

The impact of e-books on library services

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Outline

- Background: after a slow start – a rapidly growing interest in e-books
- E-books: what do librarians want?
- Finding out about e-books – the importance of metadata
- Integration of collections & e-book platforms
- E-book purchasing and licensing
- Marketing and promotion
- Others with an interest in e-books
- Impact of e-books on library services

A rapidly growing interest in e-books



A slow start

- Sweeping statements about the future of e-books made at the turn of the century
- Published in 1999, Microsoft's "future timeline" for e-books predicted that e-book titles & e-journal sales would top \$1 billion 2005. An estimated 250 million people would regularly read books and newspapers on their PCs, laptops and palms
- Roha & McGrath (2001) predicted up to 28 million e-books in use by 2005
- But in reality e-books have been very slow to take off in libraries

Library's global e-book survey Spring 2007

- Total number of respondents: 583
- Total number of individual libraries: 552
- Total number of participating countries: 67
 - North America 56%
 - Asia 16%
 - Middle East 3%
 - Europe 17%
 - Africa 6%
 - Latin America 2%
- Types of institution
 - Academic 77%
 - Government 5%
 - Corporate 6%
 - Public 4%

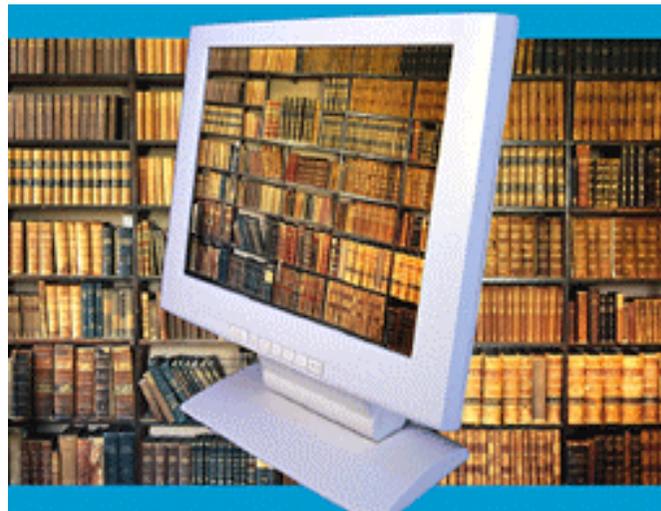
JISC e-book study 2007

- The report was commissioned by the E-Books Working Group of the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) to review the feasibility of JISC taking a more active role in the acquisition of e-books for UK higher education (HE)
- In order to assess the demand for e-books the authors undertook a survey of all UK HE libraries with an outstanding response rate of 68%
- 89 of the 92 respondents said they were either “very eager” or “fairly eager” to develop e-book collections and 37% thought that in 5 years time their book collection would be half print and half electronic

Outcome of the JISC e-book study

- **The e-book study identified that although aggregators and publishers are starting to make more e-books available, these tend not to be the e-textbooks and core reading list materials required by libraries**
- **The study went on to recommend that JISC take the lead and purchase a collection of core reading list e-books and make them freely available to ALL UK HE libraries**
- **Such a move would stimulate the e-book market place and enable JISC, librarians and publishers to explore new business and financial models**
- **JISC has recently announced a new project called “The National E-Book Observatory”. More on this later!**

E- Books: what do librarians want?



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E-Books: what do librarians want?

- Current titles, particularly e-textbooks and reading list materials
- Flexibility in choosing between subscribing or outright purchase
- Affordable charging bands and pricing regimes
- Multiple and concurrent access for users
- An easier and more systematic way of discovering what e-books are available
- Easy access – NOT lots of different platforms and interfaces

Finding our about e-books – the importance of metadata



Finding out about e-books

- No one single place – we urgently need an “E-Books in Print” (so to speak)
- Booksellers sites are improving rapidly as well as providing e-book platforms e.g. Coutts, Dawsons
- Aggregator and publisher sites
- Amazon offers e-books alongside print
- JISC E-Books WG has held meetings with Bowker and Nielsen Books who both include e-books in their databases but report significant problems in acquiring quality e-book metadata from publishers

Finding out about e-books

- Digital Book Index [www.digitalbookindex.org]
 - Meta- index for many major e-book sites
 - 137,000 title records
 - From 1,800 commercial and non-commercial publishers
 - 97,000 books, texts and documents available free

The importance of metadata

- Inter-operability and the standardisation of e-book metadata are really important in facilitating discovery, acquisition and access by librarians and publishers
- This is a critical message to relay to publishers. Ideally publishers should provide librarians high quality MARC records for all e-books – particularly for “bundled” services
- But even earlier in the life cycle, librarians must be able to easily find and purchase e-books
- Essential that e-book metadata can be easily integrated into library catalogues and virtual learning environments (VLEs)

What drives e-book usage?

1. **MARC records and OPAC integration**
2. Professor & staff recommendation
3. Position on library website
4. Word of mouth
5. Marketing campaigns & materials
6. Google and other search engines

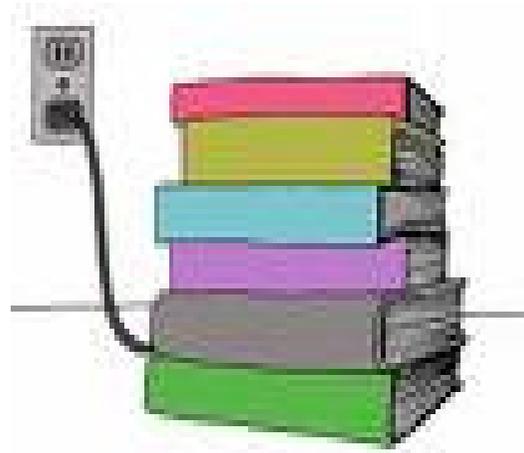
“One librarian reported that the use of 180 NetLibrary titles increased by 400% once they were identified on the OPAC with a direct link” (JISC survey 2007)

How do customers find e-books?

1. OPAC (catalogue)
2. Library website
3. Vendor provided site
4. Google
5. Other
6. Other search engines

Source: ebrary global e-books survey

Integration of e-book collections and e-book platforms



Integration

- How important is the ability to integrate e-books with other library resources and information on the web?
 - Very 81%
 - Somewhat 16%
 - Not at all 3%
- Including e-books in the OPAC helps in the integration process but it does not get over the problem of stand alone e-book services and different publisher/ aggregator platforms

Source: ebrary global e-book survey

E-Book platforms

- A recent ALPSP* report on e-book platforms concluded that “there are too many models that are too complex to understand” and that “much of the functionality available is not frequently used”
- Cross searching capability and flexibility in printing out and downloading were the most consistently valued attributes
- A future “wish list” would include: fewer, simpler models; better linking across different texts & platforms; more imaginative solutions (not PDF based)

*Source: *Association of Learned & Professional Society Publishers, E-Book Platforms & Aggregators, 2006*

E-book purchasing and licensing



Purchasing & licensing e-books

A myriad of options!

- Consortia deals
- “Big deals” (e.g. Springer)
- Individual title purchase
- “Bundled” (often subject-based) services (e.g. Knovel (engineering); Safari (IT))
- Subscription (e.g. NetLibrary and Coutts MyiLibrary, both with over 10,000 texts)

Consortia purchasing

- Evidence from the International Coalition of Library Consortia (ICOLC) suggests that consortia have been slow in offering e-books to their members
- Typically offers have been for bundled & aggregator services such as Oxford Reference Online; NetLibrary; Safari; ACLS History Books; Early English Books Online (EEBO)
- Follow the progress of the unique JISC “National E-Book Observatory Project”

The National E-Book Observatory Project

- £600,000 of electronic core reading lists materials purchased on behalf of all UK HE institutions in 4 subject area: business; engineering; medicine; media studies
- Selected by librarians in the community
- Available free at the point of use for a period of 2 years
- Usage to be monitored by deep web log analysis followed up with web-based questionnaires to users

Purchase by individual libraries

- Do we like the idea of the single publisher “big deal” for e-books? Evidence from JISC reports show UK librarians are not keen. But in North America there is some enthusiasm (larger library budgets?)
- Bundled subscription services. Some very good products on the market. But impact on library book budgets is considerable – no new money for such services
- Individual title purchase. Time consuming to find and still many titles not available electronically

Preferred methods of acquisition

1. Purchase (59%)
2. Subscription (55%)
3. Customer driven (24%)
4. Pay-per-use (22%)
5. Lease-to-own (18%)
6. Other (11%)

Source: ebrary global e-book survey

Marketing and promotion



What inhibits e-books usage

1. **Lack of awareness**
2. Difficult to use platforms
3. Difficult to read
4. **Lack of training**
5. Other
6. Inaccessibility via Google

Source: ebrary global e-books survey

Marketing and promotion

- The JISC survey collected some evidence to suggest that library staff & others involved in e-learning are not doing enough to encourage awareness of e-books
- However, also plenty of evidence of good practice in some institutions including; printed publicity materials; web pages; promotional emails; promotional events; information literacy courses; use of consortia marketing materials
- The Gold Leaf report of 2003* lists many recommendations on promotion and marketing, most of which are relevant today

**Gold Leaf, "Promoting the uptake of e-books in higher and further education"*
www.jisc-collections.ac.uk/workinggroups/ebooks/studies_reports.aspx

Others with an interest in e-books



Others with an interest in e-books: Google

- Google is spending some \$200 million on creating a digital archive of millions of books from top academic libraries worldwide including university libraries of Stanford, Michigan, Harvard & Oxford and New York Public Library
- However, the project is controversial. In Oct 2005 the Association of American Publishers filed a law suit claiming Google is breaching copyright and in a separate action the Authors Guild has filed a class action suit for copyright infringement

Others with an interest in e-books: Microsoft

- Microsoft entered the mass book digitisation market in 2005 launching their MSN Book Search
- Microsoft has joined the Yahoo-Internet-Archive project to be run by the Open Content Alliance, digitising public domain books. Microsoft is committing \$5 million for the digitisation of 150,000 books and Yahoo will pay for some 180,000 books
- In 2006 Microsoft struck deals with the Universities of California and Toronto, Cornell University and the British Library to scan titles into its Windows Live Book Search service

The impact of e-books on library services



Impact on library services (1)

- **Work flows & work processes:** discovery & acquisition much more complex and time consuming
- **Resource purchase:** decisions regarding bundles and subscriptions (expensive, ongoing commitments) involve more senior staff and more time commitment
- Sometimes pressure to acquire both print and electronic copies
- **Cataloguing** more complex: lack of good quality **metadata** from publishers/ aggregators; lack of metadata records for large e-book collections such as EEBO; additional cost of acquiring records from suppliers

Impact on library services (2)

- **Budget implications:** e-book subscriptions mean that the book budget for individual titles diminishes. Concern that a high proportion of the resources budget is committed at the start of the financial year
- Information specialists have less funds to select a broad range of titles in their subject area
- E-books are rarely cheaper than print and sophisticated services often come with a high price tag

Impact on library services (3)

- **Information literacy/ marketing and promotion**
- Librarians need to put in a lot of effort to exploit e-book collections. Different platforms need to be demonstrated; separate services need highlighting in multiple places (web pages; printed literature; subject guides).
- More time needs to be devoted to academic liaison to alert faculty to the availability of e-books and their potential for inclusion in web pages, VLEs etc



Clifford Lynch, The battle to define the
future of the book in the digital world

First Monday

www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue6_6/lynch/#17

“The most compelling case for e-books... is based on greater convenience and ubiquity of access, and somewhat enhanced use. The case for digital books broadly, as new genres of works, is about more effective communication of ideas, enhanced teaching and learning, and renewed creativity. While the first case is a good one, if the price is not too high (in social as well as economic terms), the second case is truly compelling and inspiring.”