of tailored-made answers suited to their individual needs. Observations of reference service users at the National Library of Singapore have in recent years prompted proposals to couple this service with document supply to create an integrated reference service model.

A project was initiated in late 2007 to build automated features into the National Library's existing web-based remote reference service platform. In this enhanced platform, library staff are equipped with tools to tailor each reference answer to each individual end user, making reference recommendations that users can directly click on in the received answer pages to place orders for physical library collections. This integrated user-interface provides end-users with a single contact point for both reference and document supply services and negated the need for the initiation of a second request to the National Library's Document Delivery team.

Technical development was completed in early 2009. Prior to implementation, staff members stationed at the two service points were briefed on the newly integrated service procedures and technical enhancements. Reference librarians were also encouraged to identify users who may be keen in requesting for document supply services when evaluating users' reference enquiries and making their recommendations. The integrated service was soft-launched in February 2009. To date, usage of the service has been encouraging and feedback, mostly positive. Document supply operations have also seen increased automation, which has greatly decreased service turnaround times. Through this experimentation too, the National Library is able to closely evaluate user behavioural trends and demand for select resources.