

Book Reviews

Martin Palmer. *Making the most of RFID in libraries*. London, Facet, 2009

RFID is a technology “in the play”. It has much to offer libraries in all aspects of their logics. The cost of implementation is rapidly decreasing as libraries benefit from the flow-through of retail adoption of RFID.



Martin Palmer presents a valuable précis of RFID implementation in libraries. While not technical in nature, the book does provide very good explanations of the technological framework of RFID—and of the technological options as they stand.

The development of RFID standards is as much occupied by commercial interest as it is by the need for core methods for data compatibility and interoperability. This is evident in the way in which HF has a pole position in the RFID standards. Palmer covers the relative merits of the competing RFID standards well.

Palmer also covers privacy issues surrounding RFID well. This is a rapidly developing area, affected by the increasing retail adoption of RFID as well as the library adoption of these technologies. Recent European Union consultations will have implications for standards for adoption of RFID within libraries. RFID introduces new issues for privacy and confidentiality to the library. Just as an early version of an operating system are now sitting ducks on the internet for hackers, we are likely to see several generations of improvements in securing RFID both for privacy and better holdings management. The encryption of RFID tags is an inevitability in the medium term. These questions will be increasingly on the agenda for RFID implementations.

For those libraries looking for a starting point for the evaluation of RFID in the library, this book can be highly recommended. The book provides some practical guidelines on formulating a request for tender for RFID services.

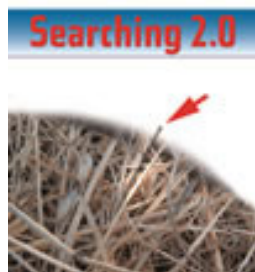
Libraries with existing RFID implementations may also be interested in this book in reviewing their current RFID systems. There is probably still room for a more technical book to expand on the specific

standards as they are emerging and on the protocols for LMS integration such as NSIP, SIP, SIP2).

Costs of RFID equipment and chips are dropping, making this technology more viable for a wider range of libraries. Careful planning is needed to achieve the potential of RFID, and Palmer makes a good contribution to facilitating the RFID selection and evaluation process.

Michael P Sauers. *Searching 2.0*. London, London, Facet, 2009

Michael P. Sauers



The phenomenon of the Web 2.0 is changing both the design and expectation of online information resources. Vague as it is, the concept of Web 2.0 describes a phenomenon

that is new:

scalable participative access to highly connected online resources. Because there are no clear boundaries to define what Web 2.0 is, there are no clear limits to guide the development of introductory resources for this phenomenon.

The challenge of professional development is pressing for the library profession. The very breadth of resources described in this book emphasises that the search specialist cannot eschew the web 2.0 resources that are

In this context, Sauers provides a text that will be useful for reference librarians and those who are mentoring Web 2.0 neophytes.

What you will not find a great deal of information on the rich substrata of web 2.0: the Application Programming Interfaces (API's) and web services that make possible innovative new mash-ups rising on the shoulders of the existing services.

In that sense this book can only be regarded primarily as a survey of the “standard” entry points to Web 2.0 resources. Missing are the interfaces between Google Maps, Wikipedia and other resources. Missing is information on how to interface directly to Google Search to build your own custom applications.

What you will find in this book is an extremely well documented survey of search interfaces to the most popular Web 2.0 resources.

The book has excellent screen captures illustrating in a step by step manner the utilisation of web 2.0 resources. These illustrated examples show a depth of understanding of the standard web interfaces to common Web 2.0 applications, and how to utilise the simple and advanced search interfaces. The large format of the book assists in the clarity of these screen shots. The book focuses on those resources that will be most familiar to a web-engaged generation: Delicious, Google, Live Search, Yahoo, Wikipedia, YouTube, and a gaggle of Google resources.

The book covers resources that have shown good longevity, and consequently will probably have a longer shelf life than the innumerable guide books that capture the moment in time of a particular software or application. The lack of coverage of mash-ups, API's and web services however means that the title of the work may invite more expectation of its content than it actually delivers.

As this issue of the newsletter demonstrates, the expectations of a web 2.0 generation need to be understood by all library search specialists. The book is focussed in its coverage, and is timely for the information professionals who need an entry point to the additional dimensions to searching provided by the world of Web 2.0.

Reviews by Dr Edmund Balnaves



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