

How we adjusted our reference services in response to COVID-19

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CLIENT SERVICES LIBRARIANS

Land Acknowledgments



We want to recognize that we are presenting upon the traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee and Mississaugas.

While the work we are presenting on was created across BC, Clare and Fiona live and work in Vancouver and New Westminster, so we would like to give acknowledgment to the Coast Salish territory, the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations, and in New West, the Qayqayt First Nations.

Furthermore, we want to acknowledge that our library is embedded within a legal system that stripped Aboriginal peoples of their lands and rights, and as an organization, we are committed to taking steps towards reconciliation.

Overview



1 About us

2 Strategic plan

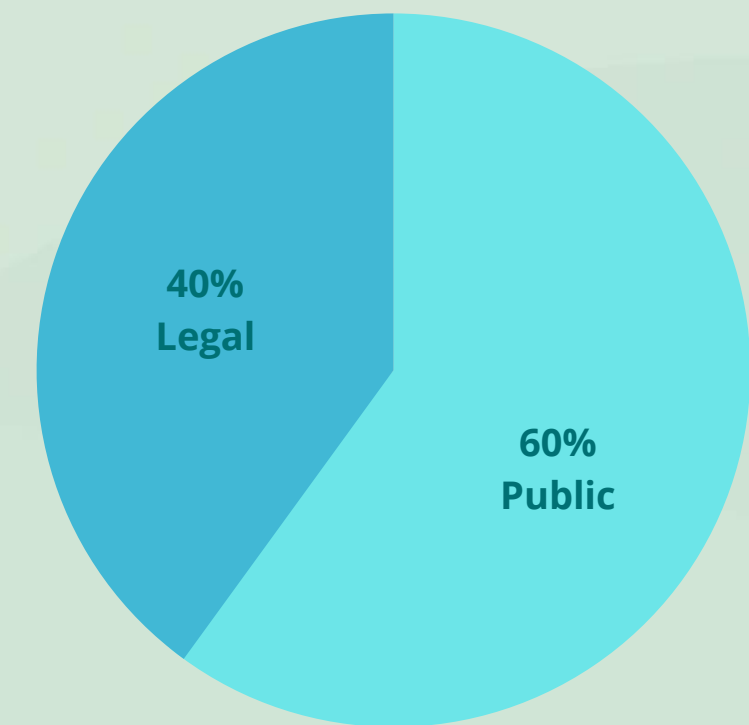
3 Redesigning reference services

- Background
- Working with Business Analyst
- Mind mapping and process modelling
- Implementation, challenges and considerations
- Impact

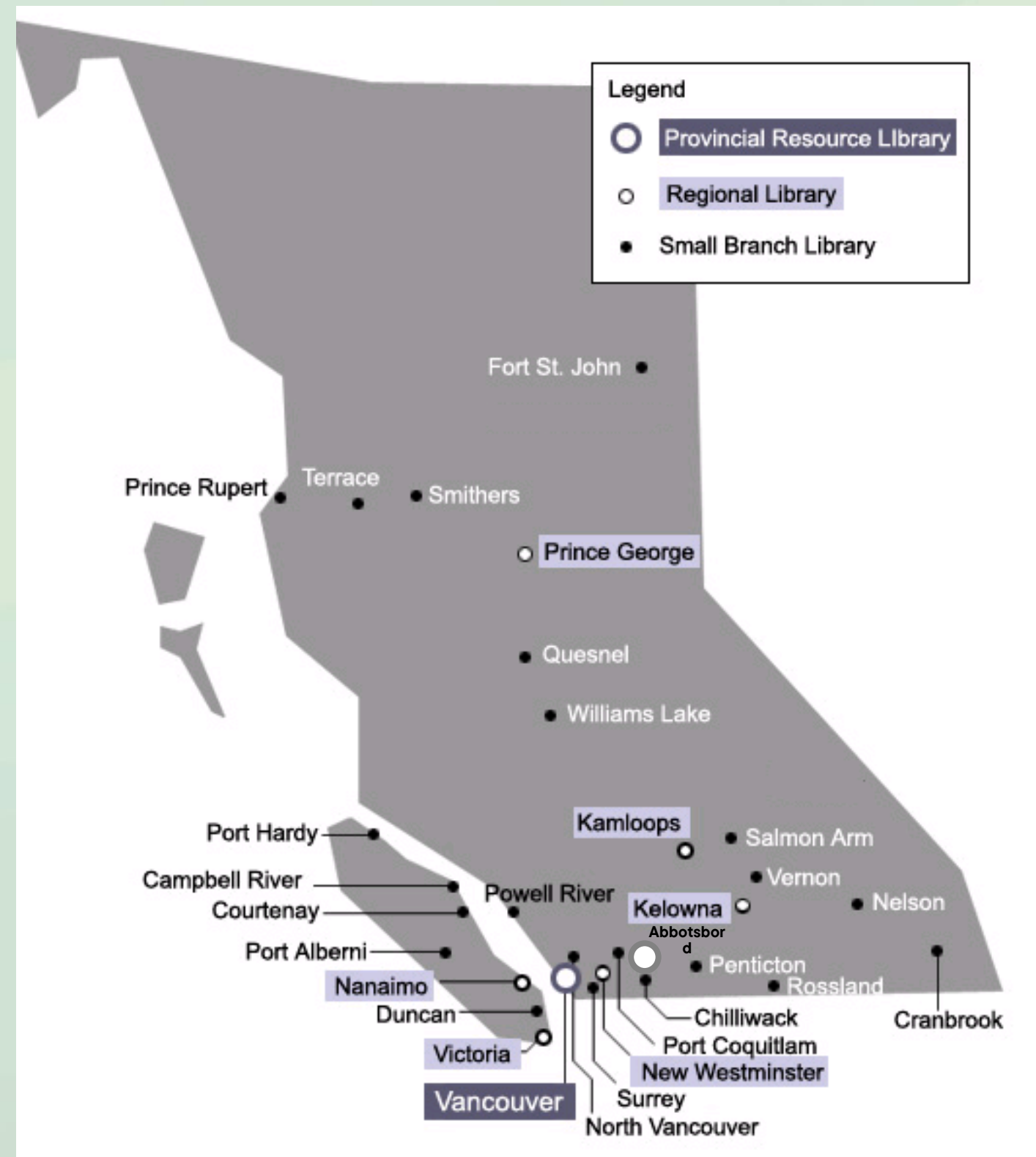
4 Q & A

About us

- We serve the legal community, judiciary and public of BC
- Funded by:
 - Law Foundation of BC
 - Law Society of BC
 - Ministry of Attorney General
 - Project funding from Notary Foundation of BC



Where we are



30 locations across British Columbia

Library types

RESOURCE	REGIONAL	LOCAL
2 locations Vancouver & Victoria	6 locations In larger population settings	22 locations In smaller community settings
Largest collections - includes commonwealth and historical material	Offer access to more services and resources to support a larger number of local lawyers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic - limited monthly hours• Enhanced - Weekly hours, and current practice material
Open 40 hrs/wk 3+ staff	Open 35 hrs/wk 1-2 staff at most	Varying hours and access depending on local library type

Vision

Everyone in BC has ready access to the legal information & resources they need.



Mission

We provide the legal community and public with legal resources, Librarian expertise & informed referrals, to help people research and manage their own or client's legal issues.



We strive to meet our mission by providing 3 core services:

1. Providing reference services

- In-person
- Remote
 - Email & document delivery*
 - Telephone
 - Book delivery

2. Curating print and digital materials

3. Delivering training and outreach programs

- Public libraries – LawMatters
- Public legal information – Clicklaw
- Continuing professional development

Our Foundation

We continuously improve our business processes & governance to support our work.

Background

Redesigning our email reference services

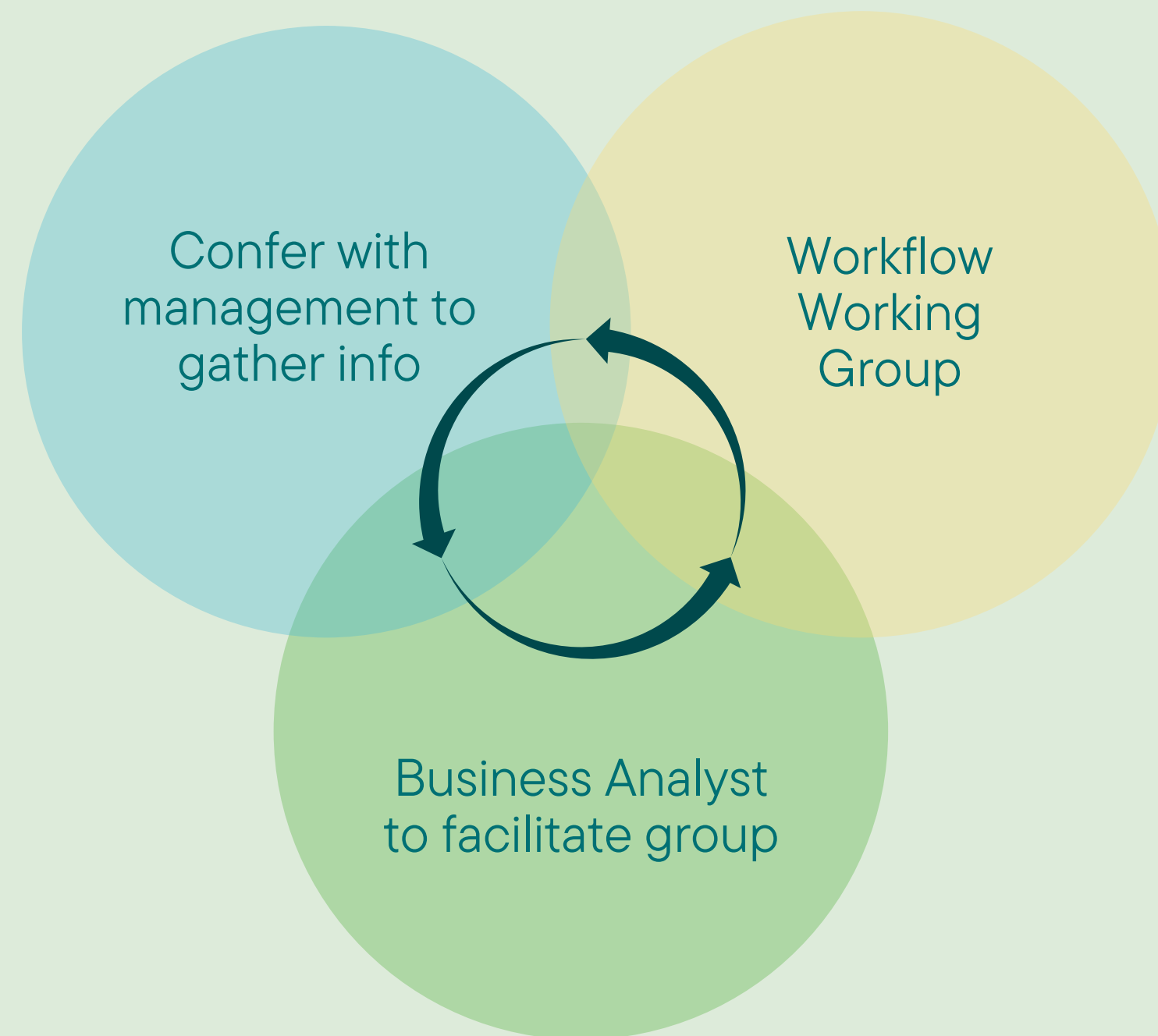
	Prior to COVID	Phase I - COVID Lockdown	Phase II - COVID
Date	Before Mar 2020	Mar - Jun 2020	Jun - Sep 2020
Physical locations	Open	Closed	Limited access
Staff	Onsite	Remote	Hybrid
Email reference model	Centralized	Decentralized	Decentralized
Key service aspects	Vancouver managed email requests while working onsite Document delivery processed	Vancouver started training librarians from other 7 locations on email reference No onsite support available	Process models mapped and used for email and document delivery services Reference triaging introduced Onsite print support

Purpose

- Review the current process for our email reference services
- Identify opportunities to improve email management process to continue delivering consistent, high quality services to our clients
- Address email management pain points identified by staff
- Explore how we can leverage the collective skills and knowledge between staff ensuring a broader pool of expertise
- Create a sustainable email service model that can be adjusted as COVID restrictions continue to change

Phase II key steps

Re-examing reference services workflow



Information Gathering

To learn more about how other libraries were adjusting to COVID, management:

- Connected with other law society and courthouse libraries to learn about their COVID service structures
- Connected with court services regarding shared building operations
- Consulted public libraries on reopening strategies
- Attended special interest groups

Workflow Working Group

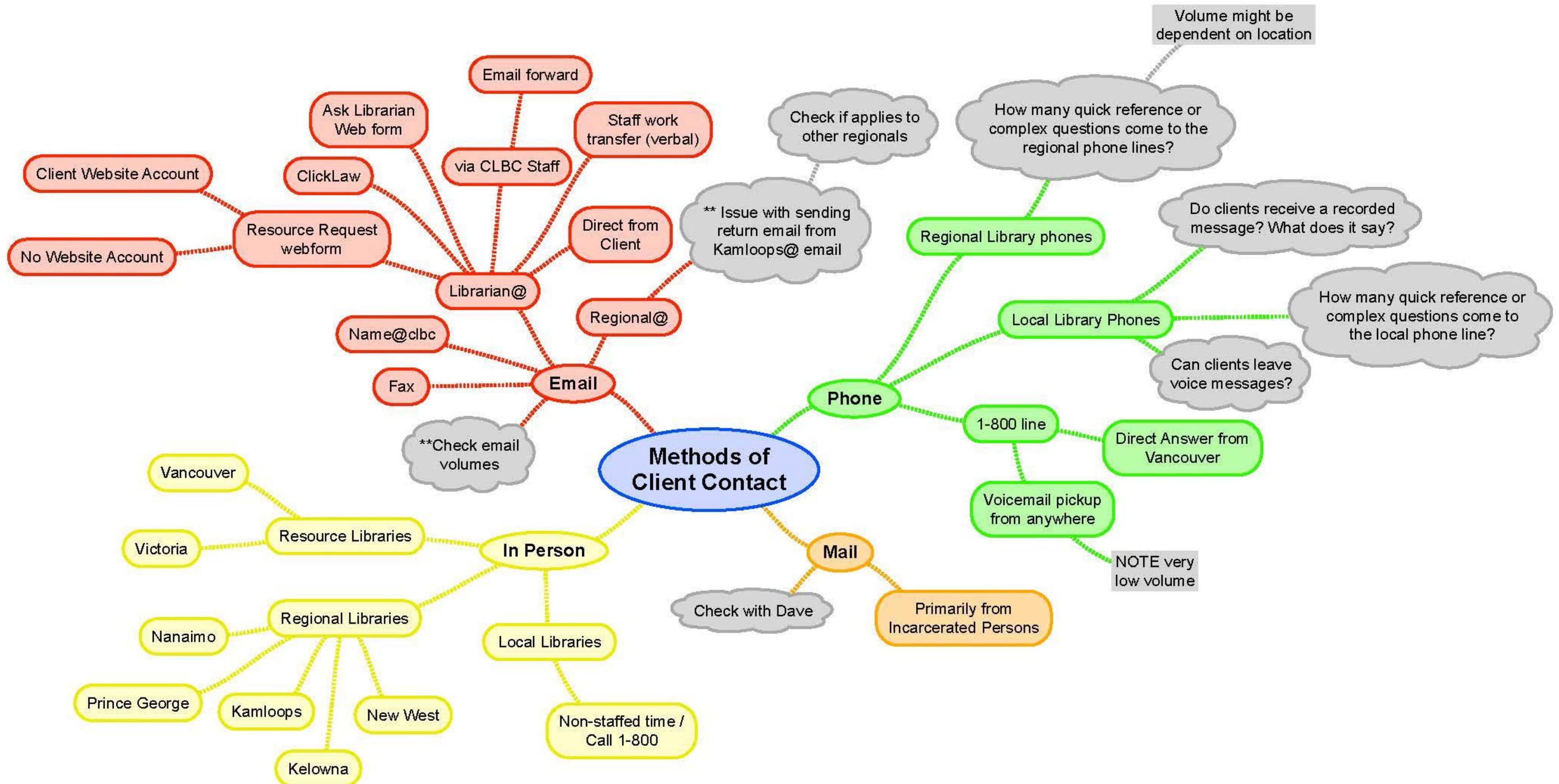
- Dedicated to re-examining current reference workflow in order to redesign how we answer email reference questions as a team of over a dozen librarians across the province who share one inbox
- Group of 4 with different work experiences:
 - Business Analyst
 - Systems Librarian
 - Regional Librarian
 - Resource Librarian
- Met weekly, 3-6 hours, for 4 months



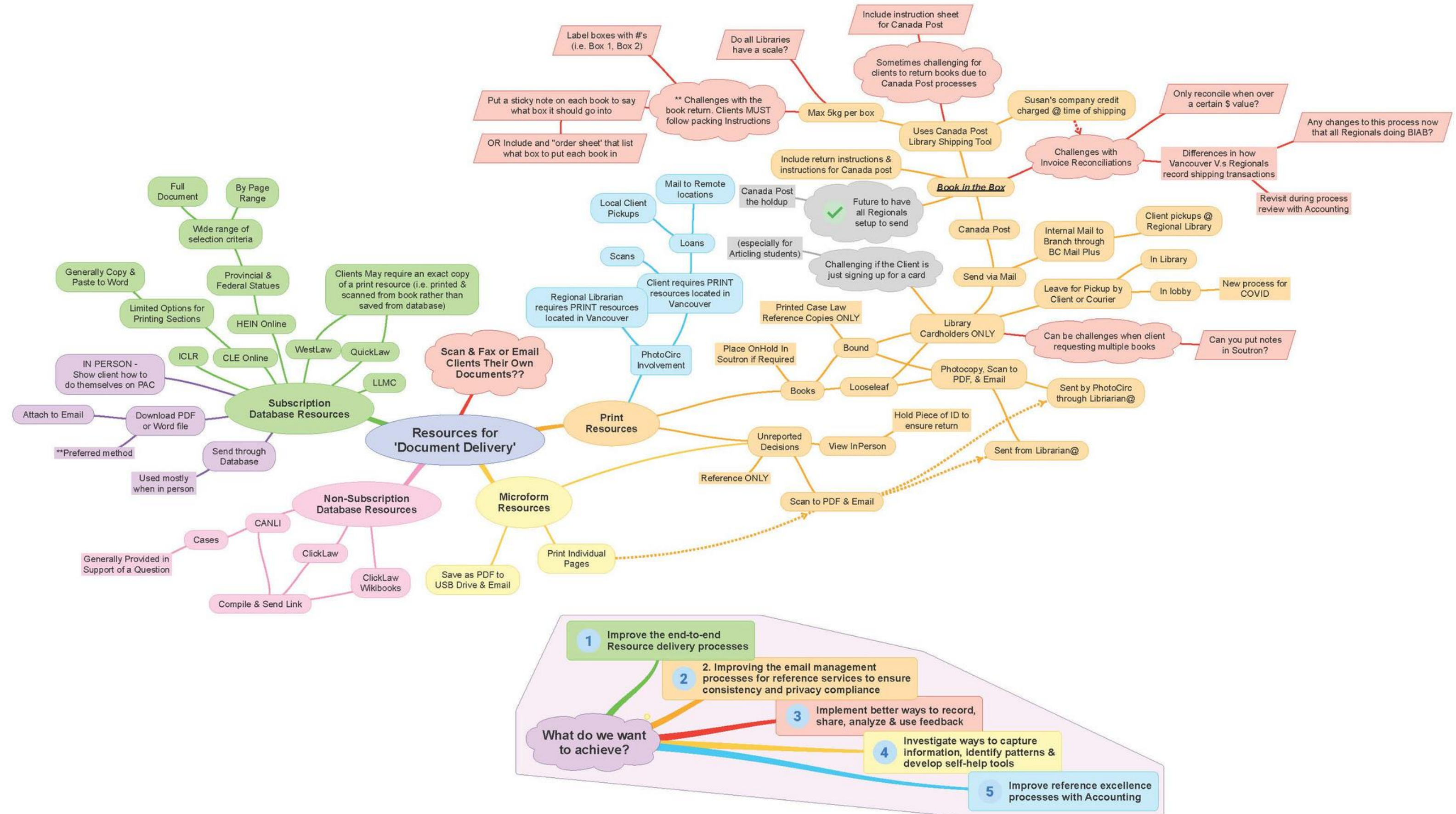
Business Analyst

- Served as facilitator for working group meetings
- Created mind maps and process models to help staff visualize current state of email reference workflow
- Facilitated discussion on current state and possible changes to improve workflow
- Conferred with management to ensure working group's direction aligned with strategic goals
- Created new process models for implementation

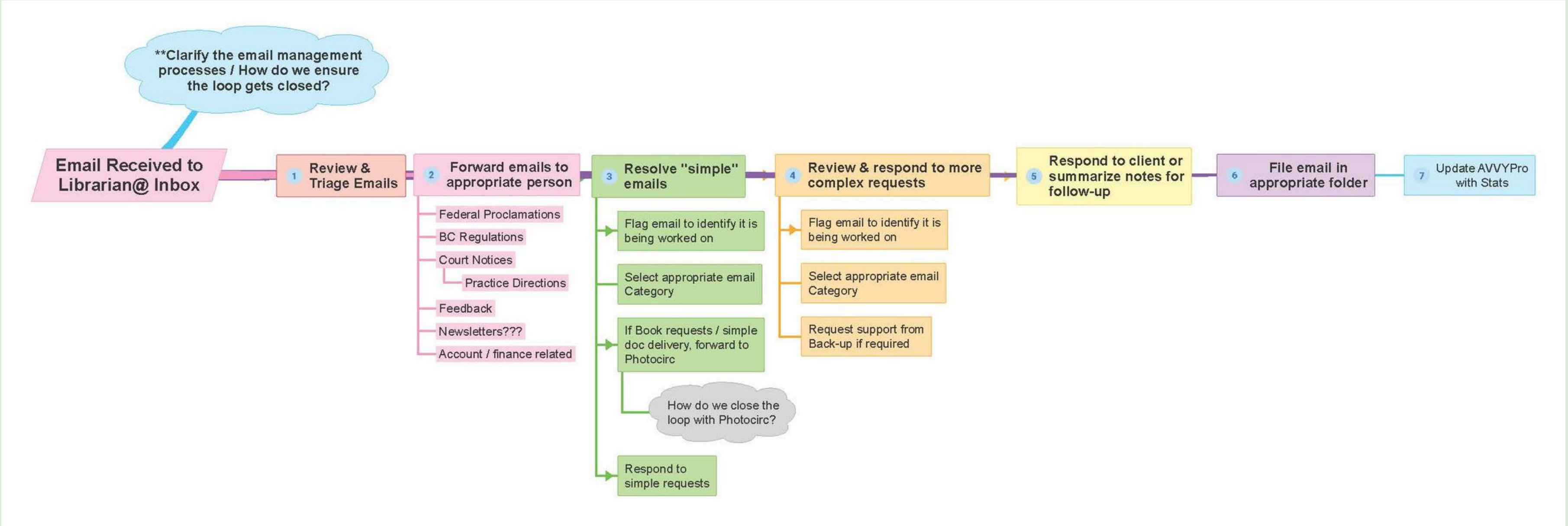
Mindmap - Methods of client contact



Mindmap - Resources for document delivery

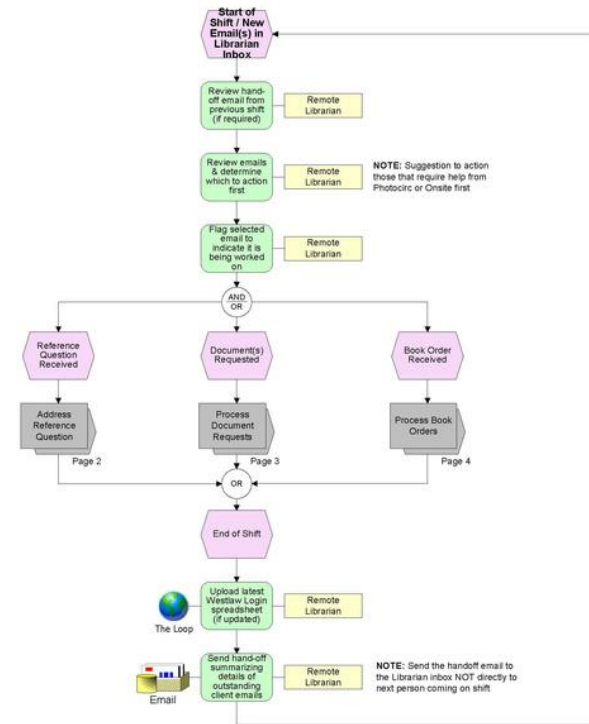


High level process model - Managing email reference

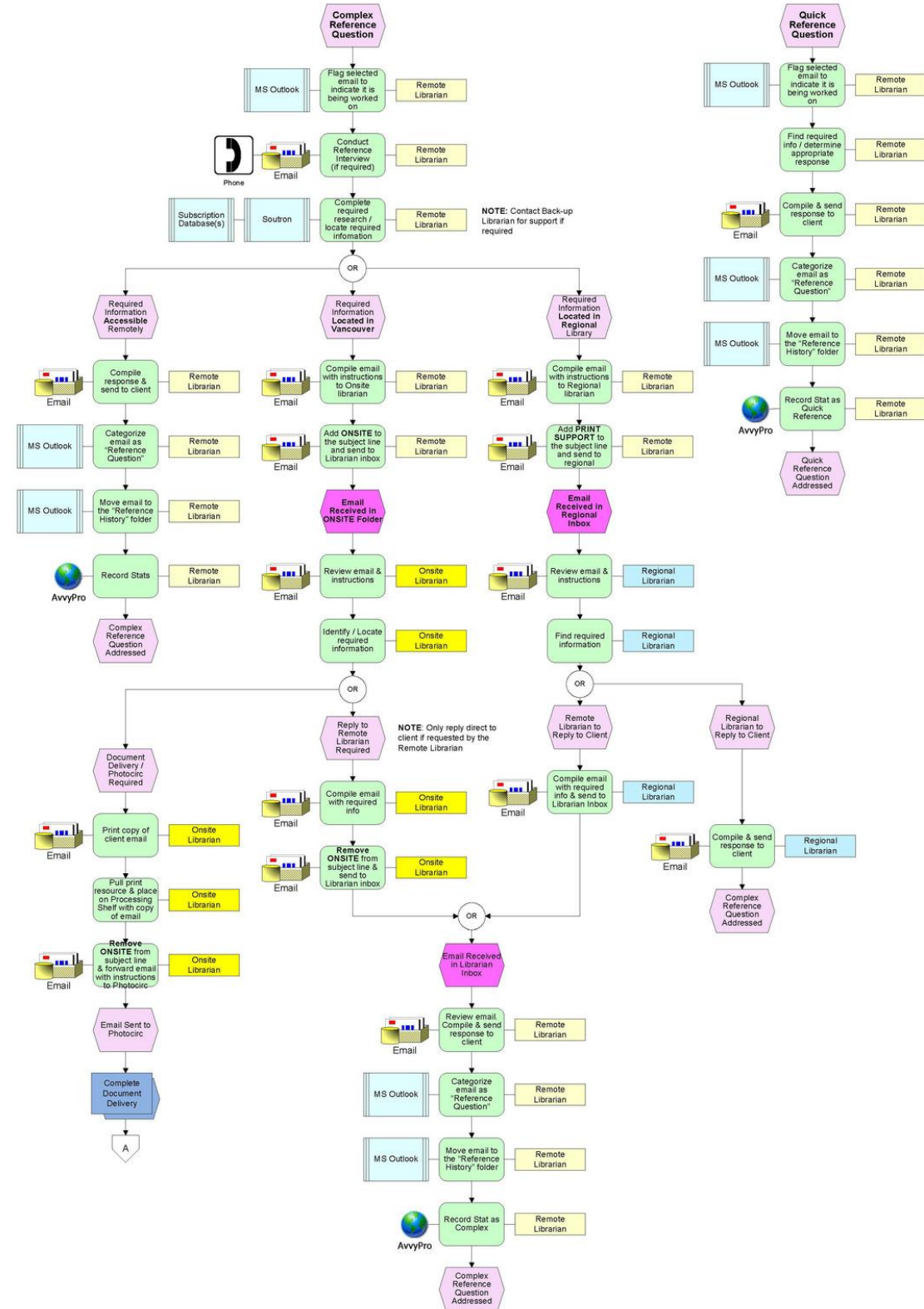


Detailed process model - Managing email reference

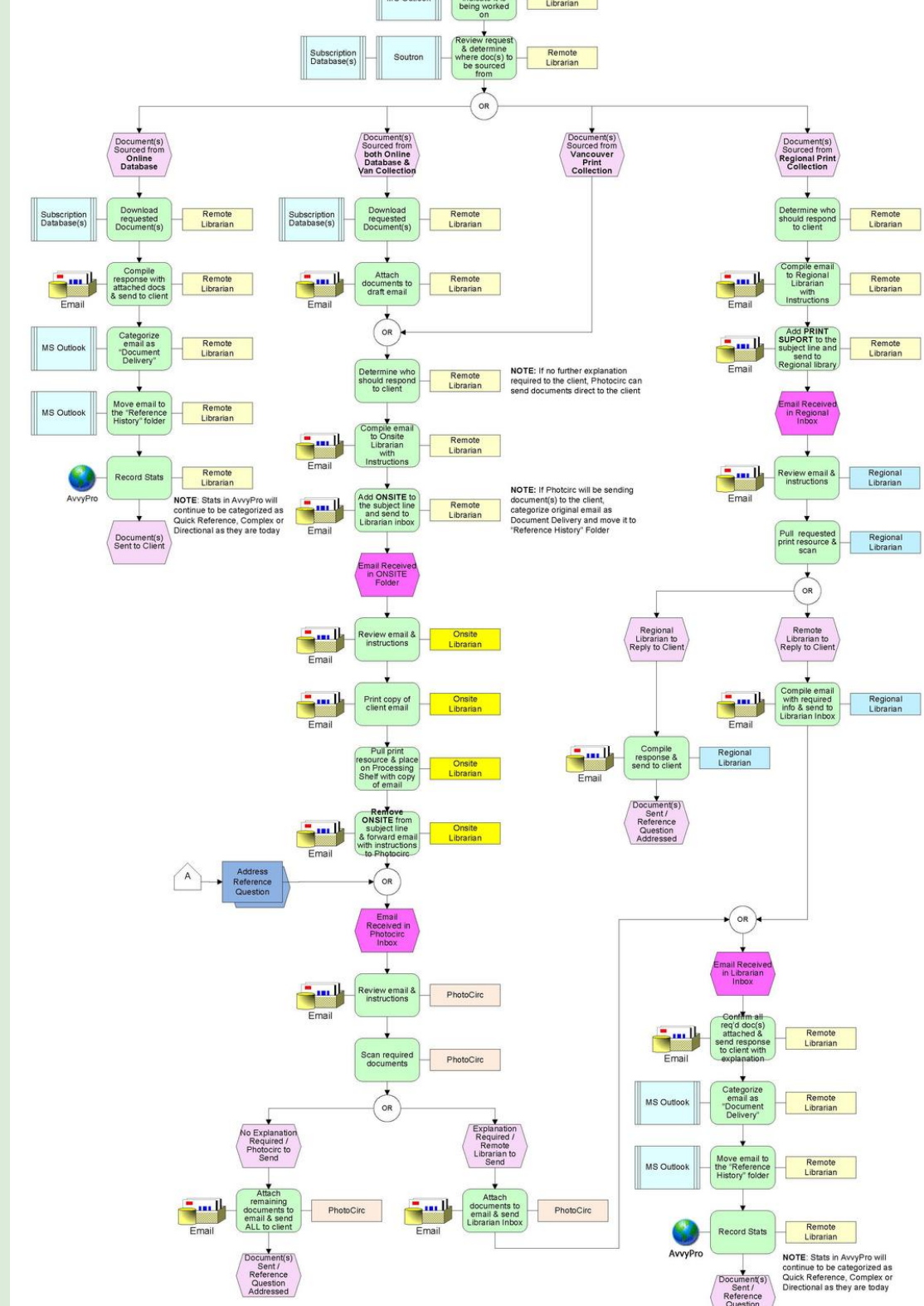
Manage Librarian Inbox OVERVIEW



Manage Librarian Inbox ADDRESS REFERENCE QUESTIONS



Manage Librarian Inbox PROCESS DOCUMENT REQUESTS



LEGEND

- Process Interface** Identifies when one process interconnects with another
- Event** Statement of fact used to identify the process starting point, decision points, or the process outcome
- Function** The activity or process step to be performed
- Application System** The IT application or system used to perform the function
- Spreadsheet** The spreadsheet that is used or produced while performing the function
- Position** The title of the position responsible for performing the function or process step
- Org Unit** The org unit responsible to perform the function or process step

Implementation

- Provided training on process changes
- Defined and updated roles and responsibilities
- Working Group provided support as required
- Held weekly team meetings to encourage staff feedback and answer questions



Challenges and considerations

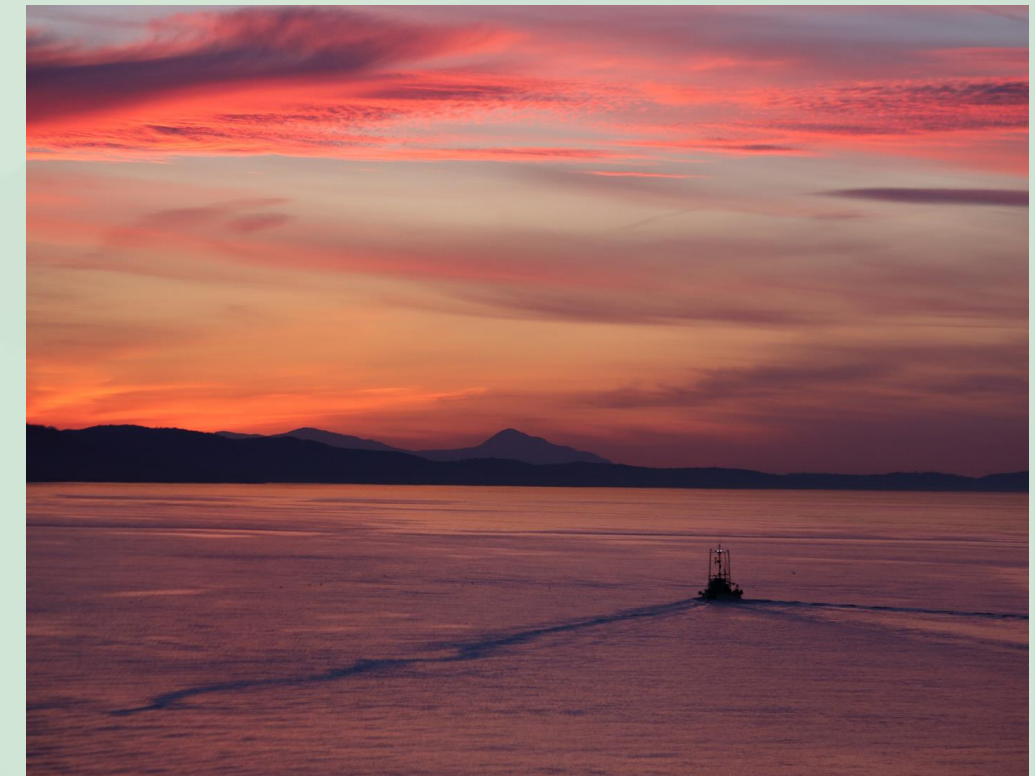
- Managing increasing volume and complexity of requests
- Coordinating increased number of staff and branches sharing one inbox
- Implementing new workflow design
- Adjusting implemented workflow based on staff feedback
- Finding time to train staff on reference skills and new workflow
- Reassessing service fees to reduce barriers to access
- Staff access to print collection for scanning during physical closures
- Delayed book returns affecting availability of resources



Impact from redesign

Direct

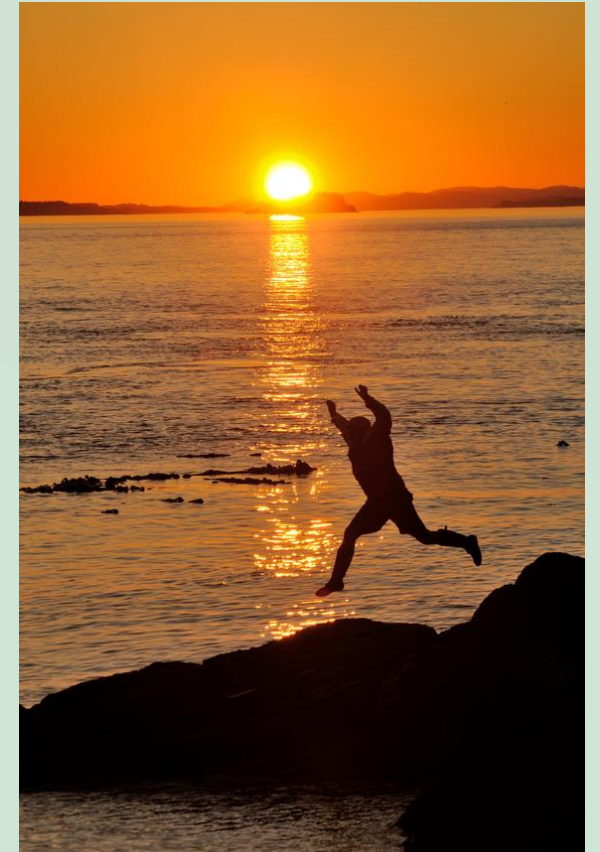
- Grew from 1 to 8 full time branches providing email reference
- Email management processes standardized to ensure consistency and privacy compliance
- Streamlined document delivery services provided by 8 full time locations
- Hybrid work model implemented (1 day from home per week)
- Triaging introduced to increase efficiency of answering emails



Impact from redesign

Bonuses

- Increased communication amongst branches enabling further collaboration
- Cross-training across branches when onboarding new staff
- Investing in staff acquisition of new skills increased satisfaction with their roles in library
- Decentralized reference model deepened sense of internal community support
- Increased collective awareness/knowledge of
 - Reference questions received across all locations
 - Unique qualities of each branch and the communities served
 - Allocation of staff expertise



Thank you!

Questions?



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