

# Book Reviews

Edward Swanson, Editor

***The Internet Under the Hood: An Introduction to Network Technologies for Information Professionals.*** By Robert E. Molyneux. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2003. 309p. \$40 paper (ISBN 1-59158-005-6).

Robert Molyneux has set himself the task of introducing the applications of networking technologies in such a manner as to be understood by information professionals whose levels of information systems expertise typically run somewhere from expert to the “dummies” for which the successful series of instructional manuals has been written. It’s a daunting assignment, but he’s handled it well.

The work is divided into four main sections: overview, technology, applications, and social issues. The overview section contains the basic groundwork information about networks, including a brief history of the development of the Internet. The technology section deals with the pure technology of networking, such as the Open Source Initiative (OSI) model, and contains four lab chapters that go into more technical detail than the chapters that they accompany as well as two case studies. The lab and case study chapters can be skipped by those readers not desiring the more comprehensive level of detail provided without hurting their general understanding of later chapters. The third section deals with applications that utilize networks and the configuration of computers to access and use a network. The last section of the book deals with social and legal issues, such as intellectual property concerns. None of the sections is comprehensive, but Molyneux provides a good introduction, with bibliographies for future reading.

Vocabulary and concepts are explained in reasonable detail throughout, and an excellent glossary is provided to assist in understanding the textual material. As with all works of this type, many paragraphs become so saturated with jargon that, while succinctly explained, they may become overwhelming and tedious to someone totally new to the subject. Molyneux provides much-needed help here, with numerous references to other works for the benefit of both those who crave a more basic approach and others searching for supplementary advanced information.

Although there is little in the way of especially new thoughts or unique insights contained in this work, such is not its purpose, and Molyneux has acted as a compiler of materials, combining information on aspects of his subject that are generally found in several different types of works into one book. This should prove especially useful to beginning information professionals or to information professionals who are either new to networking or who have managed somehow to avoid it but now find themselves no longer in a position to do so. The use made of numerous diagrams and illustrations will be helpful to the beginner in understanding the more complex concepts. All major network operating system environments are discussed briefly in separate chapters, with citations to additional sources so that readers can follow up in more detail those systems in which they are most interested.

Unlike many introductory works on networking, this one is clearly focused on the problems of information professionals; that is to say, it is intended neither for the electrical

engineer nor for the home user. This is both its main strength and at the same time a weakness in the work. It means that a great deal of technical information is intended to be provided in a relatively few pages, and unless the reader is truly motivated to learn about networking, the condensed nature of the discussion can present some difficulties. This book is therefore really best for readers who have some knowledge of at least the vocabulary of networking, but want to learn more, or those who have done some trial-and-error networking and now want to gain knowledge of the theory and concepts.

A nice touch is that Web addresses appearing in the book are indicated as being updated at [www.molyneux.com](http://www.molyneux.com). As additional resources come to the author’s attention, these are also intended to be made available from this Web site.—Vicki L. Gregory ([gregory@luna.cas.usf.edu](mailto:gregory@luna.cas.usf.edu)), University of South Florida, Tampa

***The Kovacs Guide to Electronic Library Collection Development: Essential Core Subject Collections, Selection Criteria, and Guidelines.*** By Diane K. Kovacs and Kara L. Robinson. New York: Neal-Schuman, 2004. 251p. \$125 paper (ISBN 1-55570-483-2).

This book expands on Kovacs’s 2000 book, *Building Electronic Library Collections*.<sup>1</sup> It provides guidelines for collection development of an electronic library (or “e-library”), described by the authors as “a Web-published collection of Web-accessible information resources” (xv). By their definition, an e-library includes not only a collection of information