

Emerging Technologies: A Primer for Librarians*By Jennifer Koerber and Michael P. Sauers*

Rowman & Littlefield

Lanham, MD

2015

125 pp.

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In a field full of books on library technology, is there a need for a basic text surveying the scene? In this case, the answer is positive because the authors have targeted the book's contents carefully, focussing on what they call "emerging" technologies and then applying a consistent template in each chapter as they evaluate the benefits that might accrue to libraries. Each chapter has a brief and non-technical overview of the technology, followed by a list of advantages and challenges of using these technologies in libraries. In a slightly unusual twist, they add the most common and useful platforms and tools associated with each technology [e.g. in Chapter 4 on Crowdfunding, they include a description (with URLs) of Kickstarter, Indiegogo and GoFundMe]. They then give examples of the technologies in use in libraries around the world. Almost all the examples come from the USA, which is a pity because some good examples have been missed, for example, the National Library of Australia's crowdsourcing to enable text correction for its digitised newspaper collection (even though it is not fundraising). The intention is to give the reader a model to use when evaluating any new technology, consider its relevance to a particular sector of libraries and think about how it might be used now and in the future.

As the authors are very well aware, the technologies they describe and evaluate are not necessarily new; sometimes they are existing technologies that have morphed or merged with others or simply found new life in a fresh context. So, the chapter titles may not be what you expect in a book with this title: audio and video, self-publishing and the library as publisher, mobile technologies, crowdfunding, wearables, the Internet of Things, privacy and security and keeping up with emerging technologies. OK, you predicted mobile technologies, and perhaps wearables, but the others may take you by surprise. The first four chapters are all well-established technologies that been reinvented or reimaged. The chapter on the Internet of Things is a puzzle because the authors acknowledge "there aren't any examples of its use in libraries yet" (p. 90). I appreciate seeing a chapter on privacy and security, for this is a very important, yet often overlooked, topic. Finally, the last chapter offers some suggestions for what amounts to environmental scanning of library technology developments.

This book reminds me very much of two fairly recent publications: *The Top Technologies Every Librarian Needs to Know* edited by Kenneth Varnum (American Library Association, 2015) and *Emerging Technologies for Librarians: A Practical Approach to Innovation* by Sharon Q Yang and LiLi Li (Chandos, 2015). All three books

are useful to librarians who feel they need to learn more about the application of new technology in libraries. The cost is reasonable, and many librarians can afford to purchase a personal copy.

Book reviews

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Implementing Web-scale Discovery Services: A Practical Guide For Librarians

By Jolinda Thompson

Rowman & Littlefield

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In the past few years, the Web-scale discovery (WSD) service has been gaining popularity amongst libraries whether be they academic, special or public. The demand has resulted in a multiplicity of such tools, each with its own complex nature, which makes it a vital decision to select one that is efficient and cost-effective. This book has been written to address that need.

The book includes 12 chapters, the first of which, *The Evaluation of Web-Scale Discovery in Libraries*, looks at how such systems provide an efficient, comprehensive and user-friendly one-search method, the base of which is “the combination of discovery-level functionality with a massive cloud-base centralized and normalized index of content” (p. 11). The second chapter, *A Closer Look at Web-Scale Discovery Options*, provides a profile of features of four WSD services currently available on the market, describes the hybrid systems that are being introduced and ends up with suggesting *Encore Synergy* or *Enterprise* as two innovative alternative products that use federated search and Web-services technology.

Chapter 3, *Making the Best Content Match for Your Library*, gives practical hints for selecting the WSD that best satisfies the needs of each library through a thorough content analysis. Chapter 4, *Evaluating the Discovery Layer*, defines the discovery layer of a WSD as a critical feature to the system’s effectiveness, providing not only options for refining retrieval only to the most relevant records but also tools for viewing, saving and sharing searches and retrievals.

Chapter 5, *Other Important Web-Scale Discovery Service Features and Functions*, looks at features and functions that need to be considered when purchasing a WSD service. These include features such as the presence and functionality of mobile platforms, support for consortia or multi-library environments, effectiveness of rights