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Laura Solomon’s delightfully on-target Foreward sums up this book on libraries and social media: She quotes Avinash Kaushik (an analytics evangelist for Google), “Social media is like teen sex. Everyone wants to do it. No one really knows how.” (p. v). Solomon notes that social media is “more about building relationships than it is about promoting anything” (p. vii). This point is echoed in Walt Crawford’s Introduction, which focuses on the truth that libraries are at the heart of their local communities and that suggests that successful use of social media will strengthen those community bonds. Solomon and Crawford’s chapters set the stage for the remainder of the book, a series of best practices used by a variety of libraries.

The following eight chapters discuss social media from the perspective of different libraries using different social media tools/strategies and focused on serving a variety of clientele. Chapter 1, “Blogging for Readers” by Robin Hastings, discusses the implementation of a readers advisory program via a blogged librarian/staff reading contest. Hastings provides clear goals, statistics, and a lot of technical guidance on implementation. Chapter 2 by Angelinah Boniface, describes the social media efforts of the United Nations Library and the importance of getting that important data and material out to a wide variety of patrons.

Of particular interest to academic librarians will be Chapter 3, “Visualizing Information with Pinterest” by Cynthia Dudenhoffer. Dudenhoffer discusses the expected use of Pinterest as a marketing tool for new materials, but she then highlights the usage of Pinterest as an educational tool for an “information fluency” requirement for students at her institution, a very valuable section that other librarians may wish to adapt. She further discusses using Pinterest controversies as a teachable moment for engaging students on the issues of copyright.

Chapter 4 by Yongtao Lin and Kathryn M. E. Ranjit is specific to social media use by hospital libraries, but may be interesting to the academic librarian interested in seeing how issues of privacy are handled. Laura Horn’s chapter on social media and teens (Chapter 5) is notable for providing good social media usage insights as well as anecdotes related to teen usage of Twitter, such as the refusal of teens to follow adult tweeters (it’s not cool) and the importance among teens of balancing following/being followed on Twitter (it’s an indication of popularity). Twitter is the subject again in Chapter 6 by Kay Cahill, detailing examples of the use of Twitter by the Vancouver Public Library. Cahill discusses using Twitter to quickly counter misinformation about the library, and highlights HootSuite, a means for posting important messages to multiple social media platforms.

Jason Paul Michel’s “Successful Blogging Strategy and Design” (Chapter 7) offers a number of key suggestions for keeping a blog alive and well, including providing staff with a list of topics for discussion, and connecting blog posts about campus/current events to items in the library collection. The final chapter by Laurel Tarulli focuses on the implementation of a social catalog on top of a traditional catalog.

While the content will be hit and miss for academic librarians, this reviewer found enough insightful suggestions and solid advice to consider this book a worthwhile purchase. Recommended for any librarian investing in using social media.