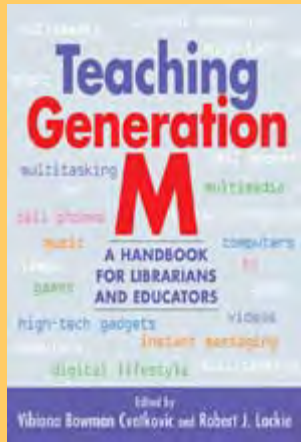


Book Reviews



Cvetkovic, Vibiana Bowman, and Lackie, Robert J, eds. *Teaching Generation M: A Handbook for Librarians and Educators*. New York: Neal-Schuman, 2009. ISBN: 9781555706678 (alk. paper) \$85.
Reviewed by Barbie E. Keiser

Editors Vibiana Bowman Cvetkovic (Reference Librarian and Web Administrator at the Paul Robeson Library, Rutgers University, Camden, NJ) and Robert J. Lackie (Associate Professor-Librarian at Rider University, Lawrenceville, NJ) have proved to be an excellent team. They have assembled an able group of contributors to this volume, established a format for each chapter that includes an introduction and extensive list of references, and provided an insightful introduction and conclusion to the work. While individual voices are heard, the chapters feel related to the whole, and the editors are to be commended for that. The work is structured around three questions. Part I deals with the notion of “Who are the members of Generation M” and what is their relationship with new media and technology. How does Generation M think, learn, and search? For me, this section of the book contained the most interesting chapters. Part II looks at the Culture of Technology addressing issues of privacy, security, and safety on the Web. Chapters within this section of the book deal with some of the major social networking tools and media available today (e.g., Facebook, YouTube, Wikipedia, video gaming, and WebComics), but somehow feels dated by not including some SMS and chat services (e.g., Twitter). In a year or so, there will be a whole range of services that might be added to a second edition. Part III outlines educational theories, practical applications, and best practices when integrating new technology into undergraduate curriculum. Here too, several chapters focused on specific tools for screen casting,

for instance, that might be out-moded or superseded by more effective tools in the near future.

The introductory chapters remind us that in titling the work “Gen M,” the authors could mean Millennials, but also Media, Mobile, Multitaskers, and Multisensory. They thrive on being connected, but often lack basic writing and other communication skills, and have difficulty with “higher order information skills such as analyzing and evaluating content” (p. 41). The collaborative and team approaches to learning developed in early grades carry over into adulthood where goal-oriented assignments directed toward future careers, flexible programs, use of technology, and “teaching strategies that are visual and interactive... appeal to this age group,” as do “group work projects and cooperative learning opportunities involving real-life problems and activities.” Active learning, as opposed to passive lectures “engages these students” (p.47). Educators must “modify their instruction to accommodate” these learners (p. 48).

These young adults may all have been born between 1980 and 1999, but they should not be thought of as a monolith, though none remembers a world without computers. Their knowledge of technology does not mean that they cannot benefit from skill-building in other areas. This is especially true as academic institutions address those who come from the other side of the digital divide where their schooling has been affected by their economic situations. The authors recognize that skill gaps persist and need to be addressed, both within the university environment and the workplace. Michele Kathleen D’Angelo, a school psychologist and adjunct assistant professor of English at Rider University, uses her chapter, “Gen M: Whose Kids Are They Anyway?,” to describe Gen M’ers as having led sheltered lives. They are confident, “used to acting instantly on information,” being less concerned with their own privacy than previous generations. Proprietary information does not hold the same meaning for them as once did. These young people achieve, and feel pressured to achieve. They tend to be “rather conventional” and sometimes a bit self-absorbed. They are great consumers, good information manipulators, socially conscious, and skilled at analyzing visual data and images (p. 97-98).

Susan Avery, Coordinator of Instructional Services at the Undergraduate Library of the University of Illinois

at Urbana-Champaign and author of Chapter 3, tells us that Gen M'ers do not appear to be aware that "the packaging of the message... influences the perception of the message" (p. 53). Her chapter, "Expanding Our Literacy Toolbox: The Case for Media Literacy," differentiates between visual literacy (associated with images) and media literacy (associated with media and its messages). "Media literacy skills empower students to filter the information around them, allowing them to incorporate the best of it into their academic and social lives, and reject that which is inaccurate, inappropriate, or manipulated" (p. 56). Gen-M students "need to be able to deconstruct media messages and critique the quality of information sources"; in other words, to master information literacy skills as well (p. 59). All of these literacy skills—visual, media, and information—require critical thinking: perception reflection, reasoning, and evaluation (p. 62).

Art Taylor, professor in the Computer Information Systems department at Rider University and author of Chapter 4 ("Gen M and the Information Search Process"), reminds librarians and educators that "the young adults of Gen M... often do not recognize incomplete fragments as such. They have a tendency to regard each fragment as valid as any other," and their ability to critically evaluate Web content "appears to be lacking." Gen-M'ers are frustrated by "the time it takes to find and evaluate content (and thus may avoid a particular research track if it seems too time consuming)... (perceiving) the lowest cost as the most convenient, readily available information with limited consideration for quality" (p. 72-73).

Dr. D'Angelo explains that for years "teachers have taught students how to learn collaboratively, and may have difficulty reading and writing on their own" (p. 99). Gen-M students have expressed dissatisfaction with teachers who are unable or unwilling to use technology, complaining about PowerPoint presentations with too many words on each slide. They like having slides made available to them ahead of class so that they can follow along without taking too many notes while conducting other activities during class, such as texting.

In Chapter 6 ("The Wired Life"), authors Karen J. Klapperstuck (Director of the Bradley Beach Public Library) and Amy J. Kearns (Program Coordinator for the Central Jersey Regional Library Cooperative and part-time lecturer at the School of Communications, Information and Library Studies at Rutgers in New Brunswick, NJ) point out how Gen M'ers manage to remain plugged into a number of different tools throughout the day, often seemingly simultaneously,

and how carrying on several conversations (live, telephonically, shared, and/or online) is not considered rude. Telling everyone where they are, what they are doing, feeling, and thinking is the norm. Their view of privacy is that they broadcast to friends and friends of friends, not to the world (e.g., on a Website). "They are creators and not just consumers of content... wanting to manipulate, remix, and share content" and live in a state of "continuous partial attention" ignoring "the difference between online and offline" (pp. 116, 120, 122). Nicholas Schiller (Library Instruction Coordinator at Washington State University Vancouver) and Carole Svensson (Assistant Director of the Library at the University of Washington, Tacoma) remind us that Gen M'ers "have played thousands of hours of video games," and teachers should begin to use games as educational tools.

Stephen Abram (Vice President of Innovation for SirsiDynix and Chief Strategist for the SirsiDynix Institute) explains how a "rich user experience, user participation, dynamic content... openness, freedom and collective intelligence by way of user participation, can also be viewed as essential attributes of Web 2.0" (p. 221). He notes a fundamental usage of Web sites and email where "information content (and largely textual information)" reigns "to one where the content is combined with functionality and targeted applications that meet the needs of society and individuals in context. It is primarily about a much higher level of interactivity and deeper user experiences" (p. 222-223). Abrams notes the advantages of "socially driven content and advanced recommendation engines and environments" when "dealing with a world of too much information and too much choice" (p. 223).

Chapter 13 ("Gen M(obile)") highlights a number of universities incorporating mobile learning into higher education, including the use of technology-driven "flash cards" (University of Pittsburgh)l video lectures, quizzes, and simulations (University of West Florida); and wireless networks that enable "students to send private messages to their professor... and the professor conduct impromptu quizzes during class" (Wake Forest University). In Chapter 14, Lauren Pressley (Instructional Design librarian at Wake Forest University) recommends "blending both useful technology and strong pedagogy... to create an educational environment that will be most effective for today's students. Educators need to adapt constantly to stay relevant and useful in students' lives, especially Gen M students who have grown up with the emerging technologies and now operate in a very different information environment than the one familiar to most

of their educators” (pp. 253-254). One impediment, she recognizes, is that today’s classroom looks much like those of decades past, while education theory tells us that individualized student-centered education is what Gen M needs to thrive in a global, knowledge-based economy. Ms. Pressley recommends hybrid learning approach that takes the best of traditional education and e-learning, but goes beyond. Hybrid learning allows “for more flexible scheduling for busy students, the ability to schedule more than one class per classroom per timeslot, as well as giving the professor the opportunity to think creatively about the restructuring of the course” (pp. 258-259).

The editors sum up the volume’s goal of encouraging those responsible with “guiding the next generation of scholars, artists, and leaders through the important endeavor of serious thinking” (p. 352). I’d say that they succeeded quite nicely.

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Laughlin, Sara and Wilson, Ray W. *The Quality Library: A Guide to Staff-Driven Improvement, Better Efficiency, and Happier Customers*. Chicago: American Library Association, 2008. ISBN -13: 9780838909522 ISBN-10: 0838909523 \$55.00
Reviewed by Celeste Moore

The Quality Library is a pragmatic self-help guide for libraries. Sara Laughlin and Ray W. Wilson have written this book “for library administrators and library employees who want to improve their libraries by improving their processes.” The authors focus on library customers and on the processes done at the library. The book is well organized and provides many practical tools for the library professional.

The Quality Library is the collaborative effort of authors Sara Laughlin and Ray W. Wilson. For

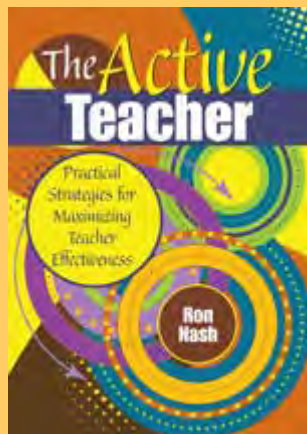
decades, the authors have worked to help organizations perform better. This specialized expertise has served as a basis for this book. The book introduces the concept of continual process improvement. Once this concept is explained, the authors begin to show how continual process improvement can benefit libraries and ultimately their customers. The book has many useful features including two appendixes, a glossary of terms, a comprehensive list of references and a useful index. The authors have also provided a multitude of worksheets, flow charts and tables to demonstrate the importance of process improvement. All of these resources help the reader better understand how library staff can plan and implement the process of continuous improvement.

The book is organized into six chapters that introduce the reader to the approach of process improvement. The chapters include the Continuous Improvement Approach, Identification and Assessment of Processes, Standardization, Measurement, Rapid Improvement Process, and Managing Process Improvements. Many chapters include visuals such as tables, worksheets or flowcharts. Real life library examples are given throughout the book to demonstrate the effectiveness of the continuous improvement model. This book can help libraries better understand and perfect their own processes. With this knowledge, library personnel can develop a plan to move forward while continually assessing their progress. The result promises a more efficient library with greater staff and customer satisfaction.

The authors have written a helpful book to start libraries on the path to continuous improvement. This approach leads to more complete understanding of library by focusing on library tasks and processes. This understanding can help libraries become better by improving each of these processes. Careful attention is given to continual process improvement in academic and public libraries, but the guide could be used in a variety of library settings. Even in times of budget cuts and greater customer demands, this book offers a straight forward approach to enhancing library efforts.

The book provides readers with a thoughtful coverage of the continual improvement approach as a means to improving library quality. *The Quality Library* will help libraries develop a course of action and become more proficient information centers. The book promotes an ongoing reflective process that will empower libraries to do what they do, only better. This is a title worth buying and adding to your professional development collection.

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Nash, Ron. *The Active Teacher: Practical Strategies for Maximizing Teacher Effectiveness*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2009. ISBN-13: 9781412973878 (pbk.) \$26.95
Reviewed by Mona Anne Niedbala

Written by Ron Nash, the nationally known teacher coach, “The Active Teacher” is a sequel to “The Active Classroom”, which focuses on creating student-centered classrooms and provides strategies, activities, and powerful presentation techniques for creating active and interactive learning environments. “The Active Teacher” addresses some obstacles to effective instruction such as inconsistent rules and procedures, use of lecture and of summative assessment as the only teaching and assessment tools, negativity in the classroom, and the lack of collegiality and effective collaboration in the school and classroom. The book emphasizes the importance of the three Rs, routines, rules, and relationships, and the importance of effective planning in order to address issues such as student achievement, positive classroom climate, effective instruction and assessment, and student motivation. The book is organized in eight chapters and an appendix. Each chapter ends with a “Final thoughts” section which summarizes the chapter’s ideas and prepares the reader for the following chapter.

Chapter 1: Positioning First Things First

The author talks about the importance of the course content, “what”, where teachers need to demonstrate command of their discipline, and of the teaching and learning processes, “how”, which offer students certainty, clarity, and consistency in an effective classroom. The importance of making clear and positively stated classroom rules routine during the first days of school as a foundation for efficient teaching and learning is emphasized.

Chapter 2: Investing in Sustainable Relationships

This chapter discusses about cultivating person-to-person, trust-centered relationships, a collaborative culture, and teaching to the strengths of students as keystones for efficient classroom management and teaching and for building a positive classroom climate. Developing listening skills by listening to parents, students, and colleagues are vital. Improving teacher-to-student and student-to-student communication and forging and sustaining adult relationships among colleagues and staff members in the school community ensure a positive school culture.

Chapter 3: Getting a Handle on Self-Control

The author provides a description of qualities of the most effective teachers who consistently display and maintain calm behavior, have self-confidence, control their own actions, emotions, and reactions, and solve discipline problems firmly, quietly, and without disturbing the flow of process in the classroom.

Chapter 4: Shifting Students from Passive to Active

As students process information and learn in different ways, differentiation and creation of a classroom culture which addresses the various needs of students who are kinesthetic, visual, tactile, and auditory are keys to success. Teachers committed to careful lesson preparation, planning, and continuous adjustment encourage students to move, work in cooperative groups, and chat. Student participation in their own learning provides opportunities for processing, reflection and discussion, and supports learning and memory.

Chapter 5: Harnessing the Power of Feedback

Feedback is connected to quality instruction. Individual feedback needs to be based on knowledge of student work and understanding of student’s strengths and weaknesses. The author suggests the use of feedback mechanisms such as checklists and rubrics as signposts, effective portfolios, or goal setting and gap elimination. Making feedback specific and instructive,

stressing the positive, and encouraging student feedback are also recommended.

Chapter 6: Balancing Formative and Summative Assessment

The chapter expands the discussion about feedback and compares the two forms of assessment, formative and summative, in order to identify which one is more cost-effective in regard to student continuous improvement. Summative assessments have limitations as quiz and test scores do not provide students with feedback useful for future learning. Formative assessment, by allowing frequent checks for understanding, opportunities for useful feedback and for applying knowledge, is more cost-effective and beneficial for building confidence, motivation, and for students' learning. Formative assessment allows building quality control into the system. Formative assessment should come before summative assessment. Teachers need to balance carefully the use of both formative and summative assessments in order to provide students with vehicles for improvement in the short term and in the long term.

Chapter 7: Enlisting Investment Partners

The author emphasizes the benefits of collaboration among colleagues in the school community as a key to success and teacher retention. Collaborative teaming and collaborative improvement efforts rooted in the shared vision and core beliefs of the organization should include the students. Cooperation at the district level and creating a collaborative culture are also beneficial and much can be accomplished when teachers, principals, and central office coordinators put their knowledge and efforts together in pursuit of continuous improvement.

Chapter 8: Ramping Up Relevance

In an age where students are inundated with huge amounts of information, the role of the teacher is that of a process facilitator by helping students develop 21st century skills such as critical thinking, methodical questioning, problem solving, effective communication, and making informed decisions as they prepare for the workforce in an increasingly complex world. Such performance skills assist students in understanding and making sense of the content they are learning. Teachers need to constantly plan, evaluate, reflect, and adjust their teaching in order to be relevant in a world where students have continuous access to instant information, have a tendency for action, and do not accept the sit-still traditional classrooms.

Appendix: Preparing for Day Six

This section provides advice for teachers who want to succeed and stay in the profession for the long run.

Teachers are encouraged to:

1. Keep an electronic journal during the course of the school year
2. Spend thirty minutes per week reading professional journals and books
3. Find time to watch each other teach
4. Schedule time to meet with other teachers frequently
5. Take time in class to have your students give you feedback.

This work would be an excellent addition to academic library collections supporting undergraduate and graduate programs in teacher education and school librarianship. The wealth of shared experiences, strategies, activities, and practical examples make this book a good resource for in-service teachers and for reflective practice professional development workshops.

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Nosich, Gerald M.
Learning to Think Things Through: A Guide to Critical Thinking Across the Curriculum, 3rd ed.
Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Inc., 2009.
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\$31.60
Reviewed by Barbie E. Keiser

Learning to think things through: a guide to critical thinking across the curriculum is a prescription for instructors and students who strive to apply critical thinking into everything they do, regardless of discipline. It begins with two prefaces: one “To the instructor” and the other “To the Student.” The first describes how the author, Gerald M. Nosich of Buffalo State University, has used the techniques in his own teaching. It highlights changes made to the third edition and contains a helpful note on the exercises that appear in each chapter. The preface to students reminds them that reading the book is not sufficient; they must “take problems or questions the text asks and actually think them out.” The book “is not a body of information” that *talks* about how to think critically, “it is about actually thinking critically.”

The work is relatively short—five chapters, each ending with a set of exercises that apply concepts from the text. Chapter One (What is Critical Thinking?) begins with defining the phrase and highlighting prominent features of critical thinking. What is Critical Thinking? discusses three parts of critical thinking: Asking questions, trying to answer those questions by reasoning them out, and believing the results of our reasoning. The chapter closes by listing impediments to critical thinking and using SEE-I “to make whatever you are working on clearer”:

State it
Elaborate (Explain it more fully, in your own words)
Exemplify (Give a good example)
Illustrate (Give an illustration, a metaphor, simile, analogy, diagram, concept map, etc.).

All eight Elements of Reasoning are covered in Chapter 2: Purpose, Question at Issue, Assumptions, Implications and Consequences, Information, Concepts, Conclusions/Interpretations, and Point of View. Three additional elements that co-exist with each of the others include reasoning (i.e., drawing conclusions on the basis of reasons), claims (judgments), and hypothesis. One of the best sections within this chapter appears toward the end and is designed to help analyze positions with which you disagree.

Chapter 3 helps the reader to apply critical thinking within a field, making logical connections and understanding the point of view of the discipline. The seven standards of reasoning are covered in Chapter 4—by far my favorite chapter:

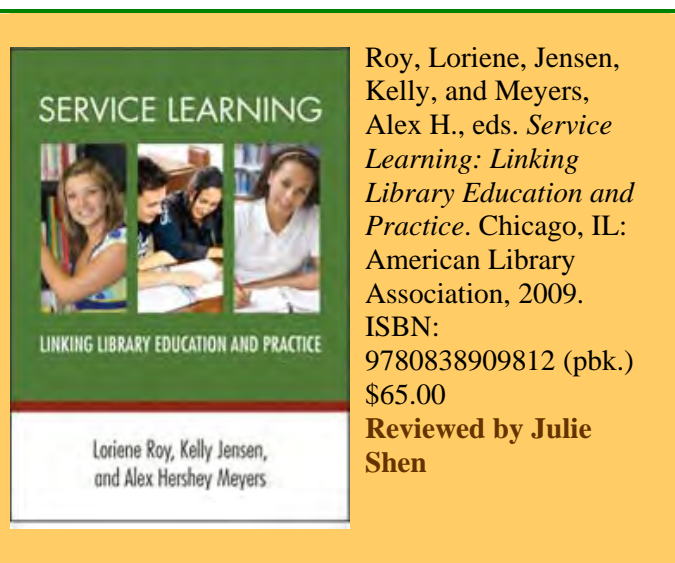
- Clearness
- Accuracy
- Importance, relevance
- Sufficiency
- Depth
- Breadth
- Precision

Putting it All Together: Answering Critical-Thinking Questions, the fifth and final chapter of this work, reviews the core process of critical thinking

The best feature of the book is the grayed-out text box that appears on nearly every page. These are designed to raise questions about what is being read in the main text. The author is constantly challenging the reader to think more deeply and revise his/her thinking, if/as warranted. At the end of each of these text boxes is a suggested action. For example, “write a paragraph describing how, in your best judgment, critical thinking is necessary within the subject matter you are studying.” Throughout the book, these text boxes force readers to think about what they’ve read and apply it to their own life/work/research.

The work might have benefitted by a better editor, but all-in-all, it's well worth the investment. I've already applied some of what I learned in this semester's class, and in reviewing homework assignments and final term projects, I see how my students have benefitted. I look forward to re-reading the work more closely and thinking about how I could incorporate even more during next semester.

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A collection of perspectives on service learning from practicing librarians, library and information science educators, students, and even an administrator, this volume is a testament to the impact service learning experiences can have on student learning outcomes and the communities in which they are practiced. The book opens with a history of service learning in library and information science education, and then draws examples from LIS programs all over North America, describing projects undertaken in a wide array of settings across the U.S., various parts of Africa, and on the Internet.

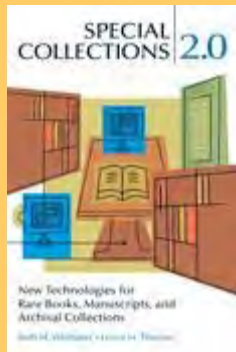
Reflection is a key component of service learning. A full chapter is devoted to the philosophical underpinnings of this type of learning, and practitioners each devote more than a few words to explaining their personal definitions of service learning, from a form of hands-on, experiential learning, to the more ambitious social entrepreneurship, in which students help find innovative solutions for community issues, to

community inquiry, where the university and the community act as partners in life-long learning. On this spectrum, a fundamental shift seems to be taking place: whereas in the past student learning was the primary and perhaps even sole focus of service learning, now community engagement is considered a key component.

The difference can be found in the projects described in this book. While many are traditional internships in which students learn on-the-job skills from experienced librarians, the most compelling projects are those that engage with under-served populations: a Korean community in Illinois, Latino communities across the U.S., a tribal college in Washington, LGBTQ youths in Tennessee, people with disabilities in Second Life, the Delft and Bellville communities in South Africa, and the developing island nation of Sao Tome in West Africa.

In addition to testimonials, this book also includes road maps and frameworks for integrating service learning into the curriculum, making it a practical read for all LIS educators seeking to incorporate service learning into their programs.

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Whittaker, Beth M. and Thomas, Lynne M.
Special Collections 2.0: New Technologies for Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Archival Collections
Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2009.
ISBN: 9781591587200
\$45.00
Reviewed by Elizabeth J. Bollinger

Beth M. Whittaker is currently an associate professor and head of special collections cataloging at The Ohio State University Libraries and Lynne M. Thomas is head of rare books and special collections and assistant professor at Northern Illinois University.

The introduction is thoughtful and thought provoking, covering why there is yet another “2.0” book, interspersed with quotes from their research and their survey of cultural heritage professionals. The book is not intended to be comprehensive on 2.0 technologies but focuses specifically on cultural heritage, special collections, archives and museums; focusing on the “dabblers” of technology.

The first chapter offers a variety of suggestions on the use of social networking services; offering descriptions of the services, how they could be used for professionals to create networking opportunities, donor communications, and discovering other related collections to our own. The second chapter covers the use of blogs and RSS feeds for use to promote collections, how to promote your blog once it is created, and even collection and preserving blogs. The material on blogs is basic and focused more for someone newly entering technology.

The third chapter focuses on an introduction to wikis and their use on both the public side and private side. Their example of using the wiki for coordination of this book and for collaboration was particularly useful. A specific example of a project using a wiki, The Edward T. Leblanc Dime Novel wiki, is discussed and provides a detailed view of how wikis can be implemented and it’s strengths.

The chapter “Media Sharing in Cultural Heritage Collections” offers strong examples of promotion of

digital collections as well as the challenges of publishing content on the web which transitions smoothly to the chapter on Access to Collections. The Access chapter provides a good background of the difficulties in finding special collections in the catalog and other search tools, making suggestions on the Web 2.0 tools to use to expose these collections. The final chapter, appropriately named “The Elephant in the Room: Digital Preservation 2.0”, is a discussion of digital preservation, mass digitization and copyright issues. Included in the appendix is the survey they conducted and a digital preservation primer, which includes a literature review and a software overview.

Special Collections 2.0 is a good introduction to Web 2.0 technologies for archivists and librarians, offers solid recommendations for software and standards, and provides examples of how the technologies can be used in appropriate and forward thinking ways.

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