

Impact of e-books in academic libraries

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ABSTRACT

E-books are attracting user's attention in today ICT environment. In this paper we are discussing about the basic concept, advantage and disadvantage. Paper also highlights the Digital Right Management of e-books. Now a day's students, wants remote information available on their desktop, laptop and mobile phone. Search the relevant information in a timely manner is critical for both the researcher and the library professional. The full text search capabilities of e-books should be integrated into our library OPAC to enable user to search within the library electronic collection as well as across other electronic materials available on the web [1]. "Publishers and academic librarians expect that e-books would not lose the advantages that printed books offered to them. Hence, publishers restrict the usage of e-books to ensure revenues as if from selling individual copies. Librarians try to regain the same level of control over e-book collections as for printed materials. There is a lot of research on various aspects of e-books and their collections in academic libraries in recent years" [2].

Keywords: Electronic Books; e-books; electronic publishing; e-book reader; e-book device; digital book

Methodology: General survey of literature has been used for this study.

1. INTRODUCTION

"Academic libraries procure electronic books and manage a variety of e-books collection from a number of distributors, aggregators and publisher using their rich

experience of negotiations from earlier phase of working with e-journals and data base of full text articles as well as other digital resources"[2]. In academic libraries e-books collection seems in PDF format but many formats are proprietary and store data in the ways designed by a particular publisher making it easily accessible only when using software and hardware of that publisher"[2].

Definition

Rao (2001) has provided a more comprehensive definition for the e-books as a text in digital form or digital form or a book converted into digital form or digital reading material or books in a computer file format or electronic file of words, images with unique identifiers, metadata to be displayed on computers screen or read on a computer through a network or view on a desktop/notebook/ dedicated portable device or read on all types of computers or formatted for display on e-book readers[3].

E-books were invented in 1971 by Michael Hart, a student at the University of Illinois. He would later go on to found project Gutenberg, the first and largest collection of free e-books available online. The first commercial e-book was launched by Random House in 1981[3].

Electronic books offer creative possibilities for expanding access as well as changing learning behavior and academic research. Content can always be accessible, regardless of time or place, to be read on PC or on portable book readers [4].

Literature Review

A number of sources have been consulted and the content was gone through to identify the related studies on the present topic of research. Some of the studies relevant to the present study are [5].

Bhatia conducted a survey on 770 student and teachers of the degree college libraries in Chandigarh regarding use of electronic resources which revealed that most of the users access e-resources for updating their knowledge for academic purpose. He suggested that college library should organize awareness and training programmes to educate the users [5].

Ramaiah discussed in his paper 'E-Book: past, present and future' about history of e-books, usage of e-books, advantage and limitation of e-books. He also raised the copyright issue, evaluation of e-books, e-book reader [6].

Meadows says that in the case of e-books the problem has been with material still in copyright, where it is necessary to trace the copyright owner and recompense them [7].

Kaba and Said in their study suggest that government and private institutions in the UAE should access their needs to e-books and adopt a long term strategic plan of marketing, training, orientation, and self assessment to improve the uses of e-resources[8].

Divakar says that e-books have tremendous implications on libraries, library user and publishers. There have been initiatives towards the ultimate goal of enhancing public access to all recorded knowledge [9].

Objective

Objective of the study are

1. The main objective of the study is to analyse and explore the changing vision and role of future libraries according to met the changes and challenges in the e-book environment.
2. To define the benefit and opportunity using new technology.

Impact of e-books in library services

"Library users increasingly demand books in electronic format because of its associated advantage. All updated information is published in electronic format. In present date it is necessary to adopt new modes to provide services to the user desktop even outside the campus. In present scenario users would like to see their library on internet, able to meet their all information needs. Users of the library should able to access the e-book from anywhere and anytime. Users prefer reading material in electronic format rather than print format. Most of the organization provides e-books link to their website. Those links helps users to access easily the desired e-books. Users used e-books for up to date their information. Faculty members are using e-books for their lecture notes e-books reduce the staff problem"[10]. "The electronic

book collection cover a broad scope of academic subject area"[19].

Advantage of E-books

E-books offer a number of advantages over their print for stakeholders, i.e., patrons, libraries, authors and publishers. For patrons, e-books offer 24/7 availability remote access, full text searching, changeable font size, accurate presentation and possession for an ultimate time. For Library – e-books save library space, it never lost, no damage.

For Library-

Save space

Never lost

No damage

No stolen

For Publisher-

Never go out of print

New editions are easily created,

Modified and delivered without any delay

Limitations

E-book requires long –term maintenance of software, operating system, hardware and file formats. We depend on technology, copyright issue and security issues are other challenges that need to be take care. Publishers and aggregators have developed so many price models for e-books, some of them are difficult to understand [11]. According to recent studies, e-books often cost more than their print edition. When academic books are purchased individually their price can be even 50% higher than their print equivalents [12].

Business Model

Many business models are adopted for new licensing process for e-content procurement. These models are controlling the access by content volume, duration of access, no. of user and the computing devices used for access [13].

1. Perpetual access rights
2. Limited period access rights
3. Subscription model
4. User Population
5. Pay-per-view Model
6. Subscription based article delivery model

Digital right Management

“One of the most critical elements in the development of electronic publishing that will impact libraries involves digital rights management systems (DRMS). Still being developed, DRMS are either hardware or software (or both) that enforce control over intellectual property, such as limit by user, time, fee, and/or extent of content. Due to publishers' concerns about rights, e-book vendors are normally able to offer only limited usage rights for printing, downloading and copying. Normally, interlibrary loan is not allowed, and classroom use is not always allowed” [4].

“A major difference between e-books and e-journals is that most e-books distributors protect their e-books with DRM (Digital Right Management). For example, with ebrary, users can print only five pages of an ebrary books at one time. In the print environment, copying a reasonable number of pages is permitted. While e-journal aggregators monitor for things like systematic downloads, it is normally quite simple for users to print off or save an entire journal article. E-books differ significantly from both the e-journal and print experience of most users [3]”. In academic libraries faculty expect same accessibility to e-books as they get into print books. “E-book restriction often begins with access limits to a particular device or account. E-books are typically limited both by format and digital right management software” [14].

Archiving and Long Term Access

“Two of the roles of academic libraries are building research level collections and acting as archives of research information. Currently, e-book vendor purchase models allow some flexibility, such as a premium price for perpetual access (and potential archiving) versus more modest pricing for annual access to a revolving group of titles. The ability to manipulate an e-book collection easily to eliminate older editions is attractive where currency matters. In other disciplines where long-term research is essential, assurance of perpetual access will be vital” [4].

E-book vendors should give the same accessibility as they allow in the case of e-journal not restricting use or access with DRM, however they may monitor the systematic downloads. “Licensing agreements are an important part of library practice. Libraries must be careful about the restrictions they agree to when they sign these agreements. It is quite possible for a library to enter into a license agreement that restricts its user's rights under the Copyright Act [3]”.

Academic libraries should be careful to provide simple and clear e-book training for all library patrons. “Academic libraries have tight budgets so it is important

that the resources they buy are justifiable and well used by students and academics [15]”.The copyright and technological issues that have yet to be resolved in this context [15].

“Interlibrary loan, within one country and internationally, is one of the ways to enhance the usage of resources developed by libraries while managing their collections over time. E-books have a lot of potential to ease the process of interlibrary loan. By using an e-book for this traditional function, libraries could save a lot of time and money and also avoid situations where library users would be left without a book for a period of time when it is on loan to another library. Despite these benefits, there are currently many barriers for sharing e-book items that are still under copyright protection. Some e-book licences impose an outright ban on interlibrary loans, while others allow sharing of chapters of books, but also with certain limits and restrictions” ([16][17].

Control of Content

Because e-book delivery is via hardware and software, e-books are being treated more like software. One does not own an e-book in many cases, he or she licenses it. Thus depending on the platform, we may not be able to transfer it to another person, or even another device that we own. We may lose access to an e-book we have purchased; if it resides on a device we do not control completely [18].

Pricing of E-books

- E-books are published by different publishers just as print books.
- The publishers offer two tiered pricing for e-books, one for institutional and another for individual.
- Print and online – some publishes combines print subscription with online access to the title.
- Online only – this entitles the customer to receive online access only for a year.

E-book Reader

“E-book reader or e-book device is a mobile electronic device that is designed primarily for the purpose of reading digital e-books. Any device that can display text on screen may represent an e-book reader, but specialized e-book reader designs may optimize portability, readability and battery life for this purpose. A single e-book reader is capable of holding the digital equivalent of hundreds of printed text”[19]. At present many e-books reader are available.

“For academic libraries, the rise of e-books highlights the struggle to offer services that address the increasing

demand for electronic resources while maintaining legacy collections. There will be questions and arguments about the future of books and the role that academic libraries must fulfill, but we must stay focused on the central question. Our materials and method may change, but our mission remains the same. We exist to support scholarship-whatever form it takes"[18].

Findings:

Challenges with academic e-books are much less known compared to their real and perceived advantages. E-book acquisition in academic libraries is affected by many ways, including access limitations, formats [13]. Since libraries acquire e-books from a number of different suppliers/publishers that means they have to cope with different licensing models and with different terms [13].

Higher authorities of the institute/college/university must ensure to better ICT infrastructure facilities. Libraries should procure only relevant e-books. Still there is requirement for publishing more and more relevant textbook in electronic format. Library must customize their e-book collection by selecting only one relevant title from publishers and aggregators. Library professionals should negotiate on license term from publishers and aggregators [12].

Conclusion

Libraries are now procuring e-books and expand more budgets on e-books due to advantages of e-books. Libraries are playing vital role in academic environment, their main purposes are maximizing access and services at minimum cost [12]. Library needs to work with

publishers, e-books providers and ICT providers to map standards and protocols. Integrating e-books into the digital library has created challenges and opportunities for library professional and e-books provider [1]. Interoperability and the standardization of electronic books metadata are really important [20]. At the present book market, it seems that there is no shortage of e-books in any discipline. Most of the big scholarly and science & technology publishers list e-books in their catalogues and on their portal, but trying to find the relevant titles as e-books in most of them is quite difficult. Actually, the low availability of relevant e-books is one of the main issues for librarians building e-collections [02].

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