

## Book Review

### **Putting Content Online: A Practical Guide for Libraries**

Mark Jordan

Chandos

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In tackling the broad subset of topics associated with the creation of digital content as well as how to serve it all up online, it would be easy for an author to overwhelm the reader with technical minutiae. In *Putting Content Online: A Practical Guide for Libraries*, author Mark Jordan has succeeded in taking a series of fairly technical and sometimes abstract topics and conveying them in a more accessible writing style. In his introductory chapter Jordan explains his rationale for the book, which he stresses is intended to be practical, as the title suggests, and to offer 'useful advice for solving realistic problems'. The rest of the chapter sets the framework for the book with notes on terminology, attributes of 'good' digital collections, the role of the library as publisher, as well as current trends, standards and software.

The second chapter focuses on preliminary tasks which must be considered when contemplating a digital project. Included are: determining rationales and motivations for digitizing, defining collection goals, determining scope and objectives, choosing source materials and ends with an interesting note on the often overlooked issue of cultural sensitivity. Chapter 3 is devoted to copyright and other issues surrounding intellectual property. Jordan illustrates some of the differences in interpretations of the terms "fair use" and "fair dealing" between the UK, US and Canada. Public domain, licensing through Creative Commons and GNU Free Documentation are also discussed along with permission management. Chapter 4 explores possible forms of metadata and the wide variety of implementation choices. Clear and thorough explanations of the differences between descriptive, administrative, structural, and preservation metadata are presented. MARC, Dublin Core, MODS and METS are reviewed with tabled examples. Specific file formats and the differences between master vs. derivative and open vs. proprietary are discussed in the fifth chapter. Jordan has provided clear explanations about the various formats for still images, text, sound, video and raw data sets as well as information on best practices for each of these formats. Search, display and navigation issues in Chapter 6 are followed up by an examination of the various types of content management systems in Chapter 7.

The last third of the book offers an in-depth look at project management, operations and developing workflows (Chapters 8-10). This section details aspects such as overall planning, time lines, proposal writing and evaluation as well as staffing considerations, metadata creation, hardware and file management. This section concludes with a chapter dedicated to preservation strategies (Chapter 11). While digital preservation is such a hot issue, Jordan provides much welcomed and practical advice regarding the development of policy, the creation and maintenance of preservation metadata, the usefulness of open formats, best backup and storage procedures as well as testing for disaster recovery.

Jordan finishes by providing a useful theoretical but realistic project case study utilizing the practical advice outlined in the book. All chapters conclude with suggestions for further reading and notes. I would recommend this book for any library staff contemplating a digitization project or who wish to

develop digital collections. This work could also serve as a textbook for library and information science courses dealing with digitization and digital libraries. Except for a lengthy discussion on the most technical aspects of digital imaging (which the author intentionally avoids due to the wide variety of other sources on the subject), Jordan has succeeded in writing a comprehensive and practical book, which makes it ultimately, a very useful resource.

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