Managing Electronic Resources consists of eight chapters written by five experienced librarians. It is an introductory book intended both for experienced e-resources managers and new professionals in all types of libraries and institutions. Although the book has an American perspective it is useful also for international readers interested in current issues in electronic resource management.

In Chapter One, the editor discusses the complex field of e-resources management shortly. He uses the concept of life cycle to take the reader through basic tasks associated with the acquisition and maintenance of e-resources: acquiring, providing access, administering, supporting, evaluating and reviewing.

In Chapter Two, one author gives an overview of economic issues related to electronic resources collections. Many of us are familiar with the challenging situation when the demand for having more e-resources grows while the acquisition budget is decreasing and prices are rising. We need to apply new cost effective ways to provide access to information (e.g. PDA, PPV, ILL, consortia), we must control costs and manage budgets more and more efficiently.

Reorganizing work flow framework is the theme in Chapter Three. The author of Chapter Four examines licensing issues from practical and historical viewpoints. He introduces a license checklist and points to remember about contract negotiations to help e-resources librarians in their work. This chapter has many similarities with the contents of IFLA Guide made by Acquisition and Collection Development Section Standing Committee (Key Issues for e-Resource Collection Development: A Guide for Libraries).

The author of Chapter Five writes about how to make e-resources more accessible and gives a clear general picture of the many ways to provide easy access to users. He also emphasizes the user experience; the importance of knowing your users when developing the best possible service for them. Libraries should focus on studying how their local users actually seek and find information.
The focus of Chapter Six is to discuss the process of gathering and evaluating usage-related data and using it to assist in the decision-making process of subscriptions. The author goes through processes and challenges of the nature of usage data, importance of standards, creating meaningful statistics, trends and reports and interpreting them in the local context and finally communicating this usage information to library’s stakeholders. He also gives practical advice and methods for gathering and organizing usage data.

The author of Chapter Seven writes about the change that the shift from print to e-resources has brought in the library workload management. According to her, the roles and responsibilities of librarians managing e-resources are still in transition and so are the staffing structure and job descriptions. Regardless of hierarchical relationships electronic resources librarians should see themselves as change agents and trailblazers. Staff working with e-resources faces constant change and challenges dealing with new technologies, legal concepts etc. and they must communicate, collaborate, learn and adapt with colleagues to find solutions and new ways to work. Communication and collaboration are essential ways that potentially can reduce stress and workload.

The last chapter takes a quick look at the future. Topics include e-books, e-resources as the primary service of libraries and organizational change.

“... there is too much to do and too little time to do everything they [professionals who manage electronic resources] would like to do, but after reading this guide they will have tools to assist them ...”

The purpose of the book was not to provide a comprehensive analysis of all relevant aspects of e-resources management. This book can be recommended to those who work with e-resources as well as to those who work with traditional print collections and want to study new matters. It is an interesting up-to-date introduction to various topics in e-resources management. The book was thought-provoking and gave some practical ideas which could be tried out quite easily. For me, the most interesting articles were Gathering, Evaluating, and Communicating Statistical Usage Information for Electronic Resources and Staffing Changes to Facilitate the Shift to Electronic Resources.

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