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Infographics: A Practical Guide for Librarians

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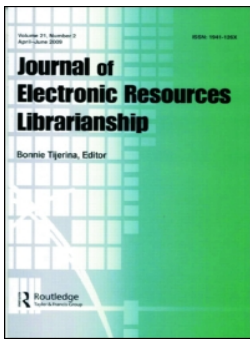
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Infographics: A Practical Guide for Librarians

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the overview of each language is necessarily brief, only 10–20 pages, a bibliography and numerous language-specific resources are provided at the end of each chapter. The book concludes with a glossary and additional resources for those who want to explore further.

The explanations of nine programming languages are tied together in an introductory chapter that begins with a short history of programming and an explanation of what programming, directories, and folders are, and what object-oriented programming is, for the absolute beginner. The recommendation that a librarian should start by loading Linux on an old computer may be beyond the abilities of a true beginner. A second suggestion is to start learning to program a microcontroller. Last, beginners are recommended to consider using resources designed for young learners, such as *Python for Kids*.

By this time, the readers may be asking themselves the question anticipated on page seven: “Finally, why should a librarian learn to program?” It is answered with several suggestions of what librarians can do with a basic knowledge of programming, followed by a sequence of “Steps for Learning to Program.”

Nine languages are sequenced according to which ones are considered the simplest to understand, beginning with Python, Ruby, and JavaScript. Open-source programs are emphasized, as explained in the chapter on PHP, which points out, “The bottom line for most library ... acquisition of new software is cost.” The middle section covers three languages considered more complex: Perl, PHP, and SQL. The book finishes with C, C#, and Java, explaining in the chapter on C that “You’ll probably never have a direct reason for developing an application or web service in C;” but that an understanding of how it works, or how any of these languages work, can be helpful. C# is used to program Microsoft’s .NET framework, which is “at the heart of Windows ... and pretty much everything Microsoft has produced in the last decade.” The contributor of the chapter on C# speaks plainly, opining that “The reason C# was invented at all is not perfectly clear” when Visual Basic also worked to program .NET. The ins and outs of the development of these nine languages can be interesting, but it may be lost on the uninitiated. Similarly, the examples of code will look intimidating to a beginner.

A more careful proofreading might have avoided the statement on the very first page that in “*The Adams Family*, Gomez was always pouring over his ticker tape.” One small error such as this will not prevent a highly motivated self-learner from making use of the explanations and examples provided here. A librarian who is willing to dive into the additional resources, or someone who knows enough already not to be put off by lines of code, might be able to use these brief introductions to get started with basic programming. At a minimum, they can gain a better understanding of the computer code that runs our library systems.

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Infographics: A Practical Guide for Librarians, Edited by Beverley E. Crane, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016, 206 pp., \$65.00, ISBN: 978-1-4422-6036-8.

Information overload is a real and growing problem as we are being deluged with information from books, articles, and the Internet. In her book, *Infographics: A Practical Guide for Librarians*, the author, Beverley Crane, has written a persuasive and informed primer on how to create and use infographics to market services, promote value, and showcase the accomplishments of librarians, by using “visual representations of information, data and knowledge” or what is commonly referred to as “infographics.” Infographics assist practitioners in conveying information using visual designs, by attuning the natural processes in the brain that allow humans to comprehend and retain information.

The book is organized in two parts, with ten chapters covering a wide range of topics, which detail the process of creating and using infographics to share information. In Part 1, Infographics 101, the first four chapters of the book center on laying the foundation by addressing important issues to consider

when using infographics. It does this by first answering the question, What are infographics? by offering a concise explanation of the problem of information overload, concerns about the complexity of communication systems, the inevitable time constraints we all encounter, changes in audience habits, the importance of visual processing, and a brief history of infographics.

Chapter 2, “Communicating through Infographics,” explains the “different types of infographics and their specific characteristics and when to use a specific type for a particular purpose and audience.” The author skillfully lays out the anatomy of the infographic by offering ways to think about the structure of an infographic, which includes levels, elements, and audience. Part 1 concludes with Chapters 3 and 4, “Creating an Infographic” and “Resources to Create Infographics,” respectfully. These chapters address the steps involved in creating successful infographics, tips for search engine optimization (SEO), and examples of infographics from other libraries followed by a discussion concerning graphic design principles and the elements involved in the visual design of infographics.

In part 2 of the book, Practical Applications, the author shifts the focus in Chapter 5 to “Teaching With Infographics” by providing examples of how infographics are used in schools and academic and public libraries to present data, teach students, and detail the step-by-step process used to incorporate infographics into learning projects in the K–12 setting. In Chapter 6, “Fundraising: An Essential Goal of Any Library,” the author stresses the importance of fundraising and using infographics to demonstrate the value of libraries. In the remaining chapters, 7, 8, 9, and 10, “Library Partnerships: A Win-Win Combination,” “Increasing Awareness of Underutilized,” and “New Library Services, Speaking Out: Creating Your Own Story to Advocate for Your Library,” and “Bringing It All Together: Creating Your Own Infographic,” the author addresses specific aspects of creating infographics including collaboration, promotion of value and services, advocacy, and the step-by-step process to create infographics that will inform, engage, and excite your intended audience.

The reemergence of infographics is important, and it is safe to say that they are here to stay. Crane’s book should become an essential resource for those interested in using infographics in the promotion of services, in fundraising efforts, and in the dissemination of information. It will not only pique the interest of new users of infographics but serve as a useful source for more experienced practitioners. The book will serve librarians of all types and skill levels. Infographics are multihued lights of information that can play a vital part in our quest to teach, inform, and learn. This book will greatly assist and prepare librarians of all kinds in that journey.

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Managing Metadata in Web-Scale Discovery Systems, Edited by Louise F. Spiteri (Ed.),
London, England: Facet Publishing, 2016, \$85.00 (paperback), ISBN: 978-1-78330-069-3.

Web-scale discovery systems are supplanting integrated library systems and next-generation catalogs providing library users with Google-like, single search box access to digitized content and physical materials from creators, institutions, publishers, and vendors across the globe. Although the expectation for search results to be all inclusive regardless of format or ownership has become *de rigueur*, equitable retrieval poses challenges rarely considered by users or in many cases content creators/publishers.

Managing Metadata in Web-Scale Discovery Systems edited by Louise F. Spiteri examines the growth of web-based information resources and the facility of existing metadata standards, practices, and schema to assist librarians in managing and providing access to these rapidly proliferating assets. Although each chapter in the book is authored by different professionals in the field and may stand independent of one another, as a whole they combine to examine the increasingly collaborative nature of working in