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Book Review - Zotero: A Guide for Librarians, Researchers and Educators, 2nd edition

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Off the SHELF

Zotero: A Guide for Librarians, Researchers and Educators, 2nd edition by Jason Puckett
(Association of College and Research Libraries,
2017: ISBN 9780838989319, \$54.00)

Zotero is an open-source reference management application. It is useful for saving references, creating personal digital libraries for projects, creating bibliographies, and much more. It is freely available for download, making it accessible to anyone, unlike commercial citation management tools.

Zotero: A Guide for Librarians, Researchers and Educators is an excellent guidebook to all the nuts and bolts of using Zotero. Chapters 1 through 6 cover the “how-tos”: what Zotero is and why to use it; the basics of setup, saving references, and creating bibliographies; synchronizing libraries between devices; and sharing libraries with other Zotero users. Screenshots are included in each section, making it easier for readers to follow along. The features that may be particularly useful are the real-world scenarios and examples of how librarians and graduate students have used Zotero in their research projects.

The final two chapters are written for librarians on how to teach and support Zotero users. The chapter on teaching covers best practices for Zotero instruction, whether it’s a five-minute demo or an hour-long workshop. Sample class activities and assignments to use with undergraduates, graduate students, or other

faculty members are included as well. The chapter on supporting Zotero on campus describes how a library can add this service for its students: having a point person for Zotero, collaborating with IT on campus, and useful

examples of promotional materials and online guides that librarians can use to promote Zotero to students and faculty on campus.

One important thing to be aware of is that Zotero has been updated since this book was published. Any examples of Zotero for Firefox are no longer applicable because that version has been discontinued. Puckett notes in the introduction that he is aware of the potential changes and relies more heavily on examples for Zotero Standalone. In addition, he maintains a research guide for Georgia State University at

<http://research.library.gsu.edu/zotero>. It is in the process of being updated for Zotero 5.0, so readers can check for updated instructions and screenshots there.

Overall, this is an easy-to-use guidebook that could make you want to explore using Zotero for your own projects. Recommended for academic library collections and for academic instruction librarians who want to incorporate reference management into their lesson plans.

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