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eBooks Two Years Later: The North Carolina State University Perspective

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Another issue of pricing, of significant interest in the library market, relates to simultaneous use. Says **Jonathan Weiss**, Senior Vice President for Business Development at **Oxford University Press**, "to realize the potential benefits of eBooks, including simultaneous use, significant issues need to be addressed. These issues include contracts on existing books, royalties, and overall, a publishing model that needs to account for the still unknown balance of costs and revenues associated with the sales of both print and electronic editions of a work. It's a new world."

eBook Metadata and File Delivery

As an industry, publishing has had hundreds of years to develop effective systems for promoting and distributing physical books. In the space of just a few years, we are being challenged to develop effective mechanisms for distributing eBooks to wholesalers and retailers, and for receiving sales accounting to facilitate royalty payment. Some might liken this challenge to changing a tire while the car is moving. Evolving standards such as **ONIX 2.0**, which contains guidelines for describing e-publications, and the potential to extend **Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs)** from the scholarly journal arena into eBook delivery, hold the promise to help smooth this transition.

Component Packages and Custom Publishing

Several publishers, largely in technical areas, are experimenting with offering readers the option of purchasing individual chapters or eBook components, or creating custom print or eBooks from a collection of content. These forays into component publishing present a host of e-commerce, royalty accounting, and archiving challenges, but offer buyers a heretofore unavailable option of purchasing just what they want in the format in which they want it.

Archiving and Evolving Content

One challenge for those committed to eBooks is sorting out which file formats are likely to survive as new technologies surface. A related challenge is one of static versus evolving content. In the print world, once a book is published, it is fixed in terms of content. The eBook world affords authors a new opportunity to interact with readers, gather their input, and update books post-publication. For publishers, retailers, and librarians, this necessitates version control and poses archiving challenges; it could also entail a fundamental rethinking of business models, as the author's work would never be fully complete. Last, but not least, it raises questions of which entities in the publishing value chain are in the best position to archive – publishers, aggregators, wholesalers, retailers, libraries, or dedicated public repositories? At **Wiley**, we are committed to offering our digital content to end users through a variety of outlets, including both publisher-hosted forums and

KELLY FRANKLIN BIO

Kelly A. Franklin has been with **John Wiley & Sons** since 1987, where she has held a series of editorial and management positions, most recently as Publisher for professional periodicals and behavioral sciences. In that capacity, she published books, reference works, journals, and software applications, and integrated professional magazines and newsletters into Wiley's online publishing service, **Wiley InterScience**.

In 1999, Kelly was appointed Director, Electronic Business Development for Wiley's Professional & Trade Division. She is responsible for Wiley's eBook's program, as well as online and electronic publishing initiatives.

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third-party eBook retailers and wholesalers; we want to allow each consumer and librarian to choose the medium and archiving mechanism that best meets their needs.

A Look to the Future

Some of the speedbumps described here can be addressed in the short term. Others will take years to fully evolve. It is critical that authors, publishers, eBook retailers, and librarians realistically assess the opportunities and challenges posed by this exciting new media, and work together to evolve new models and systems to disseminate and preserve human knowledge and literature in digital formats.

Once the infrastructure to support today's print analog eBooks is fully built-out, we will position ourselves to begin taking better advantage of the promise of digital media as a publishing tool. Among the possibilities afforded by this new media:

- the creation of "living" books, which evolve over time
- integration of audio and video as an inherent component of the reading experience
- inclusion of tools in instructional books (e.g. calculators, assessments, etc.)

An example of an attempt to evolve new models in the e-publishing arena is **Wiley's** launch of its **Wiley InterScienceOnlineBooks** product. A next step in the evolution of digital information resources, the complete contents of print works are re-purposed for the online environment. The product is a fully searchable and browseable database of scientific, technical, and medical book content that is integrated with the online journals and reference works in the **Wiley InterScience** online service. For users, **OnlineBooks** offers flexibility and efficiency of fully searchable and integrated online content. For libraries, the product offers the opportunity to license the content for unlimited online access by authorized users. As well, they will receive usage statistics that will help in managing their collection management decisions. The important point is that both the product and the sales model will evolve with customer input and feedback to take advantage of the unique capabilities of electronic technology.

Of course, all of the possibilities listed can be brought to fruition with today's technology. The rub is training readers to expect and value these enhancements and retraining authors to create them. This process will take time, patience, and ongoing investment in creating and distributing and archiving rich content. 🌳

eBooks Two Years Later: The North Carolina State University Perspective

by **Nancy J. Gibbs** (Acquisitions Librarian and Associate Head of Technical Services, Perkins Library, Duke University, Box 90187, Durham, NC 27708-0187; Phone: 919-660-5894) <Nancy.Gibbs@Duke.edu>

Two years ago publishers, librarians, writers, critics, and customers very much doubted that eBooks would be an alternative or an addition to print books, let alone a viable product. Perhaps not in the form we view them at this moment, but eBooks are here, are part of our academic collections, and fill a need for our patrons in this Internet-accessed world. We have opened the bottle and we can't put the genie back in – and would we want to?

At **North Carolina State University** we investigated, initiated, and introduced both eBooks and hand-held readers to our patrons. Initially, many in the academic community questioned those decisions based on untested products. But librarians on our staff saw this new venture as a viable alternative to bring online access of some of our monographs collection to our patrons, much as we had done

with our electronic journals and aggregator databases during the past five years. At the same time this project was beginning there was a statewide mandate to increase access to resources for patrons throughout the state, with a specific emphasis on distance education opportunities. eBook access was a natural extension to the already available eAccess to journal titles and databases. Our goals for this project were:

- Expand library services
- Become comfortable with new technology
- Monitor circulation
- Review progress

The **Libraries at NC State University** began their eBook projects on a small scale; but in reality we purchased access to a large amount of materials available electronically, became very comfortable with this new technology, and were much the richer for the experiences. All of us involved in this learned from this new technology!

The hand-held devices we introduced included five **SoftBook Readers** and seven **Rocket eBooks** devices. These were purchased from two separate vendors, uploaded with titles purchased from two separate vendors, and circulated from the Libraries' Reserve Room facilities. Positive feedback concerning the devices included the ability to read in less than ideal lighting situations; increasing the type font to accommodate low vision problems, and carrying one device with 10-15 titles available to be read. Each title had to be assigned to a specific reading device and that selection could not be changed unless the title was re-purchased for another device. Copyright constraints and device producers did not allow the same title to be placed on more than one device; nor did the technology allow the owner of the devices to allow this to occur.

Although each patron using these devices reported positive experiences with the devices and was comfortable with the technology, there was still the problem of not being able to load the hand-held device with any other set of titles. The most common complaint from our patron surveys was the inability to allow patrons to load their own selections of eBook titles onto the device. What is needed is a "gas pump model"

whereby a blank hand-held device could be attached to a computer and the patron could download those titles onto the device that were of interest to him. Genre-based readers have been tried in other libraries to accommodate this need and positive results have been reported, but if this technology is to flourish in a library environment there is still the need to allow patrons to make their own decisions on what eBook titles they read on these hand-held devices.

During this same time the **NCSU Libraries** purchased the hand-held devices, they purchased access to 1600+ **netLibrary** titles. At the time, that was 85% of all the eBook titles **netLibrary** had to sell. Over the course of the next two years we tracked that access and the circulation of those titles. We also added to our eBooks collection; the Libraries' total collection numbered 3,743 titles by 2001. Those additions came from our own purchases over the course of the succeeding two years. Last year the Libraries also had the opportunity to access the total **Solinet** collection of 14,485+ titles, purchased through an agreement with **NC LIVE**, our statewide consortia. The total collection now numbers over 18,000 titles, and our readership of those titles has increased too!

During the first few months, our patrons discovered our eBook collection somewhat serendipitously. We had advertised this new service on the Libraries' home pages; we had branded our titles at **netLibrary** with the Libraries' logo; and we talked about this new resource to faculty and students on a one-on-one basis. But we did no broad scale marketing of these titles or inputting bibliographic records into the online catalog until several months later when staff completed the updating of the bibliographic MARC records for print books to include the eBooks in the online catalog. In the ensuing months, as eBook titles

were added to our collection and the online catalog, we saw an increase in circulation of those titles. The Libraries continue to maintain their commitment to entering bibliographic information into the online catalog, at the time of purchase, for all new eBook titles so patrons have immediate access to the full collection.

Our circulation statistics provide interesting data that I suspect could be born out at other academic institutions that provide online bibliographic access to eBook titles. During the initial months of a school year there is a wide variety of usage for many of our eBook titles. The most popular subjects are computer science, technology/engineering, economics/business, medicine/health/wellness, literature, and philosophy.

During the second and third months of each semester there is a greater circulation of those titles that meet the needs of students needing to write a 3-5 page paper on a current events topic for an introductory survey class. Thus we see titles circulating in the subject areas of criminal justice, abortion, death penalty issues, childcare, alcoholism, etc.

Then as we proceed through the semester we revert back to titles of general interest; but again as we near the end of the semester and students are preparing to find jobs over the semester break, graduate and take jobs in the "real world," or are honing their computer skills we see eBooks titles being circulated in the fields of "how to write a resume" and the *Dummies guide to… .*

Then the new semester begins and the whole circulation process begins again. Only during the summer session did we not see this trend repeat itself. Our summer sessions are intensive, shortened sessions with a non-representative group of students on campus. Summer students tend to be making up classes, trying to get ahead of their traditional class in order to graduate ahead of time, non-traditional students who attend a another institution during the Fall and Spring semesters, or post-degree students returning to campus to complete requisites for an advanced degree or educational certification. These students tend to skew the data due to the nature of their classes, but their use of eBooks is still important, interesting, and worth tracking. Subjects of interest here include computer science, business, technology, biology, and publishing (teach yourself MS Word in 24 hours).

2000/2001 netLibrary at NCSU Libraries			
(statistics provided by David Goldsmith)			
	Number Owned	Number Accessed	Number Used
NCSU Libraries Collection	3,743	1,790	3,888
NC LIVE/Solinet Collection	14,482	1,099	3,648
Usage is defined as either browsing or checking out a title.			

An additional note needs to be stressed very importantly in evaluating circulation results. As stated before, **The NC State University Libraries** has made a concerted effort to add holdings to our online catalog for all the purchased **netLibrary** titles. Students looking for a title or subject will find an eBook citation just as they would if the title was available only in print format. Patrons do not need to access some other list of electronic resources for their only access to the eBook collection. This is an important consideration when evaluating our, or any, academic eBook collection and its inherent circulation. Libraries that do not provide this access have reported less than satisfactory use of their eBook collections.

This notation is also valuable when examining total circulation figures, both for our **NCSU Libraries** circulation statistics and for the **NC LIVE/Solinet** collection. The **NCSU** collection was selected by our collection managers and has been described bibliographically

in the online catalog for over two years. The **NC LIVE/Solinet** collection was selected by that staff, is of a more general collection, and bibliographic records for those titles have just recently loaded into the Libraries' online catalog. Not knowing access was available to an electronic title would significantly skew circulation data. The chart on pg. 24 shows circulation statistics for each of these categories.

Several libraries and consortia that were beginner customers to the eBook market have stuck with the products; increased the number of titles to which their institution subscribes; and are reporting positive results with eBooks. Although the utility that provides those eBook collections may vary, change, or differ between institutions or over the course of time, most early adopters of this technology know it has a place in our book collections.

Yes, there are many innovations we would like to see as this technology progresses. Among these are persistent title collections, simultaneous access models, bits and parts of books being accessible for use in reserve collections and course packs, simultaneous dis-

tribution of eBooks and pbooks for purchasing decisions, consistent standardized formatting, ability to incorporate text, video, and audio, front-listed titles, offline and online access, and perpetual access. As for the hand-held devices: many disciplines are looking at this technology for researchers and corporate documents. Medical doctors consult their copy of the *Physicians Desk Reference* on their **PalmPilots** to prescribe a drug for patients. Corporations are considering loading supply manuals and office policies onto these devices for their managers. Booklovers needing large-type print for reading comfort enjoy the ability to increase type font size while allowing them to read many more non-fiction titles than available in their local libraries.

All of these wants and desires will come as we embrace this new technology and find different ways for it to work in our library environments. eBooks might never replace the printed book for true reading enjoyment or textural scholarship, but they have a place in our collections and provide a service to our users. And they will evolve to meet patrons' needs.

Nylink's Shared Collection: A Collaborative Introduction of a New Technology

by **Mary-Alice Lynch** (Executive Director, Nylink, State University of New York, State University Plaza, Albany, NY 12246; Phone: 518-443-5444) <lynchma@Nylink.suny.edu>

Give us your money and see what we do with it! That is an offer that most of us with any semblance of frugality could easily refuse. Yet it is the concept on which the **Nylink/netlibrary** shared eBook collection was formed.

In late 1999 and early 2000, what we now see as a natural evolution of the access to electronic information was emerging with the introduction of eBooks to the marketplace. Most libraries had experience with electronic databases and were still struggling with the budget pressures and management issues of incorporating electronic full text journals into their collections. As eBooks began to emerge, the world of electronic information was now poised to add a new level of complexity to the most sacred area of library collections—books themselves.

Nylink is a not-for-profit library membership organization whose mission is to enhance collaboration and cooperation and to facilitate access to and implementation of quality, cost effective information technologies and services. **Nylink** is located in New York State, a state historically rich in library resources with approximately 7,000 libraries, including 11 ARL libraries and approximately 250 higher academic institutions.

Since one of **Nylink's** major objectives is to facilitate collaboration in the adoption of new technologies, **Nylink** entered into an

agreement with **netLibrary** in early 2000 in order to provide a mechanism for libraries in the region to introduce eBooks into library collections, initially through a shared collection. That spring, **Nylink** opened a trial of the then-current **netLibrary** collection to interested libraries in the region. This trial provided libraries an opportunity to experiment with and take their first look at eBooks.

While the trial was progressing, **Nylink** staff struggled to develop a pricing model that would encourage the broadest possible participation, yet accumulate enough funds to actually purchase a collection with enough critical mass to be a viable and substantive addition to library collections. This was a formidable challenge.

netLibrary offered two pricing models. The first included the price of the book plus an additional 50% for perpetual access. The second model included the price of the book plus a yearly access fee, with access eliminated upon the termination of that fee. **Nylink** chose the first model for its shared collection, primarily for two reasons: libraries were accustomed to "perpetual access" to their paper monograph acquisitions, and the management of making access decisions on a per title, yearly basis for both **Nylink** and participating libraries seemed too complex to embrace.

An initial pricing model was developed, but feedback indicated that the price point for most libraries was higher than they were willing to

commit. While intrigued with the prospect of adding eBooks to their collections, libraries lacked confidence in the continued viability of new and emerging technologies, and did not have a clear view of how these resources might be incorporated into their collections long-term.

After much consultation with potential participants, a tiered pricing model was developed whereby academic institution pricing was based on $1.25 per FTE (full time equivalent); four year institutions paid based on 100% of FTE, 2-year institutions paid on 75% of FTE, and K-12 paid on 50% FTE of grades 9—12. Public, special, and not-for-profit library pricing was based on a sliding scale based on book budget. Minimum and maximum per institution pricing was set at $2,500 and $30,000. While initial commitment to the shared collection was smaller than hoped, about 15 institutions signed up for participation by May 30th, 2000. All early participants were higher academic institutions.

The initial goal of this experiment in eBook adoption for libraries was to develop a balanced core collection geared towards the collection needs of the participants, with emphasis on materials with a copyright within the last three years. In order to build a collection that best reflected those needs, a survey was conducted of each participating institution. Libraries were asked to supply the top five subject areas that they would like to see in the collection.