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A review of “Makerspaces: A Practical Guide for Librarians”.

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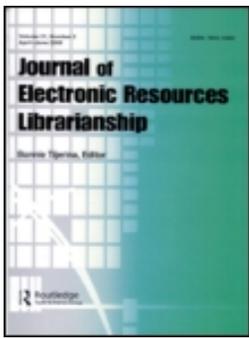


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Makerspaces: A Practical Guide for Librarians

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Makerspaces: A Practical Guide for Librarians, edited by John J. Burke, New York, Rowman & Littlefield, 2014, 183 pp., \$64.00, ISBN: 978-1-4422-2967-9.

Makerspaces are a natural fit for libraries that want to support content creation and creativity in general by offering library patrons a space where they can make things. John Burke, director of the Gardner-Harvey Library on the Middletown regional campus of Miami University of Ohio, was inspired to write *Makerspaces: A Practical Guide for Librarians* after he ran a 2013 web-based survey on library makerspaces that helped him learn more about why libraries and librarians find these spaces so compelling. The book starts off with a background and history of the maker movement, along with a broad definition of the ever-changing term “makerspace” that emphasizes community and sharing.

The book mostly focuses on answering the question of what a library needs to have in place to create a successful makerspace. Its 12 chapters cover a range of topics that help guide librarians in setting up a makerspace including planning, budgeting, grant writing, programing, and assessment. There is also a lot of discussion about the importance of engaging your library community when implementing a makerspace.

What makes the book practical and useful is that the author includes 17 cases studies of library makerspaces from a wide variety of types of libraries, including public, academic, school, American, and international. These case studies offer best practices for project planning, marketing, growing, and supporting library makerspaces. The case studies also help the reader learn which questions to ask when setting up a library makerspace, and they provide ideas for keeping up with new developments and trends in this area.

Makerspaces includes many useful tables and figures, along with comprehensive information about resources that support a wide variety of making activities like the type of activities that we typically think occur in makerspaces such as electronics, robotics, programming, audio–visual creation, crafts, and artistic pursuits, to some less common activities such as green-making activities like composting and gardening. The author also discusses ideas for programming for specific age groups, for mobile makerspaces, and for special events like maker fairs and camps. Finally, the book includes a wealth of background information in an appendix, which contains the results of the 2013 survey and a comprehensive bibliography of sources for more information.

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