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**Book Review**

[Digital rights management: A librarian's guide to technology and practice](#). Grace Agnew. Oxford: [Chandos Publishing](#), 2008. 437 p. £39.95. Soft cover. ISBN 978-1-84334 125 3.

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With *Digital rights management* ... Grace Agnew needs to be congratulated with an excellent, thorough guide for the practitioner dealing with the realities and complexities of digital rights management (DRM). The tone for a discussion reflecting sound academic awareness and a sensitivity for the needs of practitioners is set by her remark that "An effective DRM strategy will clearly identify and safeguard any rights that the organization has decided to manage, including, of course, those rights that are mandated by law" (p. 7).

*Digital rights management* ... is primarily organised around a core DRM model, in which the resource, the rights owner and the user are all entities of equal importance, and in which all three entities engage with the usage rights in a use event. The aim is to manage, appropriate use of a rights-protected resource within a DRM framework. Against this background, the eight chapters were developed. At the end of each chapter notes and references are provided. The book is concluded with an excellent and extensive index. Similarly the bibliography categorised according to chapter and sometimes sub-categories appearing at the back of the book can be commended.

The introductory chapter sets the tone, explaining that rights provide the legal and moral context for providing managed access to copyright protected resources in ways that protect the creator from exploitation of his/her work as well as the privacy of the resource user. In chapter two various facets of copyright are explored, including international copyright, the need to consider national copyright and practical steps libraries need to consider in dealing with copyright. The focus is on English speaking countries since other languages fall outside the author's expertise.

Various aspects connected to privacy are discussed in Chapter 3. These include patents, trademarks, moral rights, indigenous peoples, privacy rights, privacy and libraries, and privacy and public rights. In chapter 4 the focus falls on identifying and supporting the authentic resource, which is especially important in digital environments where resources can be readily duplicated and altered.

The greatest barrier to the use of rights-protected sources is the inability to identify and locate rights owners. Chapter 5 examines issues and strategies for identifying creators/rights owners to support attribution, and to enable future communications between rights owners and potential users. Metadata is important in describing rights, and is therefore explored in chapter 6 covering an overview of metadata, rights description, rights licensing expression languages, library use of licensing metadata, rights workflow languages and domain-specific rights expression.

Chapter 7 discusses various aspects of technology and digital rights management. These include DRM concepts, the DRM system, DRM standards, commercial DRM systems, emerging DRM strategies, plagiarism detection, and libraries and DRM technologies. According to Agnew (p. 4) it is critical for libraries to be aware of commercial DRM applications and to understand the technologies and their implications for the digital information commons.

DRM is a growing and very interesting field in especially the digital library environment. It poses many challenges to LIS professionals, and therefore *Digital rights management ...* is highly recommended to all LIS professionals and others working in the digital environment aiming to protect the rights of owners as well as users. It is also recommended to academics wishing to introduce their students to a clear well written texts reflecting practical expertise as well as sound academic knowledge.

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**[Ina Fourie](#)**

Department of Information Science, University of Pretoria  
E-mail: ina.fourie (at) up.ac.za

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