e-books and public libraries: the story so far...

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UK public libraries and e-books: the early days…

• 2000/2001 - Market Harborough

• 2003: Pilot project, funded by LASER Foundation, organised by Co-East and Loughborough University. Hosted by Essex.

• Other projects around the same time – Richmond, Blackburn & Darwen…

• To explore feasibility of e-books in UK public libraries (but not about e-reference…)
The Rocket eBook lets you do all of the things you like to do when you read—scribble margin notes, highlight passages, bookmark pages. And you can search, browse and index references in ways that are impossible with paper books.

Put a world of books in the palm of your hand.

(Actual size is 5" x 7" x 1")
So, what is an e-book? We said it was…

- A book in electronic format…
- NOT the reader itself…
- Can be read on a multifunctional device –
  - PC
  - Laptop
  - PDA
  - Smartphone
Or...

• Content/software – Yes

• Device/hardware - No
Content/platform...

- Two main types of e-book service:
  - Download: similar to traditional lending library model
    - eg Overdrive
      - Buy individual copies of individual titles...
  - On-line access:
    - eg ebrary
      - (Usually) buy entire collection,
      - simultaneous multi-user access
And then –

the return of the e-reader…

• Kindle
• Sony
• iRex iLiad (but not for long…)
• Cybook
• And many more…

• Most use e-ink, to make them look more like print books…
And then – new multifunctional devices...
iPhone as e-book reader?

• More e-book formats becoming iPhone-compatible...

• Some e-books now appearing as iPhone Apps...

• Kindle ‘app’ for the iPhone...

• 1% of the population of the USA read an e-book on an iPhone in August 2009...
And then, the iPad...
But – formats, and DRM

• Still multiplicity of download formats...
  – Mobipocket
  – Pdf
  – Microsoft Reader etc etc
  – .epub

  – Complicated by digital rights management (DRM)...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>randname</th>
<th>HanLin eBook</th>
<th>Sony Portable Reader</th>
<th>iRex iLiad</th>
<th>Amazon Kindle</th>
<th>STAReBOOK</th>
<th>Bookeen</th>
<th>Polymer Vision</th>
<th>Astak Mentor / LiteBook</th>
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<td>Sony</td>
<td>iRex Technologies</td>
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**Picture**

**Supported Formats**

- PDF, RTF, DOC, HTML, TXT, FB2 (XML), CHM, WOLF, RAR, ZIP, JPG, MP3, DJVU and others
- BBeB (LRF/LRX), PDF, TXT, RTF, JPG, BMP, GIF, PNG, MP3, AAC
- PDF, HTML, TXT, JPG, BMP, PNG, PRC/MOBI, DJVU

**Exported DRM Formats**

- Wolf, MobiPocket
- Marlin DRM (BBeB)
- Marlin DRM (BBeB), Adobe ADEPT (EPUB/PDF)
- MobiPocket
- AZW (Kindle only, USA only)
- .stk?
- MobiPocket

- Wolf, MobiPocket
- eReader, PDF, HTML/CHM, TXT, TXT, HTML, PDF (non DRM), PRC/MOBI, JPG, GIF, PNG, MP3, AAC
- eReader and Adobe (?) on Mentor, but MobiPocket on LiteBook
Download Best Selling Audio Books
Dazed and confused...

• Public library users understandably perplexed –

• iPhone/iPad/iPod

  • are compatible with library e-audio downloads
  • are compatible with retail .epub e-books and other apps
  • NOT compatible with library .epub e-books, due to DRM...
UK Audience growing...and more demanding...?

• 4% percent of British people have read an e-book in the past month but the majority of them spent nothing on the title...

• Users of e-book devices rated the range and quality of books available to download as the least satisfying aspect of owning a device...

YouGov Survey July 2009
Now - Widening range of suppliers for libraries…

• MyiLibrary – 100,000 titles from Ingram, 1000 more each week…

• Askews…

• Dawsons…
Still lots of questions for public libraries…

• Audience
  • remote...? mobile...?
  • both...?
  • in library?

• Formats? Platforms?
• Lend Devices...?
And still more...

- Integration with Library Management System – yes/no/how?
- Authentication…
- Security…
- Support –
  - “I’ve got an ebx.etd file and I don’t know what to do with it..”
  - “Should I be using Adobe 8?”
- No sense of humor…
- Promotion?
And – to charge or not to charge...?

**Proposal 34:** Government expects e-books to be loaned for free. Government will under section 8(2)(b) of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, make an (affirmative) Order preventing libraries from charging for e-books lending of any sort including remotely.
But then…

• ‘In a recent speech on Libraries, Ed Vaizey, the Culture Minister, failed to refer to e-books.

• His office told the Financial Times:
  – The Minister “would like to understand more about the different views of stakeholders before making any decisions about the question of e-books in libraries.”

  – Esther Bintliff Financial Times 23.7.10
Currently in Essex …

- Variety of services available remotely 24/7
- Added Overdrive e-audio December 2008
- Added Bloomsbury 2009
- Added WF Howes audio 2010
- More suppliers… Ingram, Askews…?
- Good range of content
- Readable on a variety of platforms – PC, Mac, PDA, phone…
  (But – not all readable on all… except PC/laptops)
- Integrated into main library offer…
Demand becomes expectation...