CDRS gets first Asian member

The Hong Kong University of Science & Technology Library (http://library.ust.hk) has become a member of CDRS, an international network of libraries that provides professional reference services to researchers anywhere at any time. This network is coordinated by the Library of Congress and consists of 60 members in 18 countries. They include a variety of libraries, consortia, museums and expert services such as the National Library of Canada, Ask ERIC, National Gallery of Art, Harvard University, Yale University and Los Angeles Metropolitan Cooperative Library System.

HKUST plays an important role as one of only two libraries in the Asia-Pacific region, the other being the National Library of Australia. Queries are submitted through a member library consortium and then directed to the appropriate member library based on profiles of collection strength, hours, patron groups, staff strength, and specialties. Recently, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada had a query on recycled food containers which was assigned to the HKUST library through the network. While serving at the reference counter, librarians located several useful web sites, searched for important journal articles from Compendex and ProQuest and referred the printed sources to the patron across the Pacific Ocean. Ultimately, end users will be able to submit questions directly through a public web interface and search the growing Q&A database.

Through this network, not only can a remote user tap into a reservoir of expertise, but information professionals can share and leverage reference experiences and skills globally, and document collective knowledge for access worldwide.

www.loc.gov/rr/digiref/ has more about CDRS.