digital libraries beyond general models of information behavior, noting that the actions users take within a given digital library can be constrained by the interface and functionality with which they are presented.

Chowdhury and Foo, in chapter 4, discuss the role that interface design has on user interactions and acknowledge that visualization techniques in particular hold great and unrealized potential for enhancing user interactions, especially as digital libraries expand to include more and different types of content. In chapter 9, Kim, Durr, and Hawamdeh focus their attention on a specific context of use—scholarly information—and in so doing, consider trends and opportunities that have emerged for engaging with digital content resulting from electronic publishing. They note how significant the roles of both technology expansion and digital information are in shaping users’ interactions with research resources, and discuss how mobile technologies and discovery tools outside the library (such as Google Scholar) play a role in today’s scholarly information landscape. Like Chowdhury and Foo, these authors also see the potential in providing users with visually oriented tools to better understand digital resources, in this case those that support visual data analysis and learning.

Metadata are integral to digital libraries in managing content and supporting access to that content. The former is discussed in chapter 2 and the latter is given more sustained attention in this book, discussed throughout several chapters. The analysis that Shiri and Rathie provide in chapter 3 concerning how metadata are leveraged to facilitate user interactions shows how a combination of manually, automatically, and user-generated metadata can help users refine their search paths and make informed decisions about resource selection. They illustrate this with four digital library websites (two national and two public). Chapter 11 provides a detailed description of Yang and Park’s iSTEM project to integrate subject categories from multiple repositories. This integration work was undertaken to provide users with a single set of topical terms used in navigating and selecting digital resources relevant to their research. This chapter should be of great interest to anyone working to support subject-based access to content in a digital environment using metadata from disparate sources, and while quite technically detailed, provides an opportunity for readers to consider tangible applications of a research project. Another metadata issue considered in chapter 3 is the role of crowdsourced metadata, including user ratings, comments, and tagging, each of which support users’ search processes from navigation to resource selection.

In addition to its emphasis on understanding user interactions and the role of metadata in digital libraries, Digital Libraries and Information Access is notable due to its extended considerations of the social role of digital libraries, which range from an overview of the impact of Web 2.0 applications and tools (chapter 6), to an exploration of how digital libraries can facilitate collaborative information seeking (chapter 5), to addressing practitioners’ obligations to ensure equitable approaches to access from technology as well as content selection and presentation perspectives (chapter 7).

Chowdhury and Foo have shaped a compilation of thoughtful approaches to current issues in digital libraries as they relate to information access. The authors throughout provide numerous opportunities to extend the reader’s exploration of these topics by virtue of well-chosen case studies, timely examples, and identified trends, as well as the comprehensive bibliographies included with each chapter. Readers seeking to better understand the fundamentals of how users engage with digital libraries as well as gain a contextual grasp on both the historic and contemporary attendant research will be able to satisfy both of these goals.—Kathryn Stine (Kathryn.Stine@ucop.edu), University of California, Oakland, California

Developing and Managing Electronic Collections: The Essentials.


As Johnson comments in the preface, her goal is to offer practical advice in working through the many issues involved in providing library users access to online resources. She focuses on indexing and abstracting services, e-books, e-journals, and streaming multimedia; she does not address locally produced content, digital textbooks, games, or software.

The book opens with a brief history of electronic resources in libraries. Although some readers may be tempted to skip the history, it both explains the context for many of the issues librarians face and introduces some essential vocabulary. For example, Johnson introduces terms like Open URL, link resolver, and digital rights management (DRM) as developments that helped libraries manage and provide access to electronic collections. In chapter 1, she also introduces issues such as equitable access, collection stability, and the differences in how publishers offer popular and scholarly content to libraries.

Throughout the book, Johnson focuses on factors to consider when selecting, acquiring, and managing e-resources. For example, in the second chapter, she lists a dozen selection criteria, in addition to the standard criteria for all materials, which libraries should consider when selecting electronic resources. She explains the importance of criteria such as persistent content, discussing the implications of leasing content from an aggregator versus a publisher and of purchasing content with annual...
hosting fees. She also gives practical examples, such as Penguin’s decision to pull e-books from the aggregator OverDrive, of why these criteria are important for all types of libraries to consider.

The chapter on licenses should be required reading for every library employee, not just those directly responsible for negotiating licenses. Johnson emphasizes that license terms override copyright law, then gives examples of how license terms can affect ILL, course reserves, patron use of the content, and patron privacy. She also explains key elements of licenses and introduces common language, such as authorized use and perpetual access, with brief examples to illustrate their importance. Throughout the licensing chapter, Johnson emphasizes that state law sometimes requires or prohibits certain terms. Finally, she tells readers that legal training is not essential for negotiating licenses; the author recommends sites for finding model licenses and discusses best practices in developing guidelines for license negotiation.

Two chapters, on conducting business with suppliers and on working across organizational units, stress the importance of good communication. These chapters outline many issues peculiar to e-resources, such as issues to consider before agreeing to become a beta site for new products or major upgrades. While the chapter on working across organizational lines may seem to target larger libraries, Johnson points out that the tasks discussed are essential whether a library has a single person or several units involved in e-resource management. These chapters also discuss tools for managing e-resources, ranging from shared spreadsheets to commercially available electronic resource management systems. Instead of recommending specific tools, Johnson explains advantages and disadvantages that libraries should consider when selecting tools to manage e-resources.

In the chapter on budgets and financial considerations, Johnson discusses different ways that libraries allocate funds for e-resources. Once again, she focuses on explaining issues to consider, such as how separate subject funds may help balance collections, but may also hinder purchases of multidisciplinary e-resources. This chapter also briefly introduces some of the issues to consider when contemplating patron-driven acquisitions or pay-per-view, introduces methods of forecasting budget needs, and explores some reasons consortia can be useful in acquiring e-resources. This chapter, along with the final chapter on the future of e-content in libraries, should prompt librarians to seriously consider whether they need to redesign materials budgets to better deal with the many options for acquiring electronic resources.

The strength of this book is its focus on issues that libraries should consider rather than prescribing specific solutions to complex issues. Two other strengths are the many short lists and the suggested readings at the end of most chapters. Many sections begin with a short list of issues that librarians should consider, then goes on to discuss each issue. These lists could easily be adapted into procedural checklists, with librarians adding details about how each issue will be handled in their library. Each chapter except the last has about a dozen suggested readings to help readers who need more information about a particular issue.

Johnson’s book is an excellent contribution to the literature on e-resource acquisitions and management; it fully lives up to the author's goal of providing practical advice on working through issues related to e-resource collections. Further, by focusing on issues libraries should consider and providing many brief examples of how different options affect workflows and usability, Johnson has written a book relevant to all sizes and types of libraries. Recommended for all libraries and for students seeking an introduction to the issues.—Ginger Williams (ginger.williams@wichita.edu), Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas