

**Needham, G. & Ally, M. (eds.) (2015). *M-Libraries 5: from devices to people*.**

**London: Facet Publishing. 224pp. ISBN-13: 9781783300341. £69.95.**

Mobile technology is offering opportunities and challenges in the way library services are delivered, from changing customer behaviour to the new methods of service provision and content accessibility. Handheld devices now offer location features that fit well with mapping and location of stock. In its simplest form a mobile optimised website can put the power of the library catalogue or SMS alert directly into the customer's pocket.

M-Libraries 5 offers an interesting exploration of how a range of library teams across 13 countries, and across public and academic sectors, have adopted mobile technology. Edited by Gill Needham and Mohamed Ally, this collection offers 22 case studies harnessing the opportunities mobile tools and connectivity can offer. Studies included in this collection draw on research largely carried out between 2010 and 2013, and one might think this would mean the findings are irrelevant now, given the pace of change in technology. At some points I did become frustrated wanting to know where the library was now in their programme of innovation, however, the strength of the collection is that the studies remember the 'human' throughout and

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have largely focused on practical, evidenced-based assessments of using technology relating to the user, be that staff at all levels of the organisation, or students or public. It is this analysis about how people use technology and the challenges to facilitate use that is one of the most powerful aspects of this book and ensures this study is relevant reading to librarians in every sector, offering an opportunity to utilise the learning in your own library project. Therefore the experiences in New Delhi, Australia or New York can be applied to UK libraries.

The book covers four main themes. The first provides a strong assessment of best practice in using mobile technology, covering designing, testing and evolving mobile library websites and tools. The second section focuses on the challenges and strategies involved in embracing mobile innovation. This section is particularly powerful as it recognises the importance of staff in supporting the transition to using mobile technology both in academic and public library settings. Part 3 offers two interesting case studies considering how mobile information and services can support specific user groups representing global challenges – the health and wellbeing of individuals with dementia in Canada and using developing library services to stimulate Zimbabwean agricultural productivity. Finally, the fourth part considers the impact of mobile technology on libraries of the future. The lessons from this section are stimulating including simple methods to adopt augmented reality into library projects or the utilisation of GIS location features.

This collection offers a useful range of case studies and research for a student, academic, or a librarian applying the concepts to his or her project or problem. At times it would have been

useful to have an update as to the progress of the projects as some of the examples are several years old now, however, this collection's strength is that people are at the core of the research and therefore the findings are relevant and offer practical uses today.