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Library Technology and Digital Resources: An Introduction for Support Staff

by Marie Keen Shaw

Lanham, MD

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This is a highly practical book aimed at new staff in libraries and similar information services, though it will also be very useful for relatively new library staff who are already working with digital technologies and resources. The book is structured into three parts. The first covers “digital resources”, the second “technologies” and the third “new directions”. Within the first part, there are chapters on “digital and visual literacies” and chapters that describe primary resources, the sorts of resources found in global, national, state and local collections, and what can be found in subscription databases. The latter chapter explains some of the particular issues that arise from managing electronic databases that are supplied by third-party vendors. The second part, rather oddly, begins with another chapter on subscription databases, this time giving information about providers and producers. Then there are chapters on eBooks, the internet (mostly on directories and search engines), appropriate use and security and infrastructure. The final part consists of a single chapter looking to the future. It is rather an odd mixture at first sight but perhaps that is using the eyes of someone very familiar with the technology environment in libraries; to those just starting out in libraries, it will provide a full description of all the aspects of digital resources and technologies that they need to know. At the start of each chapter are definitions of key terms. There are discussion points at the end of each chapter that will help the reader reflect on what they have learned. There are also activities that could be used in staff development tutorials. The book is specifically aimed at addressing the competencies developed by the American Library Association Library Support Staff Certification group, though it is nevertheless useful for library workers around the world. I recommend this book for staff development collections and for the shelves of all library trainers and tutors. It would also serve for first-year undergraduate courses in library and information science.

