Electronic Books in Libraries: 
An Annotated Bibliography

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Introduction and Scope

The following annotated bibliography addresses the use of electronic books (e-books) within libraries. The articles address their use within public and academic libraries. Topics addressed include the perceived advantages and disadvantages of e-books versus print books, from the perspective of users, students, professors, and librarians. Other topics discussed include the licensing, rights management, and purchasing models for e-books within library systems. All of the referenced articles have been published since 2003 to ensure some level of currency in a technological area that is changing so rapidly.

Description

E-books can have varied definitions depending on the breadth of materials considered and rapidly-changing technology that provide us with new definitions to consider (Soules, 2008, p. 8). For the purposes of this annotated bibliography, the definition of e-books is considered in broad terms to be “the content of a published book made available to the reader in electronic format” (McKnight et al., 2003, p. 235). These formats could include a document that can be read on a PC, downloaded and read on a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA), available on CD-ROM or DVD, provided on a web site, or contained on an electronic reading device such as a Kindle. For the purposes of this discussion, the definition of e-books does not include e-journals which have been institutionalized within the research and academic communities for a longer period of time.

Summary of Findings

For years, e-books have had a roller-coaster ride through popularity. Since the initial concept of placing the text of a book on an electronic device to be read by users, there have been a number of surges in the popularity of e-books, but few that seem to have taken hold for popular use. However, as technologies, and general populace comfort with technologies, increases, e-books become more and more prevalent in our
society. As these technologies become more widely used, in order to be successful and meet the needs of users, there will be a great need for addressing the issues associated with their use.

In general, the research shows similar results when investigating the usage and preferences for e-books versus print books. A common advantage of e-books was considered to be portability, or the ability to access multiple titles on one device, without carrying around a pile of books. Another advantage was the ability to access e-books anytime, anyplace, anywhere, without constraints that would be placed on users by physical libraries and bookstores. However, there is still a strong preference for print books. Gregory (2008) points to a study on e-books within an academic library where 66% of users still show a preference for print books (p. 269). In many instances this preference seems to be based on emotional attachments to print books, the ability to curl up with a book on the couch or take it into the bath, as well as the tactile experience of reading a print book (Dearnley et al., 2004, p. 179). Shelburne (2009) points out that while e-book usage is increasing at the University of Illinois, users still feel that print books are better for leisure reading, or reading a book from cover to cover (p. 64 – 65).

There have been several studies and pilot programs associated with e-book usage at public libraries. When these studies utilized specialty electronic reading devices or PDAs, there were definite advantages seen in the backlit screens, small size, and portability for multiple titles. However, the emotional attachment to print books described above was still largely evident, as well as frustration with battery life and screen size. Institutional issues associated with the use of e-books were maintenance of the devices, varying licensing and purchasing models, mechanisms for cataloging and loaning out the e-book collections, and potential replacement costs for electronic readers.

Overall, usage within academic libraries, and research in this area, is more common that within public libraries. However, there are still challenges to successfully incorporating e-books into academic university libraries. As Connaway et al. (2008) points out, there are consistent themes in the issues with adoption of e-books within
academic libraries. Some of these issues include lack of standards for both hardware and software and the ability to easily locate and access the e-books. While students like the ability to access the material from anywhere at any time, and print out just the pages that interest them, they struggle with navigating the varying systems and reading off a screen. As Gregory (2008) points out, most students tend to read just sections of e-books for scholarly purposes, supporting the “use, not read” mentality currently associated with academic e-book usage (p. 268). As Carlock et al. (2008) discovered when studying a focus group of faculty, academic faculty is still cautious when it comes to using e-books within their classes, citing issues with reliability, accessibility, and the perceived loss of content associated with graphics (p. 250 - 251).

Research associated with e-book usage for both academic and public libraries raise a number of issues related to the administration of e-book collections in a library setting. As much of the literature points out, currently there are multiple purchasing and licensing models which make it difficult for libraries to navigate the options and the copyright issues to provide the best solution for their patrons. As Algenio et al. (2005) propose, there needs to be language in e-book licensing that addresses standards, technologies, subscription models, archiving, and other key library issues (p. 121). Without these, libraries are in danger of inadvertently making inappropriate decisions for their collections without recourse. Potentially, a Digital Lending Right (DLR) which would be a standard licensing scheme for library use of e-books may help to address many of these questions and the current confusion that exists (Algenio et al., 2005, p. 125).

There is currently a wealth of literature addressing e-books within libraries, but as their use continues to grow and technologies continue to change, there will be a need for additional in-depth research. This research will most likely need to focus on many of the administrative issues associated with e-book usage in libraries including the purchasing, licensing, maintaining, cataloging, and archiving of e-book collections. These efforts will need to be looked at in concert with the ways that patrons want to use e-books and incorporate them into their reading experiences. The two will need to be
looked at together to provide a comprehensive view of e-books and their place within our academic and public libraries.

Will e-books succeed? And will they find a place within our libraries? As Gall (2005) points out, e-books do not need to replace print books, they both have their place in a “broader culture of information” (p. 27). For them to find their place within our libraries, librarians and users will need to help publishers in defining the concept of fair-use for e-books. As discussed by Berube (2005), print books are currently the “foundation of a sharing culture” with libraries at the center of that sharing (p. 15). With appropriate e-book licensing and digital rights management, e-books can take their appropriate place within that same sharing culture.
Bibliography
Entry 1:

Abstract: As e-books settle into the academic market, the relationship between publishers, vendors, and libraries grows more complex. This article highlights how licenses, which govern this business affair, are no exception. From aggregators to individual publishers, from large STM companies to small societies, e-book enterprises must acknowledge library values in order to remain economically viable. For the benefit of all parties involved, new and better ways of balancing the profit-driven goal of selling e-books and the educational benefit of lending e-books need to be negotiated. In an environment where communication is encouraged, flexible licenses and subscription models can balance these issues.

Annotation: Examines the issues associated with licensing e-books in an academic library setting. Balancing the desire of publishers to make a profit with the charter of libraries to share information is discussed. A wide variety of issues related to library use of e-books are examined including usage rights, fee structures, technology obsolescence, archiving, company solvency, and content obsolescence. The concept of a Digital Lending Right (DLR), a “publicly-funded, collectively-administered, blanket licensing scheme for noncommercial, private use of digital works”, is introduced.

Search Strategy: I found this article by browsing through the references at the end of *Cutting Edge Books: The Impact of Digital Books on Public Library Acquisitions* by Lisa Taylor. Those reference titles that seemed most recent and most applicable to my topic area I then noted for further investigation. I found the article by going to Drexel’s Hagerty Library e-Journal page at
http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default and entering the name of the journal into the search field, clicking on the title of the journal, and then entering the year, volume, and issue into the SFX Full Text search to retrieve the article.

Database: N/A
Method of Searching: Citation Searching
Search String: N/A

Entry 2:

Abstract:
**Purpose** – Aims to present a background to the use of Electronic Resources, especially e-books, in public libraries, which appears to threaten some basic activities that define a reading culture dependent on the print book.

**Design/methodology/approach** – There are initiatives afoot which are working to integrate e-books into the culture and process of resource sharing. This paper reviews some of the issues with e-books, and specifically how the Co-East partnership proposes to contribute to the initiatives concerned with improving accessibility.

**Findings** – It is important that public libraries do take that first step in implementing an e-books service and take care in its promotion. Their traditional role, after all, is providing the bridge between rights holders in the public and, with the advent of “disruptive technology”, this role is more crucial than ever.

**Annotation:** Focuses on the use of e-books in public libraries within the framework of paper books traditionally having been the foundation of a “sharing culture”. Discussions of the impact of current Digital Rights Management (DRM) activities and their impact on
the ability to effectively deploy e-books in public library systems are included. Includes discussions of the role of public libraries as intermediaries between the public and those who hold the rights to published works with responsibilities to drive the implementation of e-book library usage.

**Search Strategy:** I found this article by browsing through the references at the end of *eBook Loans: an e-twist on a classic interlending service* by Bronwen Woods and Michael Ireland. Those reference titles that seemed most recent and most applicable to my topic area I then noted for further investigation. I found the article by going to Drexel’s Hagerty Library e-Journal page at [http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default](http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default) and entering the name of the journal into the search field, clicking on the title of the journal, and then entering the year, volume, and issue into the SFX Full Text search to retrieve the article.

**Database:** N/A

**Method of Searching:** Citation Searching

**Search String:** N/A

**Entry 3:**

**Abstract:** Improvements in e-book technology, national and international digitalization projects, and a renewed interest by readers and libraries refueled attention on electronic books. To gauge the degree of their popularity among special, academic, and public libraries, the author posted a questionnaire to various library-related listservs querying respondents on their experiences with e-books, including: collection size, titles,
popularity, maintenance, digital rights management problems, technology needs, promotional efforts, viability concerns, acquisition and cataloging issues. Today, special, academic, and public libraries are utilizing e-book technology to facilitate information finding as well as to expand collections while reducing costs. To maximize the use of e-books, librarians must adopt an active role in shaping the development of the technology as well as negotiate licenses and pricing models that are advantageous to all libraries.

**Annotation:** Discusses the results of a survey done of academic, public, and special libraries focused on their experiences with e-books. E-books were considered to be useful largely for reference work versus fiction reading and were seen to decrease costs, especially for academic and special libraries. Common issues with e-books were considered to center on issues of standardization. Standardization of technologies, pricing models, licensing schemes, and mechanisms for updating library catalogs were all areas requiring focus. Publicity activities for libraries were seen as a key factor in the successful roll-out of e-books to the user populations.

**Search Strategy:** I found this article by performing the search in Dialog as outlined below. I chose the Library Literature and Information Science database for my initial searches due to its focus on literature related to library science topics. Once I had completed the search, I browsed through the full listings of the results to find those that seemed to be most applicable to the topic of this annotated bibliography. Once I had noted the articles I wanted to use, I found the full-text of the article by going to Drexel’s Hagerty Library e-Journal page at [http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default](http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default) and entering the name of the journal into the search field, clicking on the title of the journal, and then entering the
year, volume, and issue into the SFX Full Text search to retrieve the article.

**Database:**
Library Lit. & Info. Science [Dialog]

**Method of Searching:**
Keyword search

**Search String:**
s ‘ELECTRONIC BOOK FAIR’:‘ELECTRONIC BOOKS’ and py=2005:2009 and (libraries or library)
s s1/eng
rd s2

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**Entry 4:**


**Abstract:**

**Purpose** – The purpose of this paper is to describe how, in the spring of 2007, Arizona State University Libraries held a focus group of selected faculty to discover their perceptions and use of electronic books (e-books) in their research and teaching.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The services of the Institute of Social Sciences Research were employed to recruit and moderate the focus group. Major themes explored were: use of e-books as textbooks; use of e-books for personal research; comparison between e-books and print; disciplinary differences in perceptions of e-books; and motivators for future use.

**Findings** – Overall, the focus group revealed that faculty had generally unsatisfactory experiences in using e-books in their research and teaching owing to the unreliability of access, lack of manipulability, and the steep learning curve of the various interfaces. However, most faculty agreed that e-books would be a very viable and useful alternative if these issues were resolved.
Annotation: Discusses the results of a focus group consisting of academic faculty at Arizona State University. The goal of this study was to better understand faculty’s perceptions related to the use of e-books in an academic setting. This study is unique in its focus on the perceptions of faculty alone. Interesting findings include faculty concerns related to reliability in accessibility of e-books if they were to be used as textbooks, as well as concerns related to the loss of graphic content. The ability to write notes, highlight, and otherwise manipulate or mark-up e-books was seen as a desired improvement.

Search Strategy: I found this article by performing the search in Dialog as outlined below. I chose the Library Literature and Information Science database for my initial searches due to its focus on literature related to library science topics. Once I had completed the search, I browsed through the full listings of the results to find those that seemed to be most applicable to the topic of this annotated bibliography. Once I had noted the articles I wanted to use, I found the full-text of the article by going to Drexel’s Hagerty Library e-Journal page at http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default and entering the name of the journal into the search field, clicking on the title of the journal, and then entering the year, volume, and issue into the SFX Full Text search to retrieve the article.

Database: Library Lit. & Info. Science [Dialog]
Method of Searching: Keyword search
Search String: s ‘ELECTRONIC BOOK FAIR’;‘ELECTRONIC BOOKS’ and py=2005:2009 and (libraries or library)
s s1/eng
rd s2
Entry 5:

**Abstract:** In order to understand the patterns of use of electronic books, total NetLibrary usage for one year for five academic institutions was collected. Ranked use by number of titles closely fit the power curve, a model known to describe modern developments such as airport hubs and Internet links. A chi-square test of independence compared subject use by library and showed a modest institutional affect. Subjects were ranked by popularity. Computers, technology, and specific sciences were more popular than traditional social sciences and humanities. Implications for acquisition decisions are reviewed.

**Annotation:** Examines the use of e-books across five universities in the United States over a period of one year. As is true for print books and journals, this study showed that e-books experience small clusters of high use, with most titles having low use. The ranked usage was found to fit a power curve. Results propose that the subject matter of e-books makes a difference on usage, with technology books having the greatest usage, and humanity books having the least.

**Search Strategy:** I found this article by browsing through the references at the end of *Assessing e-books: Taking a closer look at e-book statistics* by Nancy Sprague and Ben Hunter. Those reference titles that seemed most recent and most applicable to my topic area I then noted for further investigation. I found the article by going to Drexel’s Hagerty Library e-Journal page at [http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default](http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default) and entering the name of the journal into the search field,
clicking on the title of the journal, and then entering the year, volume, and issue into the SFX Full Text search to retrieve the article.

**Database:** N/A  
**Method of Searching:** Citation Searching  
**Search String:** N/A

**Entry 6:**

**Abstract:** An examination of the literature published about electronic books (e-books) between 2000-2007 helps to determine the factors that may have influenced academic e-book offerings and the adoption of e-books in academic libraries. The literature reflects e-book concepts and offerings dating back to 1945, as well as studies and perceptions of opportunities and challenges related to e-books. In an attempt to explain why the integration of e-books into academic library collections has been very gradual during this period, this article presents a summary of the literature that addresses issues related to electronic versions of books that are made accessible online. This includes both books that are digitized and born digital.

**Annotation:** Examines the integration of e-books into academic libraries. This article is unique in its concise summary of the history of e-books, tracing key milestones from a 1945 article calling for the use of technology to store and retrieve information to current library e-book providers such as NetLibrary and ebrary. Perspectives provided for both users and librarians in the use of e-books, citing some of the commonly discussed barriers to e-book adoption such as differing purchase and access models as well as the advantage of providing full-text information to users anytime and anywhere.
Search Strategy: I found this article by performing the search in Dialog as outlined below. I chose the Library Literature and Information Science database for my initial searches due to its focus on literature related to library science topics. Once I had completed the search, I browsed through the full listings of the results to find those that seemed to be most applicable to the topic of this annotated bibliography. Once I had noted the articles I wanted to use, I found the full-text of the article by going to Drexel’s Hagerty Library e-Journal page at http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default and entering the name of the journal into the search field, clicking on the title of the journal, and then entering the year, volume, and issue into the SFX Full Text search to retrieve the article.

Database: Library Lit. & Info. Science [Dialog]

Method of Searching: Keyword search

Search String: s ‘ELECTRONIC BOOK FAIR’:‘ELECTRONIC BOOKS’ and py=2005:2009 and (libraries or library)
s s1/eng
rd s2

Entry 7:

Abstract: This article reports on one aspect of a Laser Foundation-funded research project that tested different models of e-book delivery in offered guidelines for
developing e-book collections in UK public libraries. An e-book collection was offered to library users (primarily, users relying on a mobile library service) on Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) devices at Essex County Libraries. The article considers reaction from both library users and staff. A number of positive and negative reactions to e-books were noted, and the indicative of results point to the conclusion that dedicated PDA collections still offer questionable benefits for use in public libraries.

**Annotation:** Examines the use of e-books, specifically utilizing Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) in a public library setting based on a study that was performed in the UK. The fact that the article was written in 2004 limits its usefulness due to the subsequent advances in e-book technologies and availability of materials. However, it does provide insight into some of the types of issues related to use of e-books in public libraries, both from user and institutional perspectives. The greatest advantage of the e-books was considered to be their portability. Perceived disadvantages were largely focused on the tactile experience of using an e-book versus a traditional paper book.

**Search Strategy:** I found this article by browsing through the references at the end of *Making e-books available through public libraries: Some user reactions* by Cliff McKnight, James Dearnley, and Anne Morris. Those reference titles that seemed most recent and most applicable to my topic area I then noted for further investigation. I found the article by going to Drexel’s Hagerty Library e-Journal page at [http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default](http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default) and entering the name of the journal into the search field, clicking on the title of the journal, and then entering the year, volume, and issue into the SFX Full Text search to retrieve the article.

**Database:** N/A
**Method of Searching:** Citation Searching

**Search String:** N/A

**Entry 8:**


**Abstract:** Some consider 2000 the year of the e-book, and due to the dot-com bust, that could have been the format’s high water mark. However, the first quarter of 2004 saw the greatest number of e-book purchases ever with more than $3 million in sales. A 2002 consumer survey found that 67 percent of respondents wanted to read e-books; 62 percent wanted access to e-books through a library. Unfortunately, the large amount of information written on e-books has begun to develop myths around their use, functionality, and cost. The authors suggest that these myths may interfere with the role of libraries in helping to determine the future of the medium and access to it. Rather than fixate on the pros and cons of current versions of e-book technology, it is important for librarians to stay engaged and help clarify the role of digital documents in the modern library.

**Annotation:** Examines the myths surrounding e-books, specifically as they relate to their use in libraries. In dispelling these common myths, the article argues that e-books have a role in libraries and the preservation of the written word, just as paper books will also continue to have a role. Current issues with e-book usage including disparity in formats, copyright issues, perceived costs, and emotional attachment to paper books are noted.

**Search Strategy:** I found this article by browsing through the references at the end of *Cutting Edge Books: The Impact of Digital Books on Public Library Acquisitions* by Lisa Taylor. Those reference titles that seemed most recent and most applicable to my topic
area I then noted for further investigation. I found the article by going to Drexel’s Hagerty Library e-Journal page at http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default and entering the name of the journal into the search field, clicking on the title of the journal, and then entering the year, volume, and issue into the SFX Full Text search to retrieve the article.

**Database:** N/A  
**Method of Searching:** Citation Searching  
**Search String:** N/A

**Entry 9:**  

**Abstract:** During the fall of 2004, the Head of Electronic Resources at the College of Mount St Joseph’s Archbishop Alter Library conducted a survey using a paper-based questionnaire and administered it to several randomly chosen undergraduate courses. The goal of the study was to investigate the college’s undergraduates’ usage and attitudes towards electronic books. The study grew from the college librarians’ informal observations of students’ reactions, many times negative, to e-books over a four year period. Results ran counter to what one might expect of undergraduates belonging to the Millennial or “net” generation. The findings show that students have mixed feelings about using e-books, students will use e-books but prefer using traditional print books. The study gives insight into where electronic and print media are in the current academic realm.

**Annotation:** Examines the use of e-books within academic universities. Overall, the study shows an increase in use and acceptance of e-books within the past several years.
Many of the reasons for liking or disliking e-books are similar to those found in other studies, with students appearing to favor print books. Factors such as convenience of access, cost to use, and ability to print selected pages were perceived advantages of e-books while issues related to difficulty in navigating the e-books, eyestrain from reading on an electronic screen, and a basic desire to use a print book instead were the reasons users disliked e-books. Discusses the “use, not read” phenomenon associated with e-book usage, with students displaying a tendency to get a piece of information from an e-book, but preferring print books for reading from cover to cover.

**Search Strategy:**
I found this article by performing the search in Dialog as outlined below. I chose the Library Literature and Information Science database for my initial searches due to its focus on literature related to library science topics. Once I had completed the search, I browsed through the full listings of the results to find those that seemed to be most applicable to the topic of this annotated bibliography. Once I had noted the articles I wanted to use, I found the full-text of the article by going to Drexel’s Hagerty Library e-Journal page at [http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default](http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default) and entering the name of the journal into the search field, clicking on the title of the journal, and then entering the year, volume, and issue into the SFX Full Text search to retrieve the article.

**Database:**
Library Lit. & Info. Science [Dialog]

**Method of Searching:**
Keyword search

**Search String:**
s ‘ELECTRONIC BOOK FAIR’:‘ELECTRONIC BOOKS’ and py=2005:2009 and (libraries or library)
s s1/eng
rd s2
Entry 10:

Abstract:

**Purpose** – The purpose of this paper is to describe an experiment in introducing fiction e-books in two reading groups run by a public library.

**Design/methodology/approach** – A user study involving two reading groups run over a period of three months. Electronic versions of titles of interest to each group were given out to each participant on Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs). Readers were then asked to fill in a satisfaction questionnaire and discuss their experience with the rest of their group.

**Findings** – Readers were not too negative about using a new tool/gadget like the PDA but they did not see any advantage in reading an electronic version of the selected book.

**Annotation:** Examines the use of e-books, specifically utilizing Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) in reading groups within a public library setting based on a study that was performed in the UK. While the sample size was too small to be definitive, this article does provide insight into some of the types of issues related to use of e-books from a user’s perspective. Potential perceived advantages of the e-books were considered to be their size, the backlighting, and portability. Perceived disadvantages were largely focused on the tactile experience of using an e-book versus a traditional paper book, with emotional attachment to printed books seeming to be a factor. Overall, feedback during this study was not positive, with overall perceptions of e-books decreasing by the end of the study.

**Search Strategy:** I found this article by performing the search in Dialog as outlined below. I chose the Library Literature and
Information Science database for my initial searches due to its focus on literature related to library science topics. Once I had completed the search, I browsed through the full listings of the results to find those that seemed to be most applicable to the topic of this annotated bibliography. Once I had noted the articles I wanted to use, I found the full-text of the article by going to Drexel’s Hagerty Library e-Journal page at http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default and entering the name of the journal into the search field, clicking on the title of the journal, and then entering the year, volume, and issue into the SFX Full Text search to retrieve the article.

**Database:** Library Lit. & Info. Science [Dialog]

**Method of Searching:** Keyword search

**Search String:**

s ‘ELECTRONIC BOOK FAIR’:‘ELECTRONIC BOOKS’ and py=2005:2009 and (libraries or library)

s s1/eng

rd s2

**Entry 11:**


**Abstract:** This article reports on a study which aimed to investigate the potential for portable electronic book (e-book) devices within a public library context. The main method of data collection was a questionnaire distributed to all readers who borrowed a device during the project. Results are discussed in terms of (a) the users’ reaction to the device and the process of reading from it, and (b) the institutional considerations.
encountered by the collaborating librarians. It is not clear from the outcomes of portable e-books provide a viable delivery mechanism within a public library.

**Annotation:** Examines the use of e-books in a public library setting based on a study that was performed in the UK. The usefulness of the data is limited by the size of the group of study participants. The fact that the article was written in 2003 also limits its usefulness due to the subsequent advances in e-book technologies and availability of materials. However, this article does provide insight into some of the types of issues related to use of e-books in public libraries, both from user and institutional perspectives.

**Search Strategy:** I found this article by browsing through the references at the end of *Making e-books available through public libraries: Some user reactions* by Cliff McKnight, James Dearnley, and Anne Morris. Those reference titles that seemed most recent and most applicable to my topic area I then noted for further investigation. I found the article by going to Drexel’s Hagerty Library e-Journal page at [http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default](http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default) and entering the name of the journal into the search field, clicking on the title of the journal, and then entering the year, volume, and issue into the SFX Full Text search to retrieve the article.

**Database:** N/A

**Method of Searching:** Citation Searching

**Search String:** N/A
Entry 12:

Abstract: This paper considers the results of an online questionnaire survey that collected user data on e-book collections held at Essex County Libraries over a two-year period between April 2004 and June 2006. The research was funded by the Laser Foundation, and specifically considered e-book collections held on Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) devices, as well as collections viewable on Personal Computers with Internet access. Questionnaire responses from 58 individuals indicated clearly that marketing of e-book collections needs serious consideration, that certain genres were popular with users (notably Science Fiction), and that the largest number of respondents were aged between 21 and 30. As we discuss, the findings of this questionnaire survey offer few insights into e-book usage that have not been reported in other research. However, what the findings do illustrate clearly is that publicity afforded to e-book and other electronic collections remains crucial. From perusal of the data, 47 of the 58 respondents found out about the e-book collections after browsing the website. Whilst this obviously indicates that the website is indeed useful, the fact that only nine respondents investigated the collections having seen publicity material tells another story.

Annotation: Considers the results of a limited survey of e-book usage that was performed from 2004-2006 at the Essex County Libraries. Not much new data was available from the results of this study, although it did offer confirmation of assertions made in other articles relative to the perceived advantages and disadvantages of e-books. As in previous studies, the greatest advantage of the e-books was considered to be their portability. Perceived disadvantages were largely focused on the tactile experience of using an e-book versus a traditional paper book.
Search Strategy: I found this article by searching in Google Scholar using the search string defined below. To ensure currency of the results, I also limited my search results to those since 2005. I then browsed the results for those that seemed most applicable to my topic area, and selected the FindIt@DREXEL link to retrieve the full-text of this article.

Database: N/A (Google Scholar)

Method of Searching: Keyword search

Search String: (e-book* or kindle) and librar* (pull-down to limit to since 2005)

Entry 13:

Abstract:

**Purpose** – This JISC funded UK National E-Books Observatory study is a benchmarking survey of e-book usage and perceptions in more than 120 participating universities. The paper aims to present the results that investigated: use of e-books in general (methods of obtaining e-books, reasons for using, viewing/reading behaviour in connection with e-books); use of e-books provided by the library; use of JISC collection texts (use and awareness); use of the library and print material in general.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The study is based on an online survey which was conducted between 18 January and 1 March 2008, over which period 22,437 full or partial responses were received.

**Findings** – The study shows that e-book penetration is very strong (61.8 per cent of all students are already using them in connection with their scholarly work, as teachers or
students), so the e-book revolution has already happened but clearly it has some way to go.

**Annotation:** Examines the preliminary results of a study being performed in the UK of the use of e-books within over 120 academic libraries. The study is significant when compared with other similar studies due to the large number of participants and respondents and the currency of the data which was collected between January and March 2008. Statistical results and graphs are provided to examine the data from a number of perspectives. The theory that e-books are used to gather bits of information, not to read entire books, is confirmed. Claims to conflict with the current opinion that e-books are not actually read on the computer screen, but printed out, by showing data that proves that users of all ages read e-books online, albeit snippets, not entire books.

**Search Strategy:** While retrieving the article, *E-book reading groups: interacting with e-books in public libraries*, by Monica Landoni and Gillian Hanlon, from *The Electronic Journal*, I clicked on the link for <Electronic Books> at the bottom of the Article Request page. This was basically equivalent to a controlled vocabulary search of the journals published by Emerald. I then chose to review all of the results that were in journals and browsed the results to find those that were most recent and most applicable to my topic area. I then clicked on the link to view the article in PDF format.

**Database:** N/A (Journals published by Emerald)

**Method of Searching:** Controlled Vocabulary Search

**Search String:** Electronic Books
Entry 14:

**Abstract:** This paper presents the results of a large scale survey designed to investigate usage patterns and library patron attitudes toward e-books. The survey reveals a university community’s discovery and knowledge of e-books, their likes and dislikes about book content in electronic format as opposed to print, and their predictions of how they will use electronic and print book materials in the future. The survey shows that acceptance of e-books has reached a level where they have become an important library service. The results, based on a study conducted in collaboration with Springer, break down e-book awareness and attitudes into faculty, graduate student, and undergraduate student constituent groups. Additionally, statistics are presented to complement the survey results by showing that the usage of e-book content at the University of Illinois is increasing at a rapid pace.

**Annotation:** Examines the use of e-books within academic universities. The article was published in 2009, making it one of the most current articles on this subject. Its currency is important in a field that progresses rapidly with changing technology. An increase in use and acceptance of e-books within the past several years is shown. This change is significant when compared with other studies in this area. Many of the perceived advantages and disadvantages for e-books remain the same. Factors such as size, portability, and accessibility were considered to be strong advantages while issues of tactile experience and reading from electronic screens were considered to be the largest disadvantages. Also notes the preference for using different mediums for different reading experiences, with a preference for print books when reading fiction or for leisure, and utilizing e-books for research and academic purposes.
Search Strategy: While retrieving the article, *E-book reading groups: interacting with e-books in public libraries*, by Monica Landoni and Gillian Hanlon, from *The Electronic Journal*, I clicked on the link for <Electronic Books> at the bottom of the Article Request page. This was basically equivalent to a controlled vocabulary search of the journals published by Emerald. I then chose to review all of the results that were in journals and browsed the results to find those that were most recent and most applicable to my topic area. I then clicked on the link to view the article in PDF format.

Database: N/A (Journals published by Emerald)

Method of Searching: Controlled Vocabulary Search

Search String: Electronic Books

Entry 15:


Abstract: This paper discusses a variety of options available to academic libraries considering the acquisition of eBooks. A detailed examination is undertaken with regard to the impact of eBooks on the ordering process, purchasing models, distribution options and overall utility. The paper also outlines some key issues and potential future directions for eBooks.

Annotation: Discusses the acquisition of e-books as is related to academic libraries. Issues throughout the acquisition process including ordering, purchasing models, distribution, and utility are addressed. Clear outlines of the factors currently affecting e-book acquisitions, associated issues, and discussion of the perceived future direction of these issues are included. The necessity for libraries to continue to choose solutions that
best meet the needs of their patrons, regardless of format and purchasing models, is asserted. Provides a brief discussion of Digital Rights Management (DRM) technology as it relates to e-books.

**Search Strategy:** I found this article by performing the search in Dialog as outlined below. I chose the Library Literature and Information Science database for my initial searches due to its focus on literature related to library science topics. Once I had completed the search, I browsed through the full listings of the results to find those that seemed to be most applicable to the topic of this annotated bibliography. Once I had noted the articles I wanted to use, I found the full-text of the article by going to Drexel’s Hagerty Library e-Journal page at [http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default](http://sfx.library.drexel.edu/sfx_local/a-z/default) and entering the name of the journal into the search field, clicking on the title of the journal, and then entering the year, volume, and issue into the SFX Full Text search to retrieve the article.

**Database:** Library Lit. & Info. Science [Dialog]

**Method of Searching:** Keyword search

**Search String:**
s ‘ELECTRONIC BOOK FAIR’:‘ELECTRONIC BOOKS’ and py=2005:2009 and (libraries or library)
s s1/eng
rd s2

**Entry 16:**

**Abstract:**
**Purpose** – The purpose of this paper is to review the current state of e-books, describing their potential scope, highlighting information from recent ebrary surveys in connection with the author’s on-the-ground experience with students, and discussing the challenges of these evolving works.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The paper describes the need to broaden perceptions of e-books in light of their extensive potential and scope. It highlights significant points in the ebrary surveys and compares them with the author’s on-the-ground experience in a medium-sized university with students who are less advantaged. It also presents the challenges librarians face, both currently and in the future, illustrating progress in some areas and emphasizing the growing complexity in managing these works.

**Findings** – Even as librarians cope with what can now be considered “traditional” e-books, little attention is paid to the potential breadth and diversity of e-books. The surveys show that librarians are only partially aware of students’ perceptions about e-books and that there are conflicting priorities among students, faculty, and librarians. Conclusions are that: even as librarians cope with the current state of e-books, they must also plan for future types of e-books; and there is a strong need for greater communication in the increasingly complex e-book arena of selection, acquisition, collection integration, and instruction.

**Annotation:** Discusses e-books and their transition through time, the varying definitions of e-books, and potential future directions of e-books as their definition continues to morph and change through innovation and technology. Focused on e-book usage within academic libraries, the article also discusses the perspectives of students, faculty, and librarians, noting their differing opinions of the advantages and concerns related to e-book collections. Most items noted are similar to those found in other articles, the advantages of anytime/anywhere access, concerns with ability to locate the books, readability, costs, and purchasing models.
Search Strategy: While retrieving the article, *E-book reading groups: interacting with e-books in public libraries*, by Monica Landoni and Gillian Hanlon, from *The Electronic Journal*, I clicked on the link for <Electronic Books> at the bottom of the Article Request page. This was basically equivalent to a controlled vocabulary search of the journals published by Emerald. I then chose to review all of the results that were in journals and browsed the results to find those that were most recent and most applicable to my topic area. I then clicked on the link to view the article in PDF format.

Database: N/A (Journals published by Emerald)

Method of Searching: Controlled Vocabulary Search

Search String: Electronic Books

Entry 17:


Abstract: In 2008 the University of Idaho Library conducted an in-depth analysis of our three major electronic book providers. Using spreadsheet and database applications, bibliographic data from our ILS was combined with usage statistics obtained from each platform. This technique produced a master sheet that allowed us to do subject analysis by LC classification, discover ebooks that were not cataloged in our OPAC, and identify e-books supplied by more than one provider. The usage statistics show relatively low use across both subject areas and platforms. The discussion includes an analysis of subscription costs and recommendations for the reporting of e-book statistics.

Annotation: Discusses the results of an initiative at the University of Idaho to collect and analyze usage statistics of their e-book collection. Interestingly, they found that they had
a larger number of e-books related to social sciences than science titles. This is different than what has been found in other similar studies. Another interesting fact is that usage for librarian-selected individual titles was much higher than for those that were procured as part of a larger collection. Attempts to calculate per title and per use costs were difficult due to the various pricing and title maintenance structures, but they were able to calculate a $1.97/title cost, but due to low usage the per use cost was calculated to be $3.67.

**Search Strategy:**
I found this article by searching in Google Scholar using the search string defined below. To ensure currency of the results, I also limited my search results to those since 2005. I then browsed the results for those that seemed most applicable to my topic area, and selected the FindIt@DREXEL link to retrieve the full-text of this article.

**Database:**
N/A (Google Scholar)

**Method of Searching:**
Keyword search

**Search String:**
(e-book* or kindle) and librar* (pull-down to limit to since 2005)

**Entry 18:**

**Abstract:** The book has made the transition to the digital age; that much is certain. However, the jury is still out on what form or forms the book of the future will take and how libraries will adapt. This article is a look at the impact of digital books on public library acquisitions, including available formats, purchasing considerations, functional concerns, terms, pricing, and future trends.
Annotation: Examines the issues associated with licensing e-books in a public library setting. Given that the article was written in 2008, it is fairly up-to-date in addressing current technologies and issues related to e-books. Unique in equally examining the issues associated with both visual and audio digital books for public libraries. Discussions related to audio books include issues such as varying digital audio formats. Comparisons of the issues associated with visual e-books downloaded on PCs or PDAs versus those that require a dedicated reader are discussed. Considerations for the acquisition, maintenance, licensing, and cataloging of e-books within public libraries are included.

Search Strategy: To locate this article, I began my search in the Library & Information Science Abstracts (LISA) database accessed from Drexel’s Hagerty Library website. I then performed a quick search using the below search string, and clicked on the tab for peer-reviewed articles to limit my search results. I browsed the results, and for those titles that seemed most recent and most applicable to my topic area I clicked on the SFX button to retrieve the full-text version of the article.

Database: Library & Information Science Abstracts (LISA)
Method of Searching: Keyword search
Search String: (e-book* or kindle) and librar*

Entry 19:


Abstract:
**Purpose** – The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of the e-book marketplace players and their services against a context in which e-books are becoming an increasingly significant category of digital resource.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The paper starts with a brief overview of the literature on the global e-book market and e-book business models offered by vendors to libraries. Analysis of the web sites of nine e-book publishers and 11 e-book aggregators was used as a basis for profiling the main features of e-books (user-oriented features and librarian-oriented features) and the services offered by e-book publishers and e-book aggregators. Key points from these profiles are discussed, and conclusions and recommendations for the future of the e-book marketplace are offered.

**Findings** – The e-book market is under constant change and it is important to monitor its development, not just at national but also at international level. Currently, the majority of e-book vendors market to libraries – typically academic libraries, and publishers are increasingly using e-aggregators to distribute their titles. Collections of e-books are expanding gradually and there is evidence of increasing uptake. Current e-book business models are complex and range considerably.

**Annotation:** Focuses on providing an overview of the e-book market. Main points of discussion include increasing the features of e-books to enhance their capabilities through the use of linking, embedded videos, maps, built-in dictionaries, and other multimedia components to increase their usefulness over print books. Varied purchasing models are also discussed. Formats of e-books, most commonly PDF files, are considered. Interestingly, the article also identifies that the greatest increase in e-book usage is currently occurring in Asia although multi-lingual titles are not common, with most still being available in English only.

**Search Strategy:** I found this article by searching in Google Scholar using the search string defined below. To ensure currency of the results, I also limited my search results to those since 2005.
then browsed the results for those that seemed most
applicable to my topic area, and selected the
FindIt@DREXEL link to retrieve the full-text of this article.

Database: N/A (Google Scholar)

Method of Searching: Keyword search

Search String: (e-book* or kindle) and librar* (pull-down to limit to since 2005)
Conclusion and Personal Statement

In developing the annotated bibliography for e-book usage within libraries I learned a great deal about e-books, current activities related to their use within public and academic libraries, and the current issues surrounding their wider use. I found the depth of emotional attachment to print books surprising on some level, given that it was even seen in the newer generation which has such an affinity for technology. The complexity of the issues surrounding the purchasing and licensing models for e-books, and the inconsistencies in those models was startling. I was also surprised in the consistency of findings from a number of studies across both academic and public libraries in both the U.S. and the U.K. Many of the issues surrounding the administration and acceptance of e-books in libraries are similar regardless.

This was my first experience in developing or using an annotated bibliography so I learned a lot about both the structure and purpose of an annotated bibliography, as well as learning the process for developing one. In my search strategy I found more than enough resources which led me to limit the results by date for currency and then skim a lot of abstracts to find a handful that seemed to best meet my topic area. With those in hand, I found it easier to find additional sources through citation chasing our browsing (through the use of controlled vocabulary) the same journals from which I had retrieved the first set of results. Documenting my search process was a key to being able to complete the bibliography. With my set of potential resources defined, I began reading through them, numbering each article and categorizing it, and keeping documenting my thoughts. As I read each article, I developed the annotation as well as my own set of high-level bullets. These helped in writing the summary and findings sections of the bibliography and I could easily refer back to the entire article for additional information when needed.

Overall I found this project to be a wonderful learning experience, not only about a topic in library science, but also about searching strategies and annotated bibliographies.