

## BOOK REVIEW / CRITIQUE DE LIVRE

**Library 2.0: A Guide to Participatory Library Service.** By Michael E. Casey and Laura C. Savastinuk. Medford, N.J.: Information Today, 2007. 172 pages (soft cover). ISBN 13 978-1-57387-297-3. CAN\$29.50.

Written by experienced public library administrators Michael Casey and Laura Savastinuk (Gwinnett County Public Library), *Library 2.0: A Guide to Participatory Library Service* provides an overview of how to implement “Library 2.0”—a combination of “constant and purposeful change” (p. 12) and “user participation” (p. 14). The book is illustrated with useful real-world examples. If you are considering implementing Library 2.0 technologies in your library, Casey and Savastinuk’s book is worth reading.

While the intended audience for this book is library administrators, particularly those in mid-sized to large public or academic libraries, the discussions on change management and on goal-directed evaluation of library services are certainly ones that every branch or service manager would benefit from reading. Casey and Savastinuk examine common library practices and suggest specific changes, via Library 2.0 technologies, which could fundamentally alter how libraries implement change, for the better. Detailed examples further illustrate and support the authors’ discussion.

In general, this book should be read sequentially, as discussions in later chapters hinge on the concepts described earlier on. That said, chapter 6, “Incorporating Technology”, contains good descriptions of the main technical components of Library 2.0 and can be read independently from the rest of the book. Furthermore, a detailed table of contents and an extensive index make it easy to find and revisit sections that were of particular interest.

Casey and Savastinuk’s central theses, the need for constant and purposeful change, and the need for user participation are introduced in chapter 2. Here the authors identify the fundamental differences between how traditional libraries work versus the proposed new Library 2.0 approach. The third and fourth chapters further illustrate the implementation of change in a library context.

Drawing on concrete examples that illustrate “Business 2.0”, chapter 5 examines the notion of the Long Tail, that is, the idea that the number of people who want something other than what you are offering is always greater than the number of people who want what you actually have. (To put it in library terms, the number of nonusers always exceeds the number of users.) This chapter goes on to describe how

some libraries have tried to reach these nonusers by changing the way they offer and deliver their services.

The main technical components of Library 2.0 are described in chapter 6: blogs, wikis, instant messaging and chat, podcasting, and social networking tools. Ways in which libraries can use these technologies are discussed and illustrated with examples.

Chapter 7 looks at the importance of getting buy-in from staff and customers and how to do so effectively. In the authors’ opinion, staff and customer buy-in is the most crucial element of a successful Library 2.0 implementation. “Maintaining the Momentum” (chapter 8) tackles how to incorporate changes into the daily life of the library and again emphasizes the importance of staff’s make-or-break role in the maintenance of all services, including Library 2.0 services. The concluding chapter first briefly summarizes the preceding ones and then provides an extended example of a library operating under the principles outlined in the book.

The appendices, of which there are three, outline a survey that Casey and Savastinuk conducted and refer to frequently throughout the book. In addition, lists of the Web sites referred to in each chapter, and of further resources (both print and Web-based) are supplied for those readers who want to deepen their understanding of Library 2.0.

Several diagrams and screen captures from the various Web sites under discussion are included. Unfortunately, these information-heavy images are too small to be read comfortably and so are of limited usefulness. However, the Web site that accompanies the book, <http://www.librarychange.com>, provides readers with updated links to all of the Web pages referred to, allowing readers to display and more clearly view illustrations. Author contact information, a comprehensive list of seminal library-related blogs and Web sites, and book ordering information is also available from this Web site.

*Library 2.0: A Guide to Participatory Library Service* is well written and thoughtful in its examination of one effective way of incorporating a culture of change into a library environment. Casey and Savastinuk’s book is a must-read for anyone involved in the management of libraries or who expect to implement any of the new Web 2.0 technologies in their library.

### **Donna MacLeod**

*Consumer Health Information Service*

*Toronto Public Library*

*789 Yonge Street, 3rd Floor*

*Toronto, ON M4W 2G8, Canada*

*E-mail: [dmacleod@torontopubliclibrary.ca](mailto:dmacleod@torontopubliclibrary.ca)*