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A Review of "Drupal in Libraries"

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DRUPAL IN LIBRARIES. The Tech Set 14. Varnum, Kenneth J. Chicago: ALA TechSource, 2012. 133pp. ISBN 978-1-55570-778-1.

Drupal, an open-source content management framework, is an increasingly popular website platform for libraries and other organizations. *Drupal in Libraries*, #14 in ALA's The Tech Set series, is an essential guide to any library contemplating a move to Drupal. Aimed at information professionals with a basic knowledge of website design and architecture, *Drupal in Libraries* covers the basics of establishing a Drupal web presence, including planning, implementation, marketing and metrics, in nine relatively brief chapters.

Chapter 1, "Introduction," outlines the advantages of maintaining websites in content management systems over websites consisting entirely of flat files. The author details the process whereby his library chose Drupal over a number of other available systems. Also included is a welcome explanation of some unique Drupal terms, such as "content type," "node," and "module." Chapter 2 presents the pros and cons of hosting your own Drupal installation or choosing a commercial hosting service. Chapter 3, "Planning," discusses various considerations for undertaking a Drupal project, such as determining goals, assessing staffing needs, creating the site design, and developing functionality. Chapter 4, "Social Mechanics," stresses the importance of communication, both with the IT department and with other library staff, as a vital part of project management. Chapter 5, "Implementation," represents the majority of the "how to" content of the book, including Drupal core installation, theme and module installation, configuring and styling the site, and keeping content up-to-date. There is even a brief section on creating your own modules. Chapter 6 focuses on marketing the new Drupal site, both to internal and external audiences. Chapter 7 summarizes best practices for managing the project and launching the site. The next chapter, "Metrics," provides brief discussions on various methods of measuring the site's usefulness and of determining areas on which to improve. The final chapter looks at developing trends, including forthcoming Drupal versions 8 and 9. An annotated "Recommended Reading" section and a thorough index round out the content of the book.

Although helpful screen shots are used in many places throughout the book, there could have been a few more included to support textual descriptions, particularly in Chapter 5. I also found it curious that some information was presented in "sidebars" when it could have easily been integrated into the main body of the text. In general, however, *Drupal in Libraries* is a primary guide for any library considering a switch to Drupal; I wish it had been in print when my library moved to the Drupal framework in 2011.

Kenneth J. Varnum has been the Web Systems Manager at the University of Michigan Library since 2007. He has worked in a variety of library types, both in the U.S. as well as in Prague. He can be found on the web at <http://www.varnum.org>.

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