

E-BOOKS AS A TOOL FOR SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION : EMERGING TRENDS AND TECHNOLOGIES

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Abstract

The online revolution brought about by the world wide web accompanied by other advancements in the Information & Communication Technology (ICT) is having a deep impact on the publishing industry. Readers are enjoying the fruits in the form of online journals and databases. Though the development in the area of e-books is not so rapid, yet people have started realizing its potential as an efficient & effective tool for knowledge storage and dissemination. More and more publishers are now coming up with e-book solutions for academic institutions and libraries too have started to develop collection development policies for e-books. The production, dissemination and consumption of e-books will increase substantially when certain issues regarding universal standard and copyright are resolved and we are in a better position to handle the e-books. Libraries will also look forward to more affordable and useful subscription policy for acquiring electronic books. At present there are several formats for e-books, many softwares available for e-book reading. Like Open Access journals, there are many e-books projects which offer free online books for reading and downloading which have been discussed in the present paper. The paper also discusses the commercial e-book publishers and the advantages of e-book subscription for academic libraries.

Keywords : E-books/ Standards/ ICT/ E-books Reader Software

1. Introduction

The ultimate goal of any library is to provide quality information services for complete user satisfaction through optimum utilization of the resources the library has. In order to achieve this goal libraries acquire, preserve and disseminate the documentary as well as the non-documentary records of information. In earlier days, the library documents were mostly in the form of "traditional" books with a designated format, i.e. a physically distinct creation made of a collection of pages and presented in a bound volume. Recent information handling technologies have significantly influenced the basic nature of traditional print-based libraries and have created electronic, digital and virtual libraries containing electronic documents like e-books, e-journals, etc.

Readers are already using e-journals and online databases on a very large scale. E-books are in the process of achieving the same status as of online journals and databases. Today, we find e-Books are having deep impact on the publishing industry and is considered to be the most important development in the world of literature since the Gutenberg press. This impact will definitely enhance in future when demand and usage of e-books will be much more than now.



A user viewing an electronic page on in eBook reading device

1.1 Defining E-books

Simply speaking, e-books are the electronic versions of printed books. E-books have been defined as:

- Online Dictionary of Library and Information Science [1] defines e-books as “A digital version of a traditional print book designed to be read on a personal computer or an e-book reader (a software application for use on a standard-sized computer or a book-sized computer used solely as a reading device).”
 - e-book is a term used to describe a text analogous to a book that is in digital form to be displayed on a computer screen [2].
 - An e-book is digital reading material that one views on a desktop or note-book computer or on a dedicated, portable device with a large storage capacity and the ability to download new titles through a network connection [3]
 - e-books are books in computer file format and read on all types of computers, including handheld devices designed specifically for reading e-books. e-books are as familiar as their print counterparts or as unique as the electronic medium itself, containing audio, video or live hyperlinks. e-books could be delivered by download or e-mail file attachment. e-books on diskette or CD-ROM are sent by postal mail or sold in bookstores [4]
 - e-book refers to electronic files of words and images that are of book length, formatted for display on one or more devices known as e-book readers and sold and/or distributed as stand-alone products. e-book readers are defined as the devices used to read e-books. These could be handheld or not, dedicated or not. The software that enables the display of e-books on PCs or other devices would be referred to as e-book reader software, even though some software companies such as Microsoft refer to their applications as readers.[5]
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- Ana Arias Terry's definition, which centres on texts with paper counterparts: "At its simplest level, an e-book consists of electronic content "originating from traditional books, reference material, or magazines" that is downloaded from the Internet and viewed through any number of hardware devices. These include PCs, laptops, PDA's (personal digital assistants), palm PC's or palmtops, or dedicated e-book readers." [6]

Hence, an e-book can be considered as a book in digital form or book in a computer file format. The encyclopaedia on a CD-ROM and books available on the Web are all electronic books. Like a book, e-book has a title and other features such as chapters and illustrations. However, unlike a printed book, an e-book is read on a computer, a personal digital assistant or a special electronic device or formatted for display on e-book readers. Users can purchase an e-book on diskette or CD, but the most popular method of getting an e-book is to purchase a downloadable file of the e-book from a Web site (such as Barnes and Noble) to be read from the user's computer or reading device. There is not only an improvement in the e-book reader technology but also in the emergence of some large-scale distributors of electronic texts such as NetLibrary, ebrary and Questia. The other newer technologies are electronic paper that is much like paper except that the text could be changed and audio books in MP3 format.

2. Origin & Evolution of E-books

The first printing press with movable type that was invented in 1450 by Johannes Gutenberg revolutionized the printing process by making it simpler and more affordable. Although the first hypertext novel was published in 1987 (*Afternoon, A Story* by Michael Joyce), electronic books did not capture public attention until the online publication of Stephen King's novella *Riding the Bullet* in March 2000. Within 24 hours, the text had been downloaded by 400,000 computer users.

The modern concept of e-books became common after Martin Eberhart and Jim Sachs both started their own companies and developed Rocket eBook and SoftBook, the first two handheld e-book reading devices. In 1999, the e-book industry was dominated by small U.S. start-ups like NuvoMedia (Rocket eBook) and SoftBook and many small, Web-based, often amateur-looking e-book retailers. Today great multinational companies like Gemstar, Microsoft and Adobe dominate the e-book industry. Nearly all of the major U.S. publishing companies have launched extensive e-book production schemes. McGraw-Hill, Random House, Simon & Schuster, Harper Collins and Time Warner all have extensive e-book plans. They have all signed agreements with Amazon and Barnes & Noble, the dominant e-book retailers. In a short span of time, a large part of the e-book industry has been brought into the global economy by some of the most powerful companies in the world. Everyday we hear about the new ventures, alliances and acquisitions.

Nowadays, there is an increasing interest in the use of e-books and other forms of online documentation to disseminate information and provide global access to it. Moreover, the tremendous development in the technology related to the production and

usage of E-Books is making them more and more popular. The factors behind the popularity of e-books include: advances in computer hardware and software, exchange of text and data electronically as a result of Internet, compatibility of World Wide Web with a wide variety of document formats, electronic files used in the production of printed books are now being re-purposed for the production of e-books.

3. Formats of E-books

There exist many standard formats in which e-books are available. Some of the standard formats are being discussed as under:

Type	Description
Image files	An e-book can be distributed as a sequence of images, one foreach page.
Rich Text Format (.rtf)	RTF files are actually ASCII files with special commands to indicate formatting information, such as fonts and margins.
Hyper Text Markup (e.g., Mozilla, Language (.html)	E-books using HTML can be read using a standard browser Firefox, or Microsoft Internet Explorer).
TEX	The TeX format is a popular academic format for technical writing applications in the scientific communities of mathematics and computer science.
Portable Document Format (.pdf)	PDF files are created mainly using Adobe Acrobat that provides a standard form for storing and editing printed publishable documents.
PostScript (.ps)	It is used for describing the contents of a printed page in a higher level than the actual output bitmap.
Exe-book (.exe)	It is a compiler that produces an e-book file that, when executed, produces a simulated book onscreen, complete with page texture.
DesktopAuthor (.EXE and .dnl)	It is used for the creation of digital web books with virtual turning pages, including brochures, e-books, digital photo albums, etc.

4. E-book Reader Software

E-book reader software are popular because they allow similar options like those of a printed book such as readers can bookmark pages, make notes, highlight passages, and save selected text. In addition to these, e-book readers also include built-in dictionaries, and alterable font sizes and styles. Some e-books can be downloaded for free or at reduced cost, however, prices for many e-books - especially bestsellers - are similar to those of hardcover books or even higher. Some of the most popular e-book reader software available in the market includes:

4.1 Adobe Reader



Adobe Acrobat was the first software to support Adobe Systems' Portable Document Format (PDF). Formerly known as Acrobat Reader, Adobe Reader is freely available from the Adobe Web site (www.adobe.com). It allows viewing, printing, and searching Adobe PDF files. The latest version of Adobe Reader 8 which enable the users to view, print, search, sign and verify the authenticity of PDF files. It also includes new document viewing options, advanced collaboration, increased time-saving ways to work with PDF files, and other new features to help users more securely and consistently communicate and collaborate using PDF files. Reader 8 is now integrated with Adobe Connect™ software, which enables users to instantly communicate and accelerate approvals with virtually anyone, anywhere, at any time.[7]

4.2 Microsoft Reader



Microsoft Reader (<http://www.microsoft.com/reader>) is a free software for reading e-books that works with .LIT files and supports ClearType Technology for easy reading on small PDA screens. This format is based on Microsoft Compressed HTML Help format. These books can be purchased and downloaded from large online stores, including Amazon.com. Its features include highlighting and doodling/scribbling designed for quick note taking, text notes and a search function. Other features include finding the last page you were on, your most recent page and a library of all the e-books you own. Depending on the book, there can be a cover image and images throughout the book. [8]

4.3 MobiPocket



The Mobipocket Reader is available for two platforms viz. PDAs and PCs. Through Mobipocket Reader for PC one can easily transfer the e-books from PC to PDA. One can build, organize, read and annotate entire e-book library, create reading lists, edit metadata, filter, browse, search, customize page size, full width display, 2 or 3 column display, touch-screen page turning, bookmarking, adjustable font size and colour, full text search or even use the autoscroll feature. [9]

4.4 DXReader



DX Reader is an XML driven intelligent reader solution to online eBook readers with a wide range of intelligent reading and facilities. With the help of DX Reader one can have instant access to the content along with the sophisticated digital tools including Bookmarking the pages, highlight text, flipping

through the content effortlessly, View illustrations, charts, etc. It also provides powerful and convenient digital aids like full search, highlighting, annotations, etc. that reinforce a gratifying reading experience. Additional eCommerce modules integrated with DX Reader include eSubscribe (to manage the access and distribution control of content through subscription agreements on an individual basis on time bound rules), eLicense (that allows the controlled distribution of bulk content to licensees for onward distribution to consumers), eCompile (that allows any selection of content to be assembled together and then distributed, purchased, printed or re-published as a new work), ePrint (to control the pages and quantity of pages that can be printed from any digital content), eCopy (that controls operations for copying and pasting text). [10]

4.5 dotReader



It's a new e-book reader (open source software) and documentation platform that is named after the late Dorothy Thompson, legendary foreign correspondent and broadcaster and one of the most influential women in American history. is open source — available free, owned by no one and usable by everyone. runs on multiple platforms including Windows, Macs, Linux, tablet PCs, and most PDAs. reads multiple document formats with the ability to add additional formats via plug-ins. creates a community of readers with embedded forums, discussion groups, polls, and

shared annotations. is simple to use. The built in plug-in architecture allows users to enhance its use by simply “plugging in” new features.[11]

5. Printed Books vs. E-books

Printed book	Electronic Book
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A physical object ■ Used by one person at a time ■ Requires no assisting technology ■ Linear presentation ■ Text and static illustration ■ Published commercially ■ Purchased or borrowed ■ Preserved for use in a library ■ Used independently outside the classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A digital file ■ Used by many individuals at one time ■ Requires multiple technologies ■ Linear and matrix organization ■ Multimedia content with text & graphics ■ Published commercially and privately ■ Licensed ■ Preservation undetermined ■ Used interactively in the classroom and at distance

6. Advantages

Categories	Advantages / Significance
Authors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ increased readership; ■ allows monetary return; ■ ability to control the rights to their work. ■ Authors are free to publish their own work bypassing the commercial publishing process.
Publishers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Paperless mass production makes publishing and distribution cheaper; ■ Potential end of the “out of print” era; ■ easy and multiple distribution channels. ■ Readily reformatted for independent platforms. ■ An inexpensive format for works that require color.
Libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ instant online activation purchased e-books; ■ lower production costs could lead to lower prices; ■ eco-friendly; ■ saves shelf space; ■ end of era of “weeding out”. ■ no lost or damaged titles; ■ able to create own texts. ■ Simultaneously share book (if networked) ■ Does not wear over time ■ No risk of damage, vandalism, etc on the pages ■ No risk of tear or theft
Readers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Speed, Portability, Interactivity, Print on Demand, ■ Personalization, Add Ons. ■ Convenient storing (bookcase fitting into one tiny PC); ■ less expensive (it appears at this stage of the market); ■ Instantly available through downloads. ■ Text can be searched, except when represented in the form of images. ■ E-books may be read in low light or even total darkness, with a back-lit device. ■ Type size and type face may be adjusted. Zooming in facility very useful in case of electronic map. ■ Can be used with text-to-speech software.
Classrooms & Distance Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Available via the campus network ■ Easily selected and isolated components (learning objects) ■ A vehicle for assessment and communications ■ Integral to class assignments ■ Linked to additional resources ■ Capable of customization and annotation
Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Economically and environmentally viable by cutting down on paper and ink production

7. Limitations

Category	Limitations
Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Future e-book technologies can be incompatible with the present hardware or software configurations. ■ Require care in handling and storage of the files, to avoid damage or loss ■ Reading can put strain on eyes. ■ Some publishers may not allow printing. ■ lack of awareness of software application compatibility for the readers. ■ lack of universal catalogues.
Publishers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Copyright violation may incur. ■ Limited format choice for illustrative works. ■ Restriction of availability of e-book titles for a longer period. ■ Cost of the hardware readers. ■ Limited availability of titles. ■ Lack of standard formats among products and vendors.

8. E-books Standards

8.1 The International Digital Publishing Forum (IDPF) [12]



The International Digital Publishing Forum (IDPF), formerly the Open eBook Forum (OeBF), is the trade and standards organization dedicated to the development and promotion of electronic publishing. It consists of academic, trade and professional publishers, hardware and software companies, libraries, educational institutions, etc. It provides information on the industry through statistical

reports, policy documents, educational programs and industry conferences. Goals of IDPF include:

- Developing, publishing, and maintaining common specifications relating to electronic books and promoting the successful adoption of these specifications.
- Identifying, evaluating and recommending standards created by other bodies related to electronic books.
- Encouraging interoperable implementations of electronic book related systems and providing a forum for resolution of interoperability issues.

The IDPF's work in standards development occurs within the structure of various Working Groups.

8.2 Electronic Book eXchange (EBX) [13]

There is presently lack of universally practiced means of protecting copyright for ebooks. Each manufacturer of e-book readers and each electronic publisher has come up with its own method of secure distribution and prevention of unauthorized copying. One of the application for copyright protection of e-books is EBX.

EBX, or Electronic Book eXchange, is a standard for copyright protection for electronic books, based on the World Intellectual Property Organization copyright treaty. The EBX Working Group is spearheaded by a company called Glassbook; its members include individuals from Adobe Systems, Book Industry Study Group, Coalition for Networked Information, Compaq, HarperCollins, Houghton Mifflin Company, Hewlett Packard, Hitachi, Ingram Lightning Print, J-Stream, Microsoft, RSA Labs, SoftBook Press, Philips Electronics, and Xerox.

Features

- It does not define a specific “content” file format— it will work with a variety of formats, including OEB and PDF.
- The system will allow for the lending, giving away, and (authorized) reselling of e-books.
- The public/private key encryption on which EBX is based is a tested and trusted technology.

There are, in fact, a variety of schemes for securing copyrights of digital files. This technology has been in rapid development ever since the dawn of MP3. For example, both IBM and InterTrust have working technology (though it isn’t designed specifically for the needs of books). It is hoped that the problems of protecting digital copyrights will diminish significantly in the next couple of years.

8.3 OpenReader Consortium [14]



OpenReader is an electronic format for e-books, articles, and other publications — e-texts, in other words. OpenReader will work on handhelds, tablets, laptops, desktops and other computing devices.

9. Open Access E-books Projects:

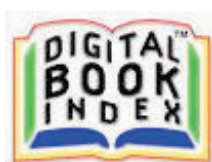
The Internet is a huge source of digital text. Many of them are in the public domain and available to the general public free of charge. e-book titles have gained popularity in recent times and most of the large online publishers now offer e-book titles for sale. There are several e-book titles available online free for download and a select list of sites offering free, downloadable e-book titles as well as others that sell them is given below:

9.1 Great Books Online: Bartleby.com [15]



The preeminent Internet publisher of literature, reference, and verse providing students, researchers and intellectually curious with unlimited access to books and information on the web, free of charge. The books are broadly classified into four categories: Reference, Verse, Fiction and Nonfiction. Indexes are also available by Authors, Subject and Title.

9.2 Digital Book Index [16]



Digital Book Index provides links to more than 130,000 title records from more than 1800 commercial and non-commercial publishers, universities and various private sites. About 90,000 of these books, texts, and documents are available free, while many others are available at very modest cost.

9.3 Free Tech Books [17]



This site lists free online computer science and engineering books and lecture notes that are available on the websites belonging to the authors or the publishers. Throughout this site, the terms that are used to refer to a book, include text, textbook, document or note.

9.4. Google Book Search [18]



It helps in searching the full text of books. Each book includes an 'About this book' page with basic bibliographic data like title, author, publication date, length and subject. For some books one may also see additional information like key terms and phrases, references to the book from scholarly publications or other books, chapter titles and a list of related books. For every book, links are available that direct the user to bookstores or the libraries where it is available. There are four types of views available - Full view, Limited preview, Snippet view, No preview available. Google has undertaken Google Books Library Project that is an enhanced card catalog of the world's books. Several major libraries including the libraries of University of California, University Complutense of Madrid, Harvard University, University of Michigan, The New York Public Library, Oxford University, Stanford University, University of Virginia and University of Wisconsin - Madison have included their collections in Google Book

Search. Like a card catalog, it shows to the users information about the book, and in many cases, a few snippets – a few sentences to display the search term in context are also provided.

9.5 Free-books4Doctors! [19]



Free-books4Doctors! is dedicated to the promotion of free access to medical books over the Internet. It contains 650 books which could be sorted by Specialty, Titles in English, French, German, Spanish and other languages in their respective alphabetical orders. Facility for email book alerts is also available.

9.6 Project Gutenberg [20]



Project Gutenberg makes the information, books and other materials available to the public in a format that most computers, programs and people could read, use, quote and search. The format chosen for these e-book titles is plain text or ASCII that could be read by most computers. There are three major areas of the library: light literature, heavy, and references. The project is ongoing and one can browse the library by author or title. One can download e-books free from here using the file transfer protocol.

9.7 WikiBooks [21]



Wikibooks is a collection of open content textbooks that anyone can edit by clicking on the edit this page link that appears near the top of each Wikibooks module. It is a small project that went online on 10 July 2003, and there are 22,410 modules currently on the site. Wikibooks's goal is to create a free instructional resource—indeed, the largest instructional resource in history, both in terms of breadth and depth, to become a reliable resource.

10. Commercial Publishers and Aggregators of E-books

10.1 Springer [22]



Springer is the world's largest scientific, technical and medical (STM) book publisher that publishes more than 3,000 new titles each year that are accessible via Windows, MAC and UNIX in PDF and HTML formats. It is the first STM publisher to offer the complete publishing program online and on one integrated platform. Springer's e-book Collection includes the following content types: e-books, Textbooks, Monographs, Atlases, and more eReference Works, Handbooks and Major Reference Works, e-book Series (LNCS, LNM etc) that are organized into 12 Online Subject Libraries. The collection offers high-resolution illustrations, exceptional

search capabilities and bookmarks, making research as fast and easy as possible. Flexible licensing options include institutional, individual and pay-per-use access. Reduced maintenance expense, sophisticated management tools and simple, user-friendly interface make the Springer e-book Collection a cost-effective, patron-pleasing choice for educational and corporate libraries. Available through SpringerLink's IP-enabled e-book gateway, libraries can offer their patrons online access to the most worthwhile books instantly from multiple locations.

10.2 Wiley InterScience Online-books [23]



Online-books™ from Wiley InterScience® offers librarians and information professionals flexible electronic access to thousands of Wiley books from a broad range of subject areas. These titles can be browsed by title or subject area, or one can search for a specific book title or keyword using the search tool to the right. Table of Contents and Chapter Summaries can be viewed online free of charge. Full-text of each chapter is available to customers with licensed access, or individual chapters can be purchased on a Pay-Per-View basis. MARC records are provided free of charge to allow easy integration into your library's catalog. All full-text chapters can be viewed or downloaded as PDF documents. Chapter

Summaries including keywords, abstract and author details are provided for each Chapter. It also provides sophisticated search technology that can search for a term across a single book, similar books, or all Online-books and have results delivered at the chapter level.

10.3 NetLibrary [24]



NetLibrary is a division of OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc. It is a collection of electronic books that are searchable and accessible through the library catalog. Founded in August 1998, netLibrary is located in Boulder, Colorado and is the world's premier provider of electronic books. It helps the

academic, public, corporate and special libraries to create a richer, more productive learning environment for their users. NetLibrary's eContent catalog never stops growing. More than 100,000 titles and hundreds of global publishers including many reference, scholarly, and university press books already represent a comprehensive inventory of trade, reference and STM content. NetLibrary's catalog has some particularly useful features- alongwith the standard subject, author, and title searches, keyword searching can be performed within the text of a single e-book or throughout the entire collection. It is regarded as the most versatile eContent provider for libraries and publishers as it supports e-books as well as eAudiobooks. NetLibrary provides a flexible and stable eContent platform that is positioned for continual rapid content growth. NetLibrary is a single source for full-text eBooks, eAudiobooks, eJournals and more.

Benefits

- Single platform for users to access all your eContent, with a simple, easy-to-use interface
- Anytime, anywhere access
- Supports your users in a variety of ways—provides access to content through Web site and downloads to portable digital devices, when possible
- Trusted content from the world's leading publishers—known for comprehensiveness, quality and desirability
- Automatic check in; no shelving; no lost, stolen, damaged or overdue materials
- Robust reporting facilitates collection development decisions
- Integrated with leading ILS systems, including SIRSI, Dynix and Innovative Interfaces

Features

- Multiple formats: eAudiobooks, eBooks, eJournals, eMagazines and eDatabases
- Multiple languages: English, Chinese, French, Spanish
- Remote authentication accessibility; materials are available inside and outside library, 24/7
- Collection development tools such as TitleSelect, TitleDirect, Patron-Driven Acquisition, Library Resource Center and more
- Full-level OCLC MARC cataloging records included
- Search functionality within and across all NetLibrary content

11. Significance of E-books in Academic Libraries

E-books provide new ways of representing content as well as distribution and selling of books. This new medium has created a new situation for the publishing industry all over the world. As a result, new organizations have started to evolve in order to meet these challenges as publishers and authors, especially in the developed countries, have started recognizing the potentials of e-books in the network economy. In terms of the libraries, the e-book environment provides the potential to provide its readers with instant access. A variety of opportunities exist for enhancing service to library clientele by combining electronic texts and reading devices. In developing an e-book collection, the libraries move to a just-in-time model rather than just-in-case model. All these advantages come with some challenges that are to be addressed for the effective use of ebooks. The challenges being faced by the libraries in order to integrate this new format of texts into the traditional library model include:

- There exists no uniform and universal common content format such as the Open e-book Standard forcing libraries to adopt all e-book formats.
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- The integration of e-books into acquisition and circulation process through the e-book publisher who manages the administration of the e-books on the library's behalf. The actual e-books files will be managed and maintained on this publisher's server.
 - The e-book information supply chain is not as effective as in the case of print books.
 - Lack of awareness among the main user groups, especially the teachers, students and the librarians.
 - Many publishers are reluctant to make their publications available in e-book format as it has an effect on their revenues.

In spite of all the challenges, e-books have given and will continue to give education new instruments to explore. They also serve as an effective tool for e-learning which include flexibility and convenience for the learner. Educators, students and librarians are considering the potential for using e-books in education. Although a relatively limited amount of e-book titles are available currently yet the situation is slowly improving and there are signs that e-books can become a promising resource in future education. E-books could help to solve the challenges currently being faced in higher education, including ever increasing student population, their changing profiles and lack of funds in the libraries.

Possessing an e-book collection can be advantageous to a library. Theoretically as long as the data is properly stored and managed, e-books are always available and accessible to your patrons. An e-book can not be lost, misshelved, mutilated, worn out, or stolen. E-books are available for convenient 24-hour access both on and off-site, which increases availability to those patrons who are not able to frequent the library during regular hours. Electronic texts can be searched and scanned in seconds to assist patrons in their quest for information. E-books can be formatted for devices patrons already own, making the product convenient, portable, light weight and easy to learn to use.

In addition, electronic content can be quickly updated so patrons and libraries have access to the most recent editions and updates. It is no longer necessary to wait years for a previous out-of-date text to be replaced and since e-books don't require paper, they are an environmentally friendly alternative to print materials. This in turn lowers production costs, which frequently makes e-books cheaper than printed books. [25]

Having an electronic environment for materials allows libraries the opportunity to gather statistics not normally available for material in the stacks. Libraries are able to view the circulation statistics for print materials borrowed by users, but how do librarians really know if someone is browsing and stumbles upon a useful reference, makes the necessary citations, and reshelves the book. Statistics for electronic items could be monitored and show a clearer picture of use. This information could then be used for purchase and retention decisions

E-books create an opportunity for libraries to preserve and archive material effectively and efficiently. E-books don't take up limited shelf space and won't deteriorate from repeated use. E-book vendors, such as Safari, supply MARC records at no charge with a link to the full text, saving the library time and money

12. Future of E-books

Printed books have always been associated with enlightenment, education, scientific and cultural development. However, computers and networks have changed the way of thinking and living of the present day society. As a result, a new information and network society has evolved. The development of e-book technology that is revolutionizing the whole book publishing industry has started having an enormous impact on the society. E-books are changing the methods by which people read, as it is easy to use and are rapidly becoming a viable alternative. It is providing growing advantages over the traditional printed medium. Several companies all over the world are working towards making electronic publishing the rule rather than the exception. With the availability of a huge variety of books, periodicals, reference materials in the electronic format, one may visualise the real birth of that paperless society which was predicted in the 1960s. The e-readers are still in the early stages of development due to the technical snags and the research is being undertaken to perfect an e-book reader, related standards and copyright concepts. In spite of technological, language and political borders, the book industry will be global, like much of the rest of the economy, with many publishers being part of multinational media companies and e-books, in one form or another will stay. However, the advancement in e-book technologies and e-book production should not be seen as a threat to paper books as the touch, smell, and feel of a paper book, its longevity and history are in our souls.

References

1. http://lu.com/odlis/odlis_e.cfm#electronicbook
 2. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E-book>
 3. Cox, Andrew and Mohammed, Heba. "E-books". Free Pint No.80, 2001. <http://www.freepint.com/issues/010201.htm>
 4. Adobe. <http://www.adobe.com/>
 5. Brooker, A.M. (2000), "All about e-books", <http://nzwriters.com.nz/help/e-books.htm>
 6. http://www.netread.com/howto/ebooks/index.cfm?article=the_ebook.cfm
 7. Ana Arias Terry. Demystifying the e-Book - what is it, where will it lead us, and who's in the game? Against the grain. November 1999. Available: <http://bibliofuture.homepage.com/demyst.htm>. Last visited 28/9/00.
 8. Adobe Reader: <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readermain.html>
 9. <http://www.microsoft.com/reader/default.asp>
-

10. <http://www.mobipocket.com/en/HomePage/default.asp>.
11. http://www.dpsl.net/dxactive_comp.asp
12. <http://www.dotreader.com/site/>
13. <http://www.idpf.org/>
14. <http://xml.coverpages.org/ebx.html>
15. OpenReader. <http://openreader.org/index.php>
16. Great Books Online. <http://www.bartleby.com/>
17. Digital Book Index. <http://www.digitalbookindex.org/>
18. Free Tech Books. www.freetechbooks.com/
19. Google Book. <http://books.google.com/>
20. Medical Books. www.freebooks4doctors.com/
21. Project Gutenberg. www.gutenberg.org/
22. Wikibooks. en.wikibooks.org/
23. Springer eBooks. <http://www.springer.com/west/home/e-content/ebooks>
24. Wiley InterScience Online Books. <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/browse/?type=BOOK>
25. NetLibrary. <http://www.netlibrary.com/>
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