Ebook Framework and Best Practices
Northern Lights Library Network
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Ebooks are transforming the way people read and access books and the way libraries and publishers distribute them. This transitional moment will determine what we do next with text. User friendliness, cost, and portability play a role in the growth of eBooks. eBooks change how students learn to read and read to learn (literacy).

School librarians/media specialists are "leading the charge to bring new media, mobile devices, social apps. and web-based technologies into the nation's classrooms" (Barach, 2012, p. 25).

Perceived ease of use is the primary determinant of eBook usage. User needs must be determined for finding the best fit between the device and content. Varieties of eBook readers, access to content, and pricing models fluctuate. Terms-of-service agreements are continually evolving and changing. An eBook management framework can be useful in developing an eBook collection (see the box below).

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eBook Management Framework

1. Formation of a collection development policy.
2. Establishment of a budget for e-books.
3. Discovery of e-book availability.
4. Evaluation of the product, including licenses and trials.
5. Negotiations over licenses.
6. Cataloging and delivery.
7. Marketing, promotion, and user education.
8. Use evaluation, monitoring, and reviewing
9. Renewals and cancellations

From Valileiou, et. al (2012). The e-book management framework. *Library and Information Science Research, 34*, 282-291

Best eBook practices:

- Determine your collection development strategy
- Evaluate different business models (DRM, archiving policy, ownership vs. subscription, number of concurrent users, availability of MARC records)
- Design effective purchasing models
- Implement trial access
- Develop lending policies
- Have a privacy policy in place (some third-party vendors have the capability to track patron data and use information)

- ADA compliance
- Consider school requirements (Common Core Standards)
- Discuss implementation with technical staff
- Provide a link to eBooks in the library catalog
- Monitor usage statistics
- Use the library website for access and promotion
- Consider copyright and digital rights management (DRM)
- Internet security
- Electronic textbook offerings
- Consider public domain works on Project Gutenberg and Google Books e-pubs, organizing access to the content.
- If hardware is loaned, consider how the accessories, such as chargers or cords will be secured.
- Patron-driven acquisitions model or literature-on-demand model.
- Partner with public libraries, if possible.

The biggest challenges are money and time -- from purchasing new technology -- to upgrading existing technology -- to learning how to access and organize it.

Librarians must choose, "an ebook interface content that is affordable and compatible with that interface, and vendors with whom they can establish sustainable business relationships. Current business models present a spectrum of accessibility, from public domain and open access ebooks to arrangements that offer libraries short-term loans or rentals of content. Progressing along that spectrum, digital rights management software becomes more pervasive and restrictive and there is a higher risk that the content will disappear from a library's collection if a subscription lapses or if a vendor or publisher changes its terms. So when making acquisitions, libraries must remain focused on whether the goal is to build a comprehensive collection, regardless of format, or to offer 'just in time' access to the most people" (Berry, et. al, 2012, p. 24).

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