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# Review of M-libraries 2: A Virtual Library in Everyone's Pocket

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## Review of M-libraries 2: A Virtual Library in Everyone's Pocket

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cacy or outreach opportunities. Included are theory and case studies all designed to aid the reader in defining ideas for implementing, sustaining, or growing programs that will help them explore and contextualize advocacy.

The book explores each of three areas in-depth—advocacy, outreach, and engagement—and offers a wealth of suggestions. It also delivers a no-nonsense “now is the time” message that will resonate with the reader. The editors hope that librarians who read *Advocacy, Outreach, and the Nation’s Academic Libraries: A Call for Action* will be able to better understand our role in the world of civic engagement as well as our role as advocates for the library on campus. They also hope to equip librarians with an understanding of issues that will help them initiate discussions for productive results. Consisting of two sections, the book is divided into twelve chapters entitled “Advocacy through Engagement,” “Librarians, Advocacy, and the Research Enterprise,” “Librarians and Scholarly Communication,” “The NIH Public Access Policy,” “Frontline Academic Library Advocacy: Whose Job Is It Anyway?” “Library Advocacy in the Campus Environment,” “Outreach Issues for Information Technology in Libraries,” “Digital Advocacy,” “Advocacy & Academic Instruction Librarians,” “Advocacy and Workplace Diversity,” “Academic Libraries and Graduate Education,” and “Advocacy in Higher Education Environments: No More Excuses.”

Each chapter describes an area where outreach, advocacy, or engagement is defined, then expanded to include examples, benefits, challenges, suggestions for implementation, and, most important, a way to find opportunities within challenging situations. The authors are leaders in the field, knowledgeable about the subject and able to offer viable options relevant to every reader looking to create an action plan of his or her own. Especially useful is the chapter on the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and open access, which explains in detail the legislative advocacy

process, including the highs and lows, political implications and privacy issues that every library professional should be aware of and concerned with.

Julie Todaro concludes the book with her “no excuses” argument that we need to acknowledge the fact that librarians have “only baseline knowledge of the target audience, an uncertain commitment, a lack of political acumen, a lack of knowledge of the umbrella institution, budget process, disagreements on what the message is, unreal expectations of who delivers the message, and finally—little time to advocate in general as well as little time to integrate the concept into the life of the organization.” She assesses the negative aspects and counters each with a positive response, offering insight into each. Finally, she describes the successful teachable moment when we have convinced academic librarians that we not only need to know “how” but that we also must “do”—advocate for our libraries—with no more excuses.—*Marcy Simons, University of Notre Dame.*

*M-libraries 2: A Virtual Library in Everyone’s Pocket.* Eds. Mohammed Ally and Gill Needham. London: Facet Publishing, 2010. 273p. Paperback, \$105 (ISBN 9781856046961). LC 2010-478224.

This collection of twenty-seven articles represents the varied views of international librarians, information scientists, and educators delivering recommendations and solutions to problems we face in the evolution of educational technology. Specifically, mobile devices—challenged by issues of access, quality, and cost—offer a solution to these pressing technological issues through the delivery of those materials and resources that students and faculty require in the course of completing their work. Affordable and ubiquitous, mobile devices present a practical platform that librarians and their allies can focus upon as a delivery mechanism in realizing the goal of everyone having the world at his or her fingertips via a vir-

tual library. The terms m-libraries and m-learning are based upon the convergence of several technologies in one handheld device whereby students may receive exam results via SMS or listen to their professor's lecture as a podcast; it's all part of the "digital lifestyle" that digital natives expect to touch upon and inform all aspects of their work, school, and play.

Underlying this principle of accessibility is the idea of universal and equitable education, while, at the same time, a nod is made toward to the issue of the very real mobile gap, or "digital divide," between first-world and the least developed fourth-world countries. Contributors catalog the differences in cost, experience, and connection/coverage in various countries but offer no real solutions to attaining the universal ownership and access of mobile devices. Mostly, contributors such as Ken Banks in "Where Books Are Few: The Role of Phones in the Developing World" imagine a utopia in which every student in the world owned a high-end mobile device and had no barriers to access. Envisioning a virtual classroom is the first step that resulted in three projects Banks writes of in his essay. So, while utopia is not upon us, Banks surges forward, one project at a time, with an eye toward engaging all students in the process and, thus, giving them access to information and voice to their experience and ideas. Innovative librarians who tackle the resource delivery challenge take their cues from those public sectors in the forefront of emerging mobile services,

such as banks, healthcare providers, and commercial enterprises, with the goal of making libraries mobile-friendly. *M-libraries 2: A Virtual Library in Everyone's Pocket* includes best practices for mobile delivery, procedures for establishing and deploying mobile services, and case studies. The first section gathers international examples of the use of mobile devices. Each article presents philosophies of use of mobile devices that differ from country to country as well as data gathered from surveys administered to students. Similarly, solutions differ accordingly and are specific to the problem and population they serve. At this stage in the m-game, most libraries gather data to determine the percentage of students who have mobile devices and inquire what services students expect via mobile technology. The second section introduces readers to the technical aspects of hardware and software that librarians must manipulate on the back end before bringing their mobile services programs to their constituency. Following the technical aspects are specific applications for mobile libraries. "Service Models for Information Therapy Services Delivered to Mobiles," by Vahideh A. Gavagani, theorizes a service in which physicians provide SMS librarians with information that they then personalize and send by e-post or fax to a post office in a rural or isolated area. Fred Rowland's and Adam Shamburg's "Ask Us Upstairs': Bringing Roaming Reference to the Paley Stacks" indicated a student preference for virtual reference via chat rather than librarians equipped with the iPod. But student preference for technology, instead of physical librarians, proves the collection's underlying message of many of the authors that mobile devices allow students to manage their educational experience inasmuch as we offer them the ability to do so. Part four focuses on the use of mobile devices as a tool for delivering content to distance education students. The final section assembles research findings on the limited data collected in this burgeoning field

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of research in library and information sciences. The editors call for precision in designing mobile sites to accommodate the difference in cultures and learning styles that mobile resources may attract.

Librarians in India support nomadic computing via wireless networks and hotspots from which students may access resources and information via their mobile devices. Parveen Babbar and Seem Chandhok describe their experiences in "Mobile Technology in Indian Libraries." In India, mobile devices are extremely affordable; this allows ordinary people access to services such as the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) papers. According to survey data gathered by Elizabeth C. Reader Fong in her essay "Mobile Technologies and Their Possibilities for the Library, University of the South Pacific (USP)," 97 percent of students in the South Pacific own mobile phones and are ripe for m-learning.

The studies and practices shared in *M-libraries 2: A Virtual Library in Everyone's Pocket* offer evidence to support new initiatives in m-resources for academic libraries. This collection focuses on academic library resources, populations, and services, but librarians in special and school libraries could possibly adapt the services and delivery models to their environment and practice. Content delivery takes the form of mobile sites, audio

tours, SMS reference, screencasting, polling, library applications, and QR codes. In fact, one case study, "Bridging the Mobile Device: Using Mobile Devices to Engage the X and Y Generations" by Phil Cheeseman and Faye Jackson, describes outreach with schoolchildren between ten and fifteen years of age. In fact, Graham McCarthy and Sally Wilson's article "The Library's Place in a Mobile Space" provided a case study of how they approached the issue of mobile delivery and whether to expand beyond SMS from the online catalog to enable students to send the call number and location of library resources to their phone to ease stacks retrieval. Hassan Sheikh and Tony Tin used Google Analytics data about visits to Open University Library to design the library's mobile site in "A Tale of Two Institutions: Collaborative Approach to Support and Develop Mobile Library Services and Resources."

With all certainty, the sharing of m-library knowledge and data throughout *M-libraries 2: A Virtual Library in Everyone's Pocket* serves as a valuable resource for academic libraries and instructional designers who wish to delve into practical applications of mobile technology and learn from the experiences and mistakes of pioneers in the field.—*Rebecca Tolley-Stokes, East Tennessee State University.*