heBooks: emerging uses of eBooks in Higher Education

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#dpc_ebooks
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A vision of the future

“How about electronic publishing? Try reading a book on disc. At best, it's an unpleasant chore: the myopic glow of a clunky computer replaces the friendly pages of a book. And you can't tote that laptop to the beach. Yet Nicholas Negroponte, director of the MIT Media Lab, predicts that we'll soon buy books and newspapers straight over the Intenet. Uh, sure.”

1. An e-book is a digital object with textual and/or other content, which arises as a result of integrating the familiar concept of a book with features that can be provided in an electronic environment.

2. E-books, typically have in-use features such as search and cross reference functions, hypertext links, bookmarks, annotations, highlights, multimedia objects and interactive tools.

Electronic books are distinct from books in terms of media, distribution, functionality, management, quantity, copyright and fair use, information technology, cost, typology of e-books, reading device specificity or lack thereof, pricing, accessibility, publishing model, book news and peer reviews, service model, quality assurance, standards and interoperability, user preferences, layout and paging, and contextual reading.

E. Carreiro (2010).

`Electronic Books: How Digital Devices and Supplementary New Technologies are Changing the Face of the Publishing Industry`

Evolution of eBooks

- 1970: Project Gutenberg
- 1980: Shiny Silver Discs
- 1990: WWW
- 2001: Safari Online (O'Reilly/Pearson)
- 2007: Mobile Phones and PDAs
- 2010: iPhone, EPUB, iPad, Kindle 3
Evolution of eBooks
Evolution of eBooks
Doing it yourself: EPUB

EPUB defines open standards for Container, Packaging and Content structure (some differences between Version 2.01 & Version 3)

- HTML (XHTML/HTML5)
- CSS
- Image formats: JPG, PNG, GIF
- Relative URLs and anchors work within the package
Doing it yourself: EPUB
Doing it yourself: Calibre
Doing it yourself: Word-processing
Doing it yourself: iBooks Author
Doing it yourself: Online
Doing it yourself: Online
The Study Pack Approach (1990)
The Study Pack Approach (2013)
The VLE approach
The VLE approach
Jisc: “The institution as e-textbook creator”
The research project website: Letters of Charlotte Mary Yonge
The research project website: Mapping the Gulag
The research project website: Transcribe Bentham
Special collections: dissemination (not preservation)
Sustainability: “Give me convenience…”

Ars Technica’s OS X Lion review made $15,000+ in 24 hours on the Kindle

Will people pay for quality digital content? It’s an argument that has been on the table for quite some time, with naysayers pointing towards downloads of discographies instead of paying attention to concrete purchasing decisions.

Last week, Apple released its new version of Mac OS X “Lion”, and as per usual, Ars Technica’s John Siracusa delivered a whopping 27,300 word review of it. His 19-page story, published last Wednesday is available for free online and has already received over 3 million page views.

In a telling turn of events, Ars Technica also decided to sell his review as a $5 Kindle ebook. In its first 24-hours on sale, the ebook sold 3,000 copies. And at $5 a pop, that’s a cool $15,000 in revenue in just one day. Harvard’s Niemen Lab interviewed Ken Fisher, the founder and editor of Ars, who is “pleasantly surprised by the outcome”. In fact, Fisher thinks of it as “free money” and that “he underestimated the power of Amazon’s one-click experience, which makes
Some conclusions

• Huge self-publishing potential individuals, projects, institutions (but self-publishing non-trivial)

• Support for teaching, learning and research using media, devices that new generations are familiar with: accessible, reflowable, adaptive, dynamic.

• Open EPUB format: DRM-free (but content is not rights-free!)

• Discrete, encapsulated file format built on established standards

• Challenges over compatibility and branching proprietary extensions to the format - strive for a stable subset (cf. PDF-A, WCAG, etc)

• Awareness of sustainability & preservation issues need to be built into creation/publishing process
Thank You!

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