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**Library Analytics and Metrics: Using Data to Drive Decisions and Services**, eds. Ben Showers. Croydon, UK: Facet Publishing, 2015. 224p. \$80.55. ISBN-13: 978-1856049658.

Libraries and cultural heritage institutions have a long history of collecting data on the use of their services, ranging from circulation, gate counts and reference transactions to electronic resources usage. Now, more than ever, supporting institutions are asking libraries to use that data to demonstrate value in new and complex ways. In addition, with the help of analytics and metrics, libraries have developed new and unique ways to improve services and enhance their patrons' experiences by harnessing the power of their data.

Showers begins the book with an analogy of the streetlight effect—a parable in which a man only looks under the streetlight to search for his lost car keys. He does not find the keys and he must walk home. Library data and information collection often works in a similar way – looking where it is convenient to look rather than where the answers might be. Showers cautions Librarians to begin the process of analytics and metrics by asking the right questions and focusing on those questions, or else they may become too distracted in the collecting and their efforts may go off course.

The editor carefully lays out the book with each of the six main chapters focusing on a current trend in metrics and analytics. Each chapter includes a discussion of a trending development and at least one case study to illuminate the concept of the chapter. The studies cover a broad range of institution and/or consortium sizes and missions. The first chapter, “Library data: big and small,” emphasizes the importance of small local data and how understanding that can lead to big data collaborations. In the second chapter, “Data-driven collections management,” Showers highlights two case studies focused on collection management. As he notes, “data-driven collections management is not a new concept for libraries,” however, these studies clearly outline unique projects whose aims are to create collection analytics tools for librarians that are very practical and actionable.

The editor moves toward examining different institutions' unique responses to the ever-increasing demands from outside sources to demonstrate impact and value in the third chapter. The case studies in this chapter, “Using data to demonstrate library impact and value,” come from different countries and illustrate a variety of different technical solutions. However, each study showcases how a library can demonstrate value by correlating library use with student retention and performance. Showers appropriately notes the ethical impact of utilizing patron data for this type of analytics; a topic that is more thoroughly discussed in chapter 6.

The 4th chapter, “Going beyond the numbers: using qualitative research to transform the library user’s experience,” illustrates how to use data to improve patrons’ experiences through qualitative and ethnographic techniques. These studies go beyond the “what” of library services and collections patrons use to “how” and “why”. The set of case studies in chapter 5, “Web and social metrics for the cultural heritage sector,” focus on cultural heritage centers and their use of web-metrics to get the most out of their users’ experiences.

Chapter 6, “Understanding and managing the risks of analytics,” concludes this collection of case studies with thoughtful discussion of ethical and legal considerations of creating and using data. Concerns include those of privacy and ownership of user records. Researchers are strongly encouraged to bear in mind the benefits of the data collection for the user.

This book is unique in that it ties together a disparate collection of forward thinking projects aimed at utilizing library and cultural heritage metrics and analytics from institutions of varying ranges of size and projects of varying ranges of technological complexity. This book could be helpful to practitioners, managers, and directors seeking a broad range of skills for not only demonstrating their institution’s value, but also enhancing their users’ experiences.

Each chapter provides links and references to allow the reader to learn more about each study and additional resources to provide further reading on each concept.

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