Enhancing Access to Information: Designing Catalogs for the 21st Century

David A. Tyckoson

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Enhancing Access to Information: Designing Catalogs for the 21st Century David A. Tyckoson Enhancing Access to Information addresses the problem when a library has limited catalog access. It discusses the various technological possibilities to help the cataloger once again cover the entire collection with his system. For centuries, the catalog has served as the primary access point to the information sources of a particular library. The principal role of the catalog has been to index and describe the information contained within the library's collection. However, despite all of the advancements in modern technology, today's library catalog system tends to index only a very small percentage of the library's comprehensive collection. The ability to expand the catalog beyond its traditional boundaries is now within our grasp, and this volume explores several ways to do it. The chapters cover a wide range of methods for improving access to information by building upon the existing catalog. Topics covered include enhancing access to existing records, adding databases for materials not traditionally included in the catalog, improving search software, enhancing the user interface, and linking a diverse array of library systems. Several reports come from libraries that have already taken the initial steps toward reclaiming the role of the catalog as the complete index to the collection. This inspiring book encourages others to explore new ways of improving access through the catalog.

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