

Survey of Library E-Book Acquisitions

**January—February 2011
265 participants**

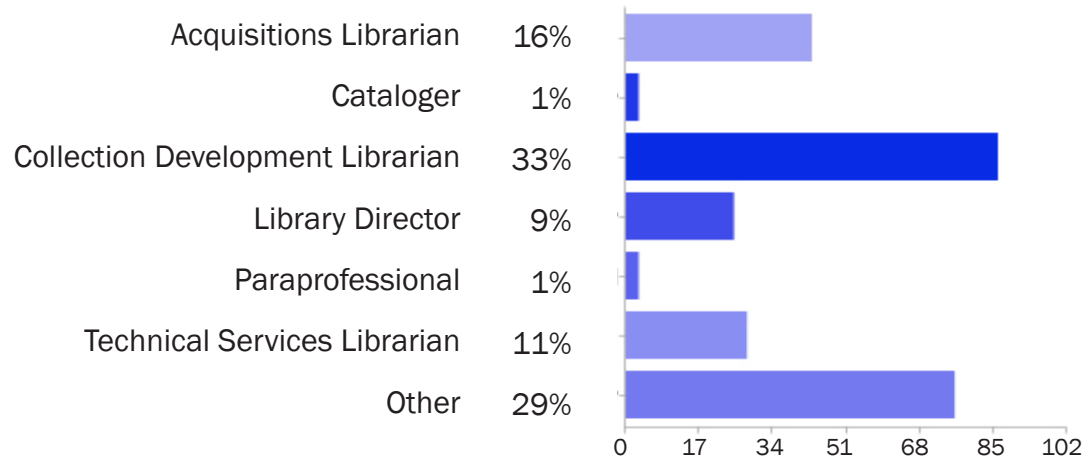
Introduction:

We e-mailed an online survey to all Duke University Press librarian contacts associated with electronic collections. Of these approximately 750 recipients, over 100 followed the link and completed the survey. We posted a different link to the same survey on the Liblicense (Licensing Digital Information: a Resource for Librarians) and ERIL (Electronic Resources in Libraries) e-mail listservs, as well as the Duke University Press Twitter feed, producing over 160 additional responses. This report compiles the results of these efforts, totaling 265 surveys.

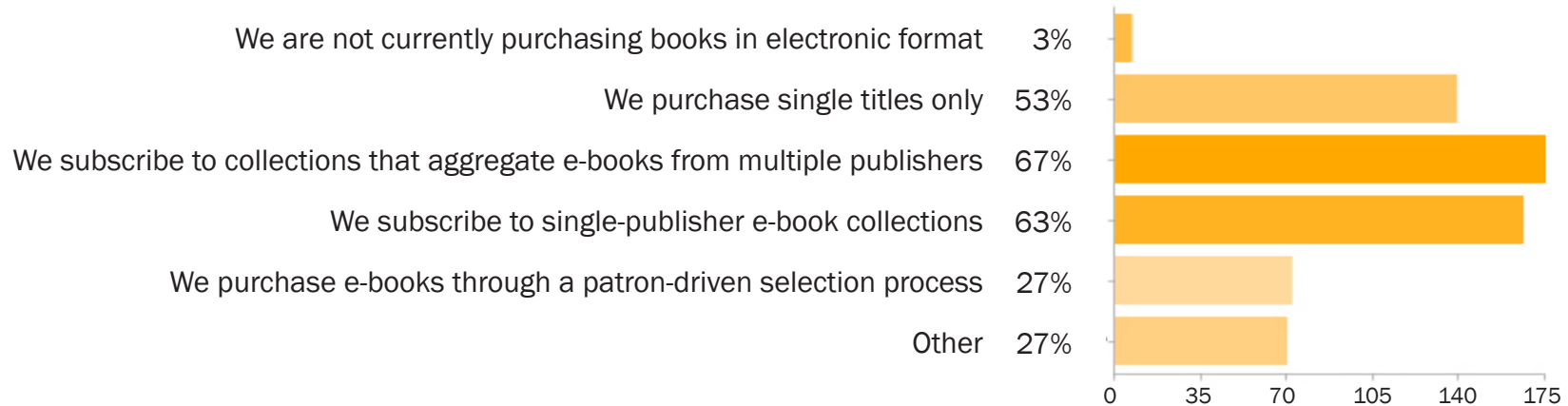
We appreciate the generosity with which respondents provided us with comments and qualitative feedback. To protect the privacy of the participants and in the interest of brevity, we have included only a sample of representative comments.



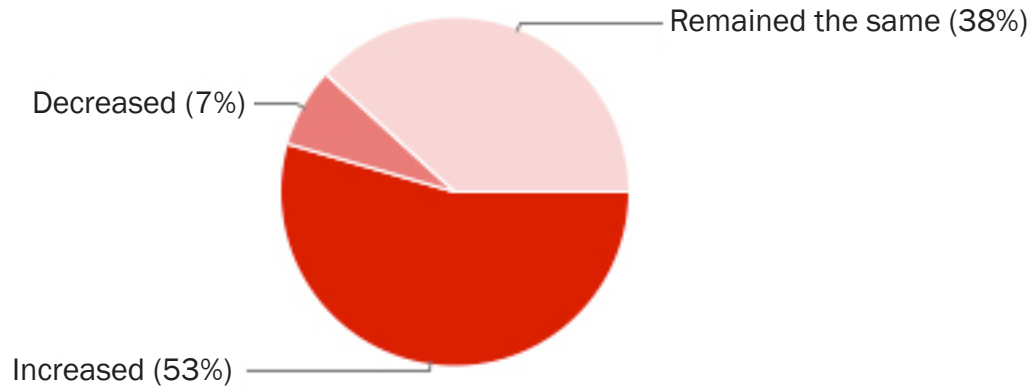
Please indicate the current position that you hold in your institution.



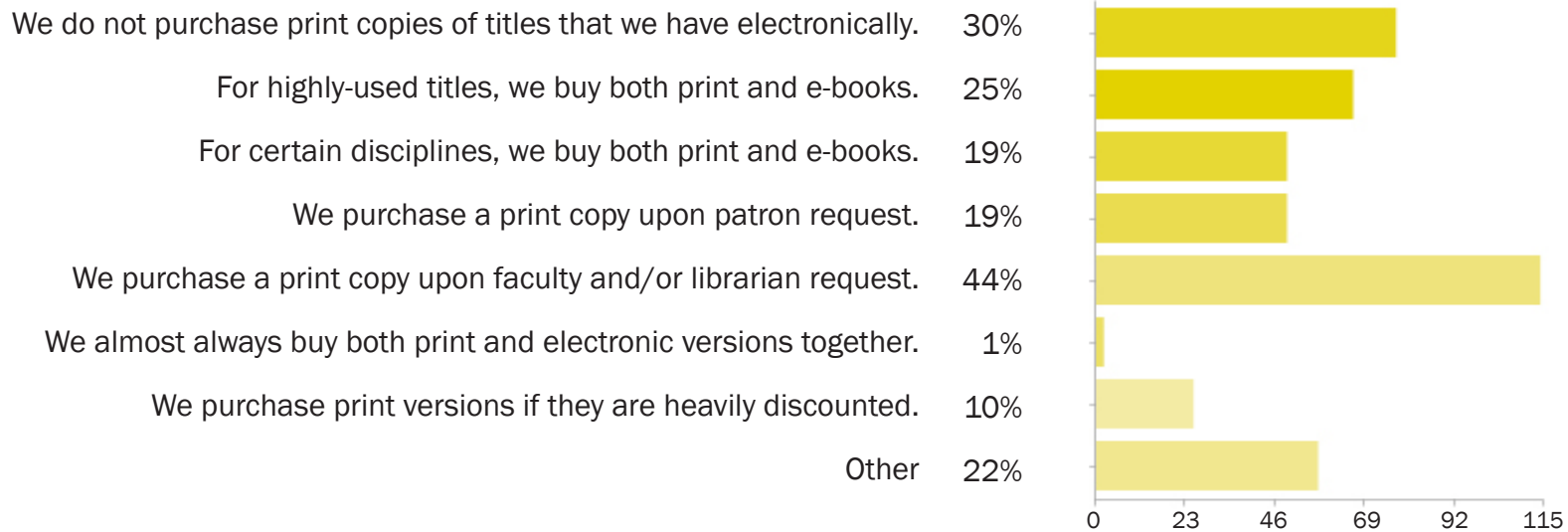
**What is your institution's current acquisition strategy with respect to e-books?
Please check all that apply.**



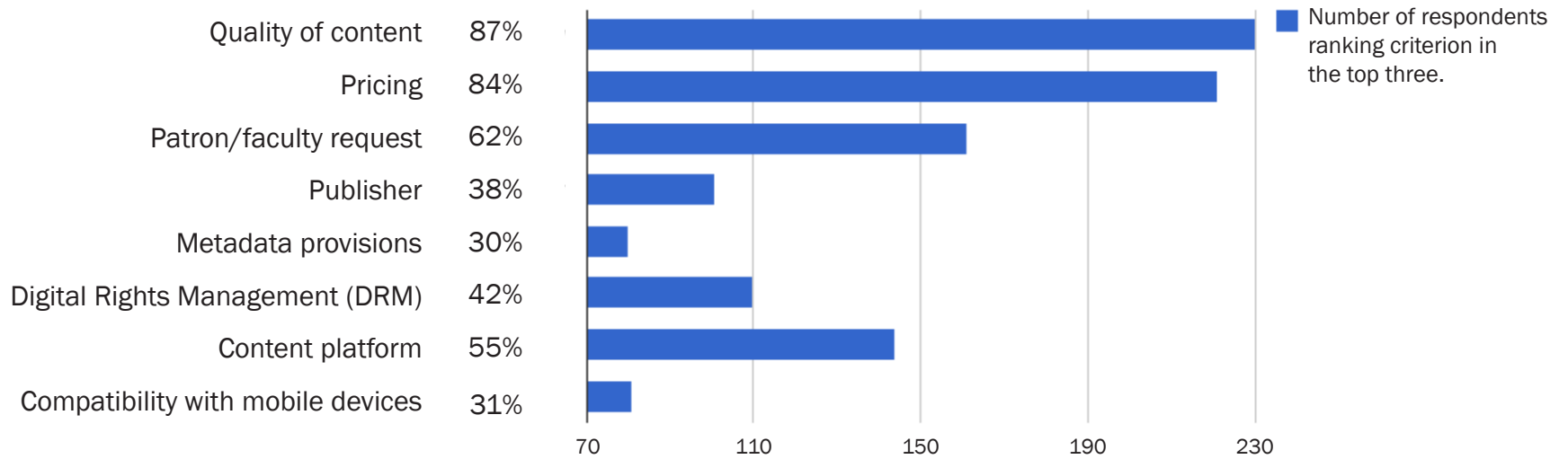
How has your budget for e-books changed from 2010 to 2011?



If your institution is currently buying e-books, under what circumstances do you also purchase a print copy of each title? Please check all that apply.



How does your institution decide to acquire an e-book collection? Please rank the top three most important criteria your library considers in making its e-book purchasing decisions.



How does your institution decide to acquire an e-book collection? Comments

We already have several platforms that we use to access ebooks and I do not want to add more.

The most important for us...and not on this list.. is ability to purchase a consortial model: i.e. with preferred pricing.

we need to make sure the license is flexible enough to allow multiple users and that the platform does not have technological barriers (e.g. requires special software or plugins) for our users. We also look for ownership opportunities instead of leasing content.

This is an evolving set of conditions and our decision points are not completely clear at this time

of course all of these criteria are important in the purchase decision, but frankly if the book is priced significantly higher than print, we just don't buy electronic.

We are moving to patron driven platforms that aggregate multi-publisher content. We like short term loan model.

I also look for availability of cataloging records for the collections. This is also considered when purchasing a collection.

We're steering away from collections.

The ability to share the content via ILL with other libraries, particularly within our consortium is an important consideration, I'd say a 1.

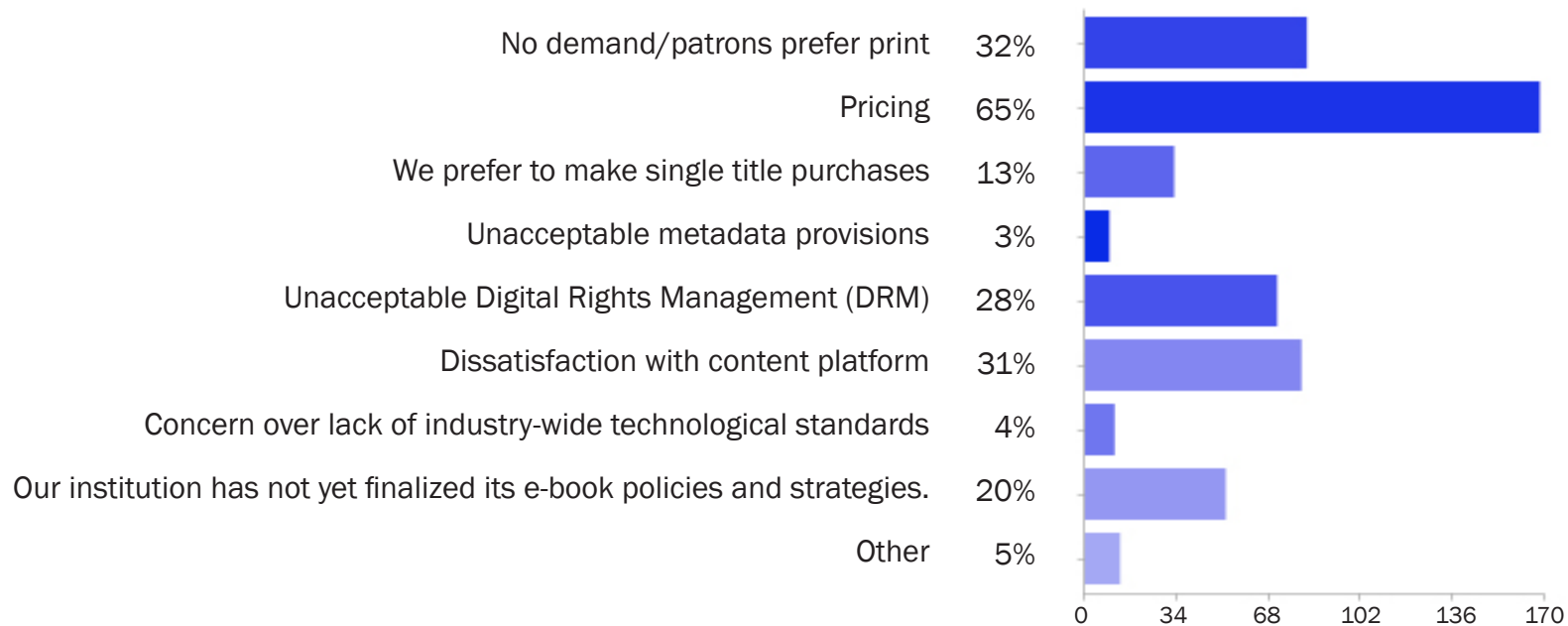
In truth, we have no policy on ebooks at this time; our approach has been rather ad hoc and largely in response to specific requests.

we also look at whether the content is going to help us meet demand more effectively - one of the biggest challenges we currently face is satisfying large nos of students after the same texts at the same time. We see e access as a potential life saver - providing the price

platform, drm and all round quality of content are there. We have neither the space nor resources to buy vast quantities of print textbooks.

We prefer to acquire complete subject collections from a single publisher if the price is right (heavily discounted). In this way we do not have to worry about having to select the interesting titles only. We accept the fact that we would acquire a lot more titles but we save on the selection process. And e-books do not fill the shelves. From less relevant publishers we may decide to acquire single titles.

When your library chooses NOT to acquire or renew an e-book collection (of otherwise high-quality content), what are the greatest deterrents? Please choose the top two deterrents.



When your library chooses NOT to acquire or renew an e-book collection (of otherwise high-quality content), what are the greatest deterrents? Comments

Price is huge. Publisher is huge. For renewals, use is huge. We have experienced reluctance to cancel databases. No experience with cancelling/not renewing ebook collections.

Since we are just getting started with different publishers, different platforms, various package and pricing options, we are definitely concerned about the lack of industry-wide technological standards!!!

We make great use of the usage statistics.

When a publisher sets minimum levels of purchase, makes us pay for platform access or maintenance, makes downloading arcane, etc., everyone loses.

Many of the single title purchasing models are expensive, requiring annual fees, maintenance, multipliers, etc. We want to purchase the book we want, pay for it once and have perpetual rights to it, but that isn't always an option ebook publishers offer.

We will almost never buy something that limits the number of simultaneous users.

We pretty much are not adding subscription based products. That excludes almost all titles using that model from consideration. DRM restrictions which make it technically impossible to use on our infrastructure will also remove products from consideration.

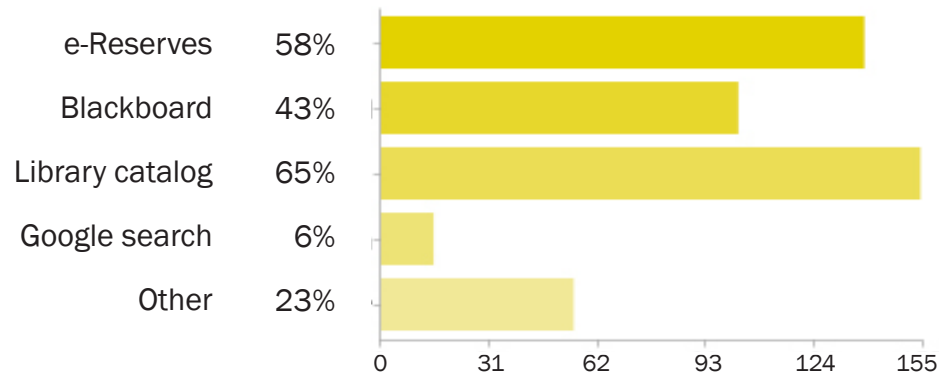
More important than anything here is the need for reliable, constant, comprehensive content. It is highly problematic when there are exclusions, titles added/dropped from packages, etc. Repeated experiences of this sort occasion a great deal of work for both public and technical services staff and make us leary of buying again from publishers or aggregators who can't tell us exactly what they're selling and can't guarantee that we'll have

ongoing access to what we think we've bought.

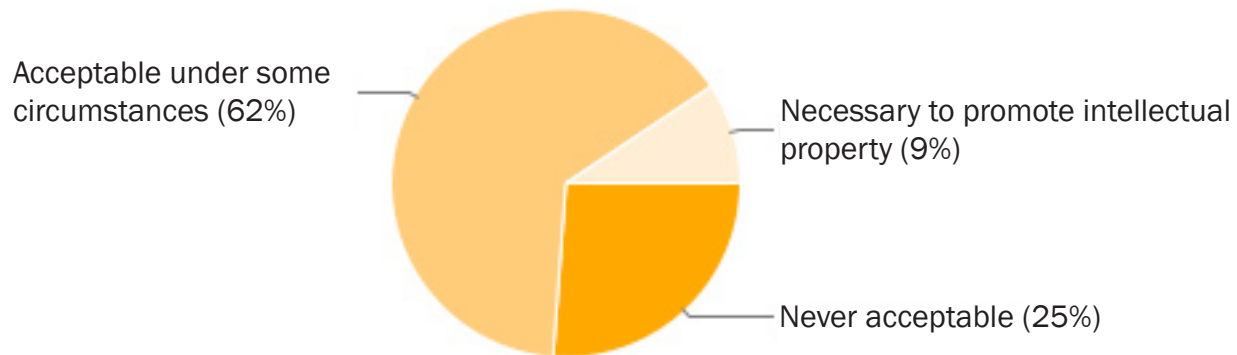
Plethora of technological standards and the amount of work in purchasing e-books (as contrasted to print) means to give up on e-book acquisition. It must be a simpler process before we can expand our e-book collection. Links always breaking, many problems. It is so easy to order and add a print book to the collection!

We do have some demand, but have been surprised that our students are still not that excited about e-books.

How does your library deliver e-book content that instructors have adopted for coursework? Please check all that apply.



Printing and downloading restrictions (DRM) on acquired e-books are:



Printing and downloading restrictions (DRM) on acquired e-books are . . .

Comments

I would like to see an **easy** way for the students to get and use the information they need via ebooks. Currently, most ebook platforms are awkward and inefficient to use. I think that is why many students prefer print. It has the ease of use and interactive features they have come to expect and rely on.

Publishers were never able to control copying and sharing of print; why the great concern over electronic? They need to stop fretting over this issue; if the books were easier to acquire (no big licenses), and easier to use by patrons, we'd buy more of them! They are slowing the market down with these restrictions, and protecting nothing, because even DRM can be overridden by savvy users. Open it up and sell, sell, sell!

If you have to have DRM, then chapter printing/
downloading is key.

Well, we prefer that DRM is eliminated, but some content we purchase despite the DRM.

we are treading water right now; if a title is device-specific (with DRM restrictions) we purchase it in print even though we would prefer to purchase it in ebook format.

Basically, if we only subscribed to ebook content that could be printed and downloaded, we wouldn't be able to provide that much content. Only a few of our ebooks are downloadable, and most have print limitations.

I understand the need to place some restrictions, but make it consistent and reasonable. For example, 30-page printing limitation.

If everyone was consistent it might be easier, but patrons don't understand why they can't print something from one ebook and not another - they just want what they need, they don't care why one publisher only allows 10 pages to be printed at a time and another allows 27 - and

librarians have a hard time explaining it because they don't really understand either. We're not out to take advantage of publishers or break any laws, we want to provide easy access to high quality content for our users and not frustrate them too much.

DRM in a library is unacceptable. It prohibits students from learning and faculty from conducting research.

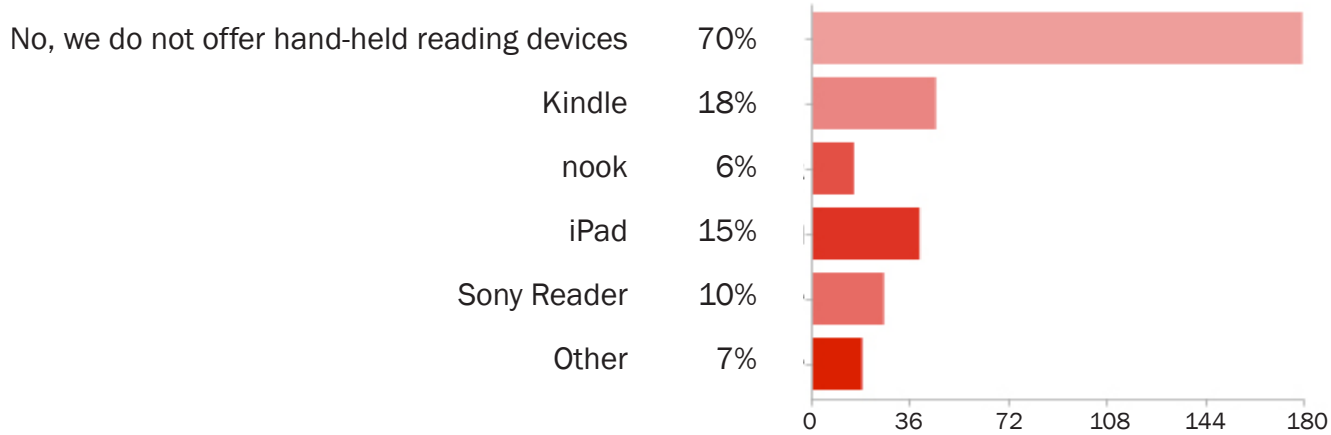
Printing and copying restrictions are acceptable. All content should be downloadable to allow users off-line access; this is quite possible using applications like Adobe Digital Editions. The ability to download from collections has influenced our decision in selecting platforms as well as whether to purchase particular collections. Provisions for ILL of some sort should also be made.

I think publishers should chill out on this [. . .] the naughty users will find ways to infringe rights whatever restrictions you impose, but most are only interested in getting what they need for their studies so why not let them.

From the library perspective, DRM is a serious obstacle to e-book adoption. It's unfortunate that some publishers interpret this as libraries don't care about protecting intellectual property. Hopefully, both sides can work together to develop mechanisms that don't adversely affect usability of the content. Faculty here have complained about the limitations that you place on printing.

Publishers need to work out what their e-book business models are. All the individual hedging around of limits and constraints is stopping libraries purchasing more e-books. It is just far too time-consuming. Even after titles are available in the catalogue there are continuing and constant access problems.

**Does your library make hand-held e-book readers available to its patrons?
If so, which ones? Please check all that apply.**



What do you load on hand-held devices?

I hope we never make hand held devices available.

We experimented with ebook readers after we had launched laptop loans but we found there were issues in that not all of our ebk collections worked on them. I don't think we are inclined to do much more with this at present in terms of us buying ebk readers to lend, but we are working with our school of Computing to explore which hand held devices show greatest potential for mobile library apps

Our library just began an "experiment" offering several types of e-readers, pre-loaded with content. At this point the content is popular fiction; leisure-reading material.

Content should NOT be ereader specific - this would be a deal-breaker for us

Why do you prefer these platforms? [Note: these comments were in response to the question, "Which electronic content platform(s) do you prefer?" We have redacted references to specific platforms.]

Currently, there are no recurring annual hosting fees. Hosting fees are integrated into the cost at the time of purchase.

Platform is not very important. Users don't expect uniformity. We're finding the bells and whistles on various platform are becoming redundant.

All of these platforms are workable, but funky. They need to fix all the little programming glitches and silly commands, like hitting ok all the time, or not being able to use enter to start a book. They all mess up individual books too, there isn't much quality control. For example, [X] often doesn't input the book contents correctly, so you can't navigate easily. Frankly, although e will get better, it is still easier to manipulate a physical book most of the time. [Y] is about the best I've seen yet.

[It] looks like a book; easy to search; print, add to bookshelf, great features, although it does take some training; for reference works, the pdf, printing, emailing feature is great

[X] is our preferred platform because of superior usability, discoverability, range of content available, commitment to pushing the envelope, short-term loans in conjunction with purchases, archival commitment, patron-driven model. [Y] is also good for stability of content and commitment to archiving content. Faculty are also familiar with [Y] and like to use it for journals, so they may also like it for ebooks.

Platforms that offer different modes of accessing content (i.e. HTML & PDF [. . .]) make content more accessible to a variety of devices.

easy to use and follow through site; customizing functions for user; visually pleasant

[X] - easy to move between pages and sections, and easy to know how to move between pages and sections (surprising how often it is hard to figure out), fast loading, clean interface, good search interface, book content takes up most of page (not navigation etc.)
[Y] - easy to scroll between pages, fast loading time, fairly clean interface book content takes up most of page (not navigation etc.)

DRM-free chapter-level pdfs. Very flexible.

Short term loan options.
Works closely with consortium on developing a shared Demand-Driven Acquisitions model.

I like the cross-publisher angle. Although we have bought a few titles direct from publisher platforms, we prefer to have as few platforms as possible. This is especially true when different platforms have different rules of use (check-out length, how much you can print, etc.)

Intuitive for end-users & DRM restrictions not terrible. Invoicing is very streamlined & convenient. They provide sufficient MARC records for patron-driven purchasing.

Our users are most familiar with these platforms. [X] offers nice features such as notetaking, highlighting, easy printing.

It's not a matter of preference. If we need the title, we buy it and deal with the platform.

If we have e-journals from a publisher we would want the e-books to be available in the same platform as the e-journals.

Thank you for your participation. We welcome any other comments that you would like to make regarding e-books or this survey.

Our library is currently struggling the most with acquisitions policies regarding e-books. We have traditionally separated our budgets between monographs and serials. In most cases we can still do that whether the format is print or electronic. However, e-book collections are causing difficulties--do we fund them from the book budget or the electronic resource database budget? Who does the ordering, vendor negotiating, licensing, etc.-acquisitions people or electronic resource people? Our attempts to find case studies or literature on this topic have been unsuccessful. What are other libraries doing?

I cannot stress enough the need for good meta-data and the ability to get that meta-data if we purchase (or subscribe) to e-book packages. Additionally, the need to be able to allow better ways to share e-books, or else realize we are effectively undermining ILL, is another important issue that needs to be addressed in this new digital world. Finally, the preservation of e-books is messy....what will happen in 25 years?

Make MARC records freely available, preferably through OCLC because there are often issue with vendor records. No DRM a plus.

Rather than purchasing packages from multiple vendors/publishers we are looking for ways to integrate ebooks into our approval plan [. . .]

Please don't develop yet another platform.

I can't highlight enough the importance of purchasing rather than subscribing. Books are books - no matter the format - and libraries want to OWN them, as they have always done.

Our budget has not allowed risk taking.

Publishers need to work with library book and serials vendors, at least for single-title if not also collection-level

ordering of e-books. They don't seem to understand that it will make things easier for everyone, and libraries may purchase more e-books if they can go through vendors and processes that are already in place.

at the moment the demand for them seems insatiable - as the numbers of students we are supporting grows ever larger and they buy fewer and fewer textbooks themselves (even when recommended to do so), we feel that ebks are an essential part of our service offering.

The main issue we have with ebooks is that it is not always clear which titles will be available as e. Print often appears prior to e and we find we have already purchased print when e would have been the preferred option

Huge preference for publishers who issue p and e simultaneously. We prefer e now in most circumstances; it's a teeth-grinding situation to buy print in March and then notice that the e-book is issued in December - we won't buy both except in special circumstances.