When Establishing an Institutional Repository”; “Appendix B: Sample Job Descriptions for Data Librarian Positions”; and “Appendix C: Sample Data Management Plans.”

Data Management for Libraries is extremely well organized and provides many useful suggestions in its overview of data management from a library perspective. Krier and Strasser are careful not to proscribe what a data services department must include in a library, which is a strength of the guide. The guide coaches the reader to carefully tailor data management to the needs of a particular institution. Libraries that may be initiating a data services department would do well to consult this title when considering data management.—Betsy Appleton (eapplet1@gmu.edu), George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia


The back cover of Calhoun’s book Exploring Digital Libraries: Foundations, Practice, and Prospects declares it “a landmark text on digital libraries for students of LIS, educators and practicing information professionals throughout the world.” It also states that it provides “an authoritative and in-depth treatment of the digital library arena, from the field’s emergence to current topics and future prospects.” Calhoun is a prolific and well-respected author and lecturer on the subject of digital libraries, and is definitely someone worthy of earning such accolades.

The book consists of two main themes. The first is a broad, international overview of the past twenty-plus years of digital libraries, while the second concerns the social roles digital libraries play in relationship to their online communities. Chapter 1, “Emergence and Definitions of Digital Libraries,” covers the first decade of this brave new world. The World Wide Web had been born, costs associated with computing had become much more affordable, and the National Science Foundation assembled a series of workshops on how to make digital libraries a reality. Projects such as the eLib Programme in the UK and the Digital Library Initiatives (DLI-1 and DLI-2) in the US, plus Project Gutenberg and the Internet Archive, gave a taste of what was to come. Calhoun also uses this chapter to establish the definition of digital libraries upon which she bases the rest of the book. In her eyes, digital libraries are both a multidisciplinary field of research and practice, and the systems and services that support the advancement of knowledge and culture; contain managed collections of digital content; and often utilize architecture from the computer and information science/library field (e.g., repository, resource identifiers, user interface).

In chapter 2, “Outcomes of Digital Libraries’ First Decade,” Calhoun identifies several key results from this initial period. These include a new field of research and practice, the transformation of scholarly communication processes, open access, digitization and digital preservation, metadata and its standards, and actual working digital libraries and the communities they serve. Each outcome is discussed in detail, and introduces such topics as D-Lib Magazine, PageRank (Google’s forerunner), the Open Archives Initiative (OAI), JSTOR (short for Journal Storage), Dublin Core, the Library of Congress’ American Memory, and the British Library Online Newspaper Archive. Chapter 3, “Key Themes and Challenges in Digital Libraries,” introduces the concept map that Calhoun created based on the major themes from the digital library literature of the decade 2002–12. The map consists of a collection of keywords plotted in a continuum of themes and topics arranged from “collections” to “communities” (x-axis) and from “technology” to “social and economic aspects” (y-axis). The remainder of the book is based on both this map and the four challenges that she has identified to building collections and communities for digital libraries: interoperability (providing uniform access for users to diverse information from various systems), community engagement, intellectual property rights, and sustainability.

Chapter 4, “Digital Library Collections: Repositories,” begins with a look at traditional library collections and collection development in light of the web. It provides a close examination of digital repositories, including content usage and discovery (e.g., Google Scholar), the application of repository software (e.g., DSpace, Fedora), and web services such as XML (Extensible Markup Language), and concludes with examples of next-generation repositories such as Drupal and Scholar’s Workbench. Chapter 5, “Hybrid Libraries,” wraps up the book’s first theme by examining the interaction between library users and hybrid libraries (collections of non-digital, digitized, and born-digital materials). Calhoun discusses the growth of e-books, the importance of special collections and archives, the emergence of digitized research library collections (e.g., Europeana, HathiTrust) and discovery services (e.g., portals), and concludes with licensing, e-resource management, remote access, and finally the web visibility of hybrid libraries.

An examination of the book’s second theme begins with chapter 6, “Social Roles of Digital Libraries.” Calhoun considers the value of libraries to their communities, both past and present, and uses them as a framework to describe the social role of their digital counterparts. She emphasizes five key areas: to support the free flow of ideas, to empower individuals and reduce what is known as the digital divide (the gap between those with and those without access to digital
information and its related technologies), to support teaching, learning, and the advancement of knowledge, to provide economic benefits (in the global economy, knowledge and networks feed the fire of innovation and economic growth), and to preserve the intellectual and cultural assets for future generations. By incorporating these areas into their framework, digital library managers should be able to describe their roles to external audiences such as funding bodies, in making priorities and improving service to their communities, and finally in defining desired outcomes and assessing the libraries in terms of their community impact. Chapters 7 and 8, “Digital Libraries and Their Communities” and “The Prospects of Open Access Repositories,” expand on the work begun in chapter six by looking at why some digital libraries continue to succeed while others fail, and focuses on the potential of digital library repositories to have a positive impact on scholarship and increase their social and economic value.

The last two chapters examine potential paths digital libraries can follow through the maze that is the social web. Chapter 9, “Digital Libraries and the Social Web: Scholarship,” examines how digital libraries can promote the importance of scholars’ work, and increase their avenues for collaboration. Finally, chapter 10, “Digital Libraries and the Social Web: Collections and Platforms,” expands on chapter 9 to examine the transition of collections to platforms that fit well with users’ expectations for finding information, reusing data for their own needs, inviting collaboration, and generally working and playing on the web. One possibility is through crowdsourcing to leverage user strengths and encourage their support of digital libraries’ future existence.

The book should be experienced in the digital realm, rather than under the limitations imposed by the physical (read “analog”) world. While it can be read from cover to cover, each chapter contains what could be considered hyperlinks that pinball the reader from like concept to like concept, no matter their physical relativity to each other within the book. This reviewer would not be surprised if future editions of this book will come to market as a digital download or permanent web link.

Another quote from the back cover, by Lorcan Dempsey, Vice President, OCLC Research and Chief Strategist, states that “this book provides an overview of the digital turn in libraries,” and “fills a clear gap in the library literature.” After reading Exploring Digital Libraries, the reviewer would have to agree. The book covers a plethora of topics about digital libraries within its 300-plus pages, while not overwhelming the reader in the process. The one complaint that this reviewer has is that the book is indeed an overview of the field, and some areas (such as streaming media) are skimmed over due to time and space constraints. This book is definitely recommended to library science students and educators, and those libraries trying to understand the digital world in which they now find themselves.—Robert Freeborn (rbf6@psu.edu), Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania


Delivering Research Data Management Services proposes to build awareness of the need for a research data management (RDM) service infrastructure and explain how to set up such a service (including technological and human resources as well as securing institutional support). It accomplishes this through five chapters authored individually by the three editors, all currently or formerly affiliated with the United Kingdom’s (UK) Digital Curation Centre (DCC). It discusses three case studies from institutions that have successfully launched RDM services in the United States, UK, and Australia; and two case studies from national programs in the UK. The book provides in-depth information about high-level considerations for RDM services; it does not provide instruction in best practices for managing data. An earlier publication by the same lead editor, Managing Research Data, may prove more useful for those seeking best practices information. Since this book demonstrates the value in planning ahead through advocacy and capacity-building before tackling the preservation and provision of access to research data, it may be a good first read.

The authors have extensive knowledge of and experience on this subject, yet write clearly enough for novices to comprehend. However, readers need to have a high tolerance for acronyms, since every agency, service, and tool seems to have one. Each chapter provides enough context to stand on its own, but this reviewer would have preferred that the book had been more tightly edited to facilitate cohesion across chapters. For instance, the authors recommend that Case Study 5 (chapter 10) be read in conjunction with chapter 5, begging the question of why Case Study 5 was not positioned as Case Study 1 (chapter 6). Such sequencing would have naturally achieved the authors’ suggestion.

The book lacks a concluding chapter summing up the best practices, but it is left to readers to draw their own conclusions based on their institutional settings. Indeed, institutions in the UK seem to have an advantage in terms of governmental funding and shared infrastructure. In contrast, US institutions must either step up advocacy and coordination efforts at a national level or find smaller-scale solutions to the challenge of research data management. Examples of US universities’ current and emerging practices