



Final Report: Task Force on the Integration of E-books

OCLC Member's Council October 21, 2007

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A Brand Transformed

“What we need to do is put content in a format that is fit for any purpose.” (John Makinson, CEO of Penguin Group)²

Among information seekers, “*library* is synonymous with *books* [physical books].”³ Since 1971 and the beginning of Project Gutenberg, open-content and commercial electronic books have had a relatively slow adoption rate in libraries especially in comparison with other forms of electronic information. Since the December 2004 announcement of the Google Library Project, it is now common wisdom that libraries will be transformed with the advent of the mass digitization of books. “We just don’t know exactly how. . . .”⁴

In September 2006, the Executive Committee of OCLC Members Council created the Task Force on the Integration of E-books to investigate how “libraries and OCLC can best integrate e-books into library services and collections.” At the Task Force’s first meeting in October 2006, it decided to begin work by looking at the e-book landscape and collecting case studies from libraries and consortia with significant experience with e-books. In February 2007, the Task Force reviewed its work on the e-book landscape. It also organized sub-groups to look at what library services will be transformed by e-books, what considerations are important for the integration of e-books and what key observations and recommendations it should make to Members Council.

In May 2007, the Task Force distributed to Members Council a draft report, an appendix of ten library case studies, and five draft recommendations. At the May Members Council Meeting, the Task Force made its report and received many helpful comments and suggestions. Most of the comments and suggestions were integrated into the report, and one case study was added to the appendix.

In the conduct of its work, the Task Force has had regular conference calls to discuss key issues. Its members have conducted literature searches, shared important sources and conducted much work via e-mail.

Members of the Task Force are very aware that this report is not the last word on e-books⁵. It is seen as the opening of a serious conversation within Members Council regarding e-books and their impact on libraries, information seekers and OCLC.

Current E-book Landscape Business and Service Models

Background

There are strong forces at work that shape the expectations of libraries and publishers regarding the topic of e-books. It is critical to understand the perceptions and financial framework that each party brings to the discussion. What follows is an attempt to summarize the key issues that impact the ability to define and implement business models that are, by virtue of the nature of digital technology, different from long-standing and well understood models.

Promise and Fear

Librarians and others express great hopes for the digital library of the future. It “. . . will give access to a large variety of multimedia and multi-type documents created by integrating content from many different heterogeneous sources that range from repositories of text, images, and audio-video, to scientific data archives and databases.”⁶ The environment will be seamless and digital preservation will be provided. The hopes for the future reflect an all-encompassing philosophy, suggesting open and easy access to the best of all available types of content.

Book publishers face a fast-changing environment where long standing and successful business practices need to adapt. Some publishers can envision the digital library of the future and see it as a major threat. The Internet has already been a major economic problem for the music and film industries. The easy power of file sharing could seriously damage authors and publishers.⁷ Or more directly, “Mass digitization may kill publishers.”⁸ There is little or no hard data on the impact of e-books on print sales and conversations with many publishers confirm that, to date, e-books have not negatively impacted the sale of print books. In fact, in some cases, they may have helped.⁹ Yet, e-books currently remain quite a small part of every publisher’s revenue stream and the future remains uncertain.

Some publishers, such as Elsevier and Oxford University Press, made the transition to e-books by creating electronic copies of major reference works several years ago. Major publishers of monographs have had a harder time devising a digital strategy. Spurred by the Google Library Project, Harper-Collins, Macmillan and Penguin are now investing in digitizing their own back files of which many titles are currently out of print. They are looking to take advantage of the new technology and compete with companies like Amazon and Google. They realize that they

have a valuable asset that if put in digital format, can be re-purposed and cheaply distributed. “We’ll earn more from our content as we, and our digital partners,” says John Makinson, “find new ways to sell it, rent it, syndicate it, license it and aggregate it.”¹⁰

In the United States, trade wholesale e-book sales are gradually growing.¹¹ Recently, *The New York Times* reported on some interesting initiatives by Amazon and Google in the e-book marketplace.¹² Amazon will soon introduce Kindle, <http://www.engadget.com/tag/kindle/>, an e-book reader to compete with the Sony e-book reader. One distinctive feature of Kindle is that it will allow a user to “. . . wirelessly connect to an e-book store on Amazon’s site.”¹³ Its one major drawback is that it will use a proprietary e-book format. The same *Times* article also described that Google and its Book Search Partners (participating publishers) will “. . . allow users to pay some portion of a book’s cover price to read its text online.”¹⁴

The Quandary

The basic quandary for publishers is how to price an e-book, and for libraries it is how much should they pay for one. As publishers address their need to be profitable by at times withholding content or requiring strict access measures, the opposing market forces are building demand for integrated content solutions that go far beyond just e-books. That demand, in some instances, contributes to the fears about copyright infringement.¹⁵ The basic issue for publishers is that they know how to price a print book as a single unit item. They well understand the financial metrics, author compensation, and rights management for physical books. The digital world changes that. Titles in a digital format no longer need to be checked out for long periods of time. Multiple users can access a digital title simultaneously. Previously, the value of a title was determined by its subject, author, publisher, etc, and a publisher received a given price for a given title. Potential usage was not a factor and was mitigated by what one individual could check out and physically take possession of for some period of days. In the digital age, the need for “physical possession” by a patron essentially disappears. Additionally, we know that currently actual time in a book is very short since most titles are used for research purposes and not for cover-to-cover reading. Consequently, the value proposition changes, at least for publishers. They must consider new metrics such as: frequency of use, length of use, and the significantly expanded potential for exposure of the content to many more patrons than is possible in a “physical model” when a book is off the shelf for some period of time. The question, therefore, remains how much to charge for an e-book and how much is a reasonable price to be paid by a library?

E-books: Current State

The adoption rate of e-books varies across the globe. In parts of Asia there has been robust adoption of e-books and no uncertainty about their future.¹⁶ In the United States, e-book acceptance is just beginning to move beyond the adoption phase.¹⁷ The publishing of German-language electronic books appear less robust than in the U.S.¹⁸ Risks and rewards to publisher are still being evaluated as are risks and rewards to libraries. There is a lack of clarity about technological features and functions that are desirable versus those that are considered absolutely necessary. Digital Rights Management and Copyright Law in the digital world are often confusing or not clearly understood. There is a lack of agreement regarding what is needed and when it will all come together to drive significant growth in e-book acceptance.

One survey shows that e-books as a share of total library collections are:¹⁹

Special Libraries:	15% to 60%
Academic Libraries:	5%
Public Libraries:	2%

There are five major areas for libraries to consider as they acquire e-books.²⁰

Ordering:

- Direct from publisher
- Through a book services company
- Through an agent
- Through an aggregator

Acquisitions - purchase or lease

- Single or multiple book purchases
- Subscription (leasing) databases
- Perpetual access databases

Distribution

- Direct from publisher
- Through an aggregator
- Through a database/platform vendor

Access

- Interdisciplinary use
- Core subject use

Utility

- Value-added services for students and professors
- Value added services for the library
- Continued growth of collections or availability from publishers or vendors

Ordering

No one situation will meet all the needs of a library. Several vendors and publishers provide single title ordering capabilities; some provide the ability to order e-books on a subscription basis, and some offer a database approach to e-book aggregation. “The important thing to remember about the ordering process is that it must match the need and use of the materials, but should not override the choice of content.”²¹

Acquisitions

Acquisition strategies seem to fall predominantly into two camps: those who choose to access titles on a leased basis and those who choose to acquire access on a permanent basis. In reality, it is likely that libraries will need some titles permanently and some titles for a limited period of time. A library must consider the value of the content, its applications and pricing model. A subscription model may be advantageous for time-sensitive content but perpetual access may suit materials that require preservation. “But, this entirely depends on the value proposition of the e-book collection available from the publisher.”²²

Distribution

E-books distribution is governed by two factors: the type of reading software used and the access model employed. Several factors to consider include platforms and access, download size, security requirements, customization features desired, multiuse requirements, searchability, and accessibility. “The other important aspect of e-book access that a library must consider is how they expect their patrons to utilize and peruse their e-book collections. Notwithstanding the fact that each user can be different, a library must develop, as part of their acquisition and collection policy, a clear strategy and guidance on best utilizing e-books. Because e-books are still evolving, libraries can be in the vanguard for providing access to electronic content.”²³

Access

For some libraries, access seems to involve the two key issues of interdisciplinary use and core subject use. If there is a greater need for access to information across disciplines or a systematic presentation of

subject matter, then a collection or database approach may be warranted. If there is a core set of subject areas that require seminal publications, then a custom collection or single title approach may be warranted. For many libraries, the issue of how to provide access simply relates to whether to provide title by title access to each item owned/leased or to rely upon providing access to the vendor/publisher's database.

Utility

The acceptance of e-books has gone beyond simply including them in the library catalog as a way of generating use. Other utility options are of equal importance in promoting the use of e-books: search functionality, navigation features, personalization features, usage statistics, compatibility with courseware, and portability.

The following chart provides an overview of the more prevalent western language e-book offerings currently available.²⁴ Information about the status of e-books in Asia can be found by going to the e-proceedings of the University of Hong Kong's celebration of its millionth e-book: http://lib.hku.hk/1m_ebook_celebration/symposium/e-proceedings.html.

Zsolt Silberer and David Bass, "Battle for EBook Mindshare: It's all about the rights," *IFLA Journal* 33, no. 1 (2007): 23-31

	Books 24/7	eBook Corp (EBL)	ebrary	EBSCO	Knovel	netLibrary	O'Reilly /Safari	Overdrive	Ovid	Swets	Thomson Gale Group	Rcfcr
Ordering												
Proprietary system	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Integrated with book services company		•	•			•						
Print and electronic available				•				•	•	•	•	
Agent for publisher				•				•	•	•	•	
Database vendor			•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•
Purchasing Model												
Subscription (FTE)	•	•	•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•
Subscription (concurrent users)					•		•		•			
Subscription (swapping)												
Perpetual purchase single user		•	•			•						
Perpetual purchase multiple user	•		•									
Distribution												
Direct from publisher												
Vendor for publisher	•	•		•		•				•		
eBook Database vendor			•		•		•		•		•	
Utility												
Added search features	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Added eBook features		•	•		•	•					•	•
Added services (MARC's etc.)		•	•	•		•		•		•	•	
Integration features		•	•			•						
Courseware features			•									
Personalization		•	•	•	•	•			•		•	•

Figure 1. A comparison of eBook vendor options.

Current E-book Landscape

Factors that Hamper the Integration of E-books

In many parts of the world, despite the attractive features of e-books such as 24/7 availability and remote access, it is clear that they have not been integrated into library services as well as other digital information such as electronic journals and articles. What are the obstacles?

1. There are no agreed upon standards for the development and distribution of e-books; therefore libraries must support multiple formats, software, hardware platforms, and multiple acquisition, purchasing, and usage models.
2. “Digital rights management causes compatibility problems that sharply limit e-book potential.”²⁵
 - a. The lack of interoperability of e-book hardware requires libraries to support audio books on various MP3 players and e-books on different hardware platforms, i.e., computer workstations, laptops, dedicated readers, PDAs, or cell phones.
 - b. Librarians want to archive and preserve access to e-books.
 - c. People do not want to be limited to one platform. They want to access the same e-books from home, at the office, on cell phones, PDAs, laptops, MP3 players, etc. A recent survey reports that 60% of Millennials “. . . want the ability to move their content to any device they own without any problems.”²⁶
3. E-books often require a learning curve for, or knowledge of, finding, downloading, and reading. Although e-book bibliographic records are sometimes included in the library catalog, people find library catalogs difficult to use in comparison to other Internet search engines, e.g., Google and Yahoo, or web services such as Amazon.com. Research indicates that users prefer to use sources that are convenient and familiar to them.²⁷ This learning curve is especially challenging for populations that have little access, training, or experience with technology.
4. Electronic displays are often difficult for people to see or to read for lengthy periods of time.²⁸ Arguably most people read e-books on laptop or desktop computers. Yet, new reading devices show the promise of an easy to read display for cover-to-cover reading.

5. The current electronic workspace for e-books does not model most researchers' behaviors.
 - a. It is more difficult to open, mark, and switch between multiple e-books than it is with print books.
 - b. People want to download, copy and paste, and print information from e-books, which may prove cumbersome or not possible at all.
6. Market expectations for acquiring and purchasing e-books may not be realistic for the e-book providers and publishers.

Issues Checklist

For e-books to become better integrated into library systems, services, and collections, important issues must be resolved. A brief checklist follows:

- E-resources management
 - Integration into library acquisition and purchasing processes, such as approval plans
 - Usage and statistical reports
 - Storage, archiving, and preservation
- Discovery
 - Catalogs vs. databases
 - Marketing
 - Pricing/cost
- Access
 - Digital Rights Management
 - Purchase/lease models
 - Pricing/cost
 - Circulation models, such as simultaneous users or one book, one user
 - E-reserve capabilities
 - Authentication policies and procedures
- Web usability
 - Added features, such as citation printing and formatting, note-taking, printing, downloading, etc.
 - Equipment requirements and device compatibility
- Content
- Vendor relations

Current E-book Landscape

Case Studies of E-book Experiences

As part of its effort to understand the current e-book landscape, the task force collected case studies from libraries and consortia with significant experience with e-books.²⁹ The libraries and consortia providing case studies for this report were:

- Robert W. Woodruff Library, Atlanta University Center
- Douglas County Libraries (Colorado)
- Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), United Kingdom
- Marion County Internet Library, Indianapolis Library Partners
- Nationwide Library, Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company
- OhioLINK
- Library and Information Center, Online Computer Library Center (OCLC)
- Parkway Central High Library, Parkway School District (Missouri)
- TexShare, Texas State Library and Archives Commission
- University Libraries, University of Alberta
- University of Hong Kong and Columbia University Experiences

These institutions were asked to provide the following information:

1. Your library's/organization's motivation for collecting e-books?
2. When did you begin? Provide a brief chronological development.
3. Description of collecting activities (examples of collections purchased, local digitization efforts if any, etc.)
4. Nature of bibliographic access provided.
5. Nature of training, promotional activities.
6. How financed, e.g., Regular? Special funds? Other?
7. User reactions and statistics – the results.
8. Probable future directions.

The case studies comprise the appendix to this report. They make interesting reading if you want to know how a variety of organizations try to integrate e-books into their library services. Each case study is unique influenced by local vision, environment and finances. Despite their uniqueness, there are some common elements that appear in many of the studies.

For the organizations that shared their experiences, they all saw the provision of e-books as a natural extension of their provision of electronic information to the communities that they served. Some explicitly want to support this format because the organizations served

information seekers over a large geographic area. Many libraries had the chance to take advantage of special local opportunities. Except for the special libraries in the group, economics of cooperative/consortia purchasing was a major factor in the development for many of these collections. The economics of it were very attractive. Some of the organizations were highly price sensitive. When consortia pricing would rise, they would either stop or sharply curtail their purchase of e-books. Gift funds and grants played a major role in the growth of many of these collections. Some used only their regular budget funds, and a few used a creative mixture of funding from a variety of sources.

The organizations used a variety of methods to acquire e-books. Some selected individual titles or complete subject sets. Some employed patron driven acquisition. Several used a combination of methods. Some academic librarians questioned collection development practices that strayed from the traditional methods of selecting print books.

The promotional and training activities described in the case studies vary. Some organizations did normal training and promotion in an assertive manner. Others did limited promotion. Many saw the loading of records into their local OPACs as a key to increased e-book use. Yet, the OPAC may not be as effective a discovery tool for e-books as some assume.³⁰ It is difficult to make any generalizations about the reported use of e-books, but there are some very interesting individual observations on this topic. The University of Alberta and the Joint Information System Committee noted studies that they have done or are planning to do.

What do they see for the future? The University of Hong Kong looks to a robust growth in the collection of e-books. Some organizations indicate that they will continue at a modest rate. Others have stopped collecting e-books in reaction to changes in consortia pricing. OhioLINK clearly indicated a change regarding how they will collect e-books: "Our priority focus for the development of e-book licenses has shifted away from aggregators . . . to direct negotiations with major book publishers." Lastly, the JISC is in the process of conducting a "national e-books observatory project." This major project intends to aid the development of ". . . an e-books market that has appropriate business and licensing models." <http://www.jiscebooksproject.org/>

Current E-book Landscape

Mass Digitization

Regardless how libraries dealt with e-books in the past, the creation of e-books through mass digitization will impact information seekers, scholars and libraries.³¹ It will dramatically enhance worldwide discovery of in-print and out-of-print monographs and increase full-text access to pre-1923 monographs. Unless prevented by legal action, Google plans to digitize over 30 million books in the next 10 years and create “a universal digital library.”³² There are other major e-book digitization initiatives such as the Open Content Alliance, Microsoft’s Live Book Search portal, the Million Book Project, and the European Digital Library that will make e-books accessible to a worldwide audience.

What makes Google’s Book Project so distinctive is “. . . the scale of investment Google promised to bring, the sweeping scope of their vision, the rapidity with which they sought to achieve this, and their bold approach to navigating potential legal obstacles.”³³ It is mass digitization on steroids!

Task Force members interviewed key players at four Google libraries.³⁴ These interviews combined with Google’s Book Search website and other published literature gives some interesting insight into the reasons why libraries want to participate with Google, the local plans they have for their library digital copy, and the impact they anticipate from the mass digitization of books.

Why did libraries want to participate?

Even though they do not pay for the digitization, the Google Libraries make a major commitment of library resources. This holds true if a library digitizes only parts of or nearly every book in the collection. Each library selects material; pulls it from its shelves; creates an item record, barcode and brief bibliographic record; and prepares material for transport. The library may check the image quality of the digital copies and decide how to use and preserve the digital asset.

Google Libraries commonly mention enhanced discovery and access to information as a major reason to participate in the Google project. They see it as natural part of their institutional missions. Many libraries noted that the financial incentive of getting large numbers of “books” digitized was very important. Also many libraries saw participation as a good way to enhance their local digitization efforts.³⁵

Some libraries are especially interested in getting specific types of materials digitized. The University of Wisconsin Madison mentioned historically unique collections. It is partnering with the Wisconsin Historical Society in this effort. UW Madison is also interested in government publications since Google currently includes only snippets of post-1923 government publications. UW Madison intends to enhance the University of Wisconsin Digital Collections with some of these publications.

What are they doing or going to do with the digital assets that they receive back from Google?

Although many of the Google libraries have experience with large-scale digital collections, several have not yet done detailed planning for dealing with the library digital copies that they will have as a result of the Google project. Some libraries expressed the idea that the project will help them get a better understanding of print and digital preservation issues and learn better how to live and work in a digital world. The New York Public Library is taking the concrete step of creating a new position, a “digital strategist.” The person in this position will help clarify the implications and develop strategies regarding their digital programs. As a first step, the University of Virginia plans to create some tools for manipulation and to do some mark-up of selected titles.

The University of Michigan, long a leader in digital collections, is an example of an institution making extensive and creative use of the digital assets locally. The digitized collection, called **MBooks**, is searchable in the UM library catalog. Full-text of works that are out of copyright or in the public domain is available. In spring 2007, Michigan students will be able to see the numbers of hits on a particular subject found on each page of a title still under copyright. This will make relevance more obvious. UM will provide in-the-library access to the full text of copyrighted material under Section 108 (preservation purposes). In addition, they are working with the National Federation of the Blind to provide full text of all digitized materials for the sight disabled. Potentially, 90% of the books in the UM libraries will be available to the sight disabled.

The preservation of these digital assets will be a major issue for the Google libraries. Oxford has developed a partnership with Sun Microsystems to enhance its preservation infrastructure.³⁶ The libraries of the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) are discussing the establishment of a federated, certified trusted digital repository.

Concerns regarding Google Book Search

The Task Force has not found serious concerns about the Google Book project expressed by the Google libraries themselves, although concerns have been expressed by many librarians and publishers worldwide. One of the most thorough and thoughtful critiques came from Jean-Noel Jeanneney in *Google and the Myth of Universal Knowledge: a View from Europe*.³⁷ David Bearman has done an admirable job of describing the “. . . five distinct critiques Jeanneney weaves through. . .” his book.³⁸

They are:

1. The Google Books Library Project is culturally biased towards English language material. This is based on the fact that the original Google 5 contained four libraries in the United States and one British library. As of this writing, Google has 18 library partners with some partners representing several individual institutions. Eleven partners are in the United States; five are on the European continent; one is in Japan; and one in England.³⁹ It may be true that cultures and languages will be underrepresented in Google, but it is fair to say now that Google is moving toward more universal coverage.
2. Google’s presentation of scanned books is significantly flawed. The scans are not carefully done. There are too many inadvertent fingers displayed and too many misaligned, cut-off or missing pages. Also, scanned pages appear without any cultural context.
3. Google Book Search results ranking is not appropriate for discovery of the world’s cultural heritage. It is linguistically biased and may be influenced by commercial motives.
4. Google or any for-profit enterprise should not have so much control over such a large body of cultural heritage and should not limit the uses of the digital assets by the Google libraries.
5. Google does not respect the rights of authors and publishers.⁴⁰

It is good to be mindful of the critiques of Jeanneney and others.⁴¹ The Association of Research Libraries lists concerns in a “Negotiation Checklist” for libraries that participate in mass digitization projects.⁴² Yet, mass digitization of books, as represented by Google and other projects, requires that libraries respond to the explosion of e-books in a constructive manner so they can be integrated into the library mainstream for the benefit of information seekers.

E-content Synchronization

During the past year, OCLC has been designing a program to synchronize WorldCat with the major mass digitization projects currently underway. The purpose of the program is to increase visibility and access to library digital collections at the point of need. **OCLC's E-content Synchronization Program** is designed to enhance delivery of library capacity through synchronization at three points:

1. **Print Manifestations:** Fully represent library print items submitted for scanning. As records are harvested and matched against WorldCat, any new records will be added to insure 100% coverage for print items.
2. **Digitization Agent Manifestations:** Fully represent the digital manifestations of the scanned print item available through the digitization agent site.
3. **Library Digital Manifestations:** Fully represent library copies of the digital manifestations as delivered from the digitizing agent, archived by the library, and/or made available via the library for access.

The process will create MARC records describing each manifestation with relevant links to the Web page representing the scanned image. The records themselves will be linked to facilitate discovery of all related manifestations. Finally, metadata will be pushed to digitization agents to facilitate the addition of WorldCat.org Find-in-a-Library links on their item pages, driving traffic back to libraries.

The project consists of the following components:

- Implementation of an automated, scalable batch process to add metadata describing print and digitized works with appropriate holdings in WorldCat.
- Facilitation of global discovery and fulfillment via the addition of these new records describing digital manifestations with links to content pages on digitization agent and library sites.
- Increase exposure of library collections through agreements to add Find-in-a-Library links to digitization agent content pages, leading searchers back to libraries for additional fulfillment options

The E-content Synchronization Program benefits libraries and digitization agents by increasing discovery and access to their collection of scanned material at the point of need. The program provides an efficient, automated method to register digitized content in WorldCat quickly and cost effectively, without adding to current cataloging workload.

By enabling representation of these digital manifestations within WorldCat, the program will provide value to OCLC, libraries and information seekers through current and planned OCLC services as follows:

- **Discovery:** Increased awareness of the print and digitized manifestations to information seekers and libraries through the OCLC discovery platform, including WorldCat on FirstSearch and WorldCat.org.
- **Cataloging:** Reduce cataloging work load and increase efficiency by automatically creating records representing print and digital manifestations, setting holdings, and delivering optional MARC records.
- **Collection Analysis:** Enable comparison of library collections against the collection of digitized materials, assisting libraries in collection development and managing digitization program decisions.
- **Resource Sharing:** Facilitate resource sharing through exposure of digital and print manifestations across the cooperative, providing links to digital copies where appropriate.
- **Preservation:** Facilitate preservation and reduce duplicate digitization efforts through integration with the Registry of Digital Masters and WorldCat Collection Analysis.

OCLC is currently in the design and development phase and anticipates implementation of a pilot no later than September 2007.

Library Services Transformed

The increasing availability of e-books is transforming traditional library functions in profound ways. Past methods on how we acquire, catalog, store, find and deliver, track and manage collections are under review. Libraries look to improve delivery services and to achieve more effective use of resources. The following issues arise as libraries adapt to rapid technological change in the delivery of e-books.

1. **Physical Plant:** Library space, new or old, requires change to create an infrastructure that supports delivery of e-materials. Wireless connectivity everywhere is becoming critical to library users. Libraries are remodeling to deliver e-content to readers. New multi-media services in instruction rooms, group study rooms, "Internet" rooms and computer labs underscore the role e-books play in library services.
2. **Staffing:** New patterns of service have emerged with the prevalence of e-materials. Remote library use grows steadily. Remote reference

through products such as Question Point allows staff to point to and deliver e-books across the World Wide Web. By pushing web content through chat and email, libraries extend their services to those with online access. The video display on an information seeker's computer or other device becomes the equivalent of the front door to your library and worldwide collections of information.

Managing e-books requires a different investment in human resources. Libraries are re-examining labor-intensive activities such as selection, acquisition, cataloging, shelving and binding, locating, delivering and tracking of physical material. Skilled employees will be required for handling digital rights management, licensing agreements, and copyright and marketing library resources through the discovery and fulfillment process.

3. Discovery: Presently, libraries do not provide simple, transparent access to e-books. Since many e-books are embedded in specialized databases, the library user must seek experienced staff for access when e-books do not appear the library's catalog. This makes e-books harder to find than materials represented in the catalog.

Once simple platforms are available, libraries are finding wider and deeper use of collections. Books that were difficult to locate or not found by those individuals browsing shelves are now available and being used in new ways. Readers are beginning to make more sophisticated use of traditional material in an electronic world. Older works have been reborn in the e-book environment. Works from writers long-forgotten have attracted new interest and research. The study of texts and the use of language have been further enhanced by the power of quality OCR technology.

4. Access/Fulfillment: Readers expect seamless delivery to any location through any electronic means including desktops, laptops, cell phones, PDAs and MP3s. Fulfillment with e-books has changed delivery points. Physically tracking down materials has been replaced by quick, efficient delivery of materials to locations outside the library. Printing and downloading have replaced checkout as delivery options. Items that have digital counterparts allow for quick access.

Having surrogate copies of materials, especially from special collections opens up items for review that would previously have required on-site access. The e-book also preserves intellectual content for future generations and grants easy public access to materials that have financial and historical value.

5. Education and Scholarship: It is fair to say that many see e-books and the mass digitization of books as transformative for libraries. Some have looked at what this means for education and scholarship. “. . . We also must consider the consequences,” Gregory Crane states, “not only for digital libraries but also for the intellectual life of the human race as a whole if the record of human experience becomes, in substantial measure, freely available online anytime and anywhere.”⁴³ What new fields of study will emerge as a result of so much available content? What happens as digital libraries become more and more intelligent? What is the impact of each word of a book becoming a searchable digital object?

Roy Rosenzweig, a historian, at George Mason University’s Center for History and the New Media (<http://chnm.gmu.edu/>), makes interesting observations about the future of humanities research in an e-content world. In previous generations, a scholar was expected to know the entire corpus of literature in his discipline. Now with massive capture and digital preservation, in-depth knowledge of the entire literature is impossible. However, digital access allows humanists to base their research on sampling, as social scientists commonly do.

6. The “Book”: Will the concept of the “book” itself be transformed by electronic books? Currently, most electronic books are digital images of printed books. Many have searchable text and a few other features. Will we start to see electronic books without chapters and sections? Will we start to see more Wiki-Books?⁴⁴ Will we see (or have we seen) the merging of the “book” with gaming technology? It seems possible that the power of new technology will change the view that future generations have of the “book.”

Key Observations

Since October 2006, the Task Force has investigated and analyzed many issues related to e-books. Below are key observations from the Task Force and from the Members Council discussion in May 2007. These observations either directly or indirectly informed our resolution and recommendations presented for Members Council’s action in October 2007.

1. OCLC’s interest in e-books extends beyond its interest in NetLibrary. Its efforts in e-Content Synchronization are important and should be encouraged.
2. The synchronization of WorldCat with international mass digitization projects, as part of OCLC’s global initiatives, should be a high priority

after the pilot phase of the synchronization program. The inclusion of non-western language e-books is very important.

3. WorldCat is in a unique position to become the portal of choice for the discovery of all e-books made available through mass digitization projects.
4. OCLC should use its database to identify public domain books missed in mass digitization projects and then enable interested members owning these materials to digitize and contribute them to these projects.
5. Additional study is needed regarding the specific impact that Google's Library Program will have on libraries.
6. Google Book Search may become a potential competitor to WorldCat. It may provide Google the potential platform to deliver "library services."
7. As Google helps move the discovery of books to the network level, this may make local OPACs even more endangered and provide a greater opportunity for WorldCat Local.
8. It is estimated that 20% of the books digitized by Google will be in the public domain, 70% of this material will be protected by copyright but out of print and only 10% of this material is both under copyright and in-print.⁴⁵ By far the largest number of titles digitized will be easily discovered but not easily available, which may have a major impact on resource sharing for libraries and a large potential for print on demand services by publishers.
9. The e-book market is rapidly evolving. Publishers, book distributors, e-book providers face an array of options on the best methods to provide e-book content. There is no single model of e-book distribution, discovery and access that has captured the library market.
10. In planning for e-content, consider the needs of small libraries, culturally diverse populations, and under-representative groups. This is important in overcoming the digital divide.
11. Although text books were not part of the scope of this report, the high cost of text books is a major issue in higher education. Electronically disaggregating college texts by article or chapter may provide a cost savings to students.

12. OCLC should play a leadership role in facilitating the implementation of e-book standards across the marketplace that would lead to greater interoperability of e-book formats and reading devices.
 - There are no agreed upon standards for the development and distribution of e-books; therefore libraries must support multiple formats, software, hardware platforms, and multiple acquisition, purchasing, and usage models.
 - The lack of standards and lack of interoperability are major factors that hamper the full integration of e-books into library services and the robust use by information seekers.

13. There is a need for additional studies addressing paper and e-book collections and the use of these collections. Some possible questions to address are:
 - What is the anatomy of the aggregate collections of the Google 18?
 - How are information seekers using e-books from Google?
 - What are the patterns of the e-book adoption by ARL libraries and what are the obstacles to the adoption of e-books?

Notes & References

¹ I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to the members of the Task Force for their dedication to the group's work. Patrick J. Wilkinson, Chair.

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⁵ For the purposes of this report, **e-books** are defined as collections of digital images, usually, but not always digital images of printed books. Audio books are not the focus of this report.

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¹⁶ See "University of Hong Kong and Columbia University Experiences" in the appendix to this report and "E-Book Challenges and Developments 2006: A Global Perspective." Symposium organized by the University of Hong Kong Libraries, 21 – 22 September 2006. http://lib.hku.hk/1m_ebook_celebration/symposium/speakers.html

¹⁷ This is certainly a judgment call. eBrary's global eBook Survey which had an "overwhelming majority" of academic library respondents showed a significant number of libraries purchasing or subscribing to e-books and many with over 10,000 electronic volumes. Yet, the data about patron access and usage give a more nuanced view about adoption. <http://www.ebrary.com/corp/>

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¹⁹ Barbara Blummer, "E-Books Revisited: The Adoption of Electronic Books by Special, Academic, and Public Libraries," *Internet Quarterly Review*, vol. 11, no. 2 (2006).

²⁰ Zsolt Silberer and David Bass, "Battle for eBook Mindshare: It's all about the rights," *IFLA Journal* 33, no. 1 (2007): 23-31. Source for the following material through and including the chart on page 7.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Walt Crawford, "Why Aren't Ebooks More Successful?" *EContent: Digital Content Strategies & Resources*, October 2006.

<http://www.econtentmag.com/Articles/ArticleReader.aspx?ArticleID=18144&AuthorID=11>

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<http://www.econtentmag.com/Articles/ArticleReader.aspx?ArticleID=18144&AuthorID=11>)
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- ³¹ The venerable Project Gutenberg pioneered access to electronic text of non-copyrighted works. For the purposes of this report, **e-books** are defined as collections of digital images, usually, but not always digital images of printed books.
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- ³³ Association of Research Libraries, "In Google's Broad Wake: Taking Responsibility for Shaping the Global Digital Library," *ARL: A Bimonthly Report on Research Library Issues and Actions from ARL, CNI, and SPARC* 250 (February 2007): 2.
- ³⁴ The New York Public Library, the University of Michigan, the University of Virginia, and the University of Wisconsin – Madison.
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