OTRS: a tool for telematic questions management

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The Universidad Autónoma de Madrid has drawn up a "Framework Charter of Services for Students" and a "Framework Charter of Services for Teaching and Research Staff" within the framework of the process-based quality management system, aimed at continuous improvement and the satisfaction of the university community and society in general, to which it provides services.

Through this document, the University informs the public of the procedures and formalities it carries out, as well as the commitments it assumes in its provision of services.

Both documents contain the commitments of the Library Service, which carries out measurements on which to base actions aimed at preventing deficiencies, rectifying errors and implementing improvements.

In relation to the provision of information and advice, it is linked to the general commitment, according to the quality indicators, not to delay the response beyond 2 days.

User services in the UAM Library are provided in different ways, both face-to-face and remotely.

For telematic communications, the Question Point programme of the Library of Congress was used until 2017.

Since then, the free OTRS (Open Source Ticket Request System) has been used, a tool for agile management and analysis of service quality, which provides a quick and global vision oni t.

The ultimate objective is a continuous improvement by monitoring the degree of compliance with the commitments made.

This manager tool provides a personalised e-mail response to all the queries received depending on the type of user.

Quid? Consulta a la Biblioteca, the name we give to this service, manages enquiries that we can classify according to the subject or category and thus, assign the appropriate librarian.

It works with a form available on the Library's website, in which the user directs their query to the corresponding library. The response time is a maximum of 2 days (except on weekends and public holidays).

It should be noticed that during the periods of confinement and restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, in which face-to-face service was greatly reduced, the main means of communication was telematic and by telephone, which is why OTRS played a fundamental role.

We show you the statistics of the 3 last years about the total queries received as well as the percentage of compliance of less tan 2 working days of the commitment acquired:

Year	2019	2020	2021
Total enquiries	6300	5467	3333
Annual compliance rate of less than 2 working days	94.97%	90.13%	90%

The following is a SWOT analysis we have made of OTRS, because we consider that it is time to question whether this tool, which is used for all the University Services, is adapted to the specific needs of the Library.

Does the OTRS tool we are using meet the needs of this Service favourably?

Methods and materials

For this report we have consulted with the Library Service statisticians, some of the OTRS managers, as well as users.

We have also reviewed the available documentation referred to:

- OTRS Documentation. Information Technologies Service Incident Manager, 16 September 2015.

- Minutes of Heads' Meetings (22/01/2018, 30/04/2019 and 31/03/2022)

- Working Instruction: OTRS Management including general working recommendations, as well as in OTRS Library Manual, Version 2.0, March 2022.

SWOT ANALYSIS

- Strengths:

- Provides detailed **statistics**
- Allows the creation of tickets with **queries received through other routes**
- Offers options for distributing tickets by queues (centres, services) and statuses
- Possibility of searching for tickets that have already been resolved by applying filters

- Weaknesses:

- Lack of training for OTRS managers
- Delay in the development of a common instruction for the entire Service, which has led to delays in decision-making
- Lack of uniformity in the use by centres
- Not all staff are authorised
- It is necessary to log into the application to view the consultations

- Opportunities:

- o OTRS is free and offers multiple configurations and utilities
- o The maintenance and management of the tool is carried out by the Information Technology Service
- o It allows detecting gaps and failures in other information channels of the Library

- Threats:

- ➢ The interface is neither intuitive nor user-friendly
- ➢ The double-response email is very disconcerting for the user, in addition to the satisfaction survey email
- ➢ The subject of the email can be mistaken for spam (does not identify the sender)
- ➢ It is subject to the functionalities chosen by the Information Technologies Service
- ➢ It is not a very versatile tool

Conclusion

We have found that it is not the ideal tool, as it has many unfavorable elements, but it does the job. Favourable aspects to be highlighted are:

- ✚ The possibility of **statistics** and **labeling of queries** is very positive, as it allows a joint and structured view of the results of use.

- ✚ It is also positive that the **exhaustive analysis** makes possible **to detect shortcomings** in other information channels of the Library Service and in this way, **to propose improvements** in the information and communication of the Services, which meet the demands of users.

➕ In some aspects, we are starting to adopt measures to remedy certain shortcomings detected and to optimise its use, such as uniformity in management actions and the drafting of a Working Instruction on OTRS from the Library Service.

It would be advisable to explore other options that are friendlier and more appropriate to the type of consultation done and to the regular users of the library.

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