

Talking Points on Library Lending of E-books

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- E-books are a mainstream information product.
 - ❖ Effective deployment of e-books in society depends on an ecosystem of e-book producers/authors, information intermediaries (which includes publishers, aggregators, and libraries), and users.
- The nation greatly benefits from library lending.
 - ❖ Encourages the public to experiment with new authors, topics, and genres, thereby promoting literacy, creativity, and innovation essential to be competitive in the global knowledge economy.
 - ❖ Provides access to e-books to those who could not afford to purchase them. Books should be available to everyone regardless of financial circumstances—a central tenet of the library community.
 - ❖ Enables pursuits that require many different e-books that would be impractical or impossible for most people to purchase because of cost.
 - ❖ Promotes privacy and free expression rights for individuals, as librarians would insist on them in the provision of e-book services.
- Publishers and aggregators specifically benefit from library lending, in addition to the benefits described above. Library lending
 - ❖ Enables the discovery of new authors, topics, and genres that stimulates the market for purchases of e-books.
 - ❖ Includes digital literacy support to help individuals learn about and use e-books and related technologies and applications.
- Current e-book business and operational models are constrained and do not accommodate library needs.
 - ❖ Business models need to include an explicit purchase option that allow rights as permitted under the limitations and exceptions of copyright law.
 - ❖ Licensing options need to be more flexible to address the needs of the different types of libraries—school, public, academic, and other—and their varying characteristics such as size, volume needs, and user populations.
 - ❖ More flexible licensing options are needed for collaborative ventures such as library cooperatives that allow libraries to leverage the digital potential of e-books and increase efficiency through coordinated purchasing and services.
 - ❖ The process for downloading a library e-book to an e-reader should be straightforward with a minimum number of steps.
 - ❖ License agreements need to be more explicit and transparent.
- The library community looks forward to working with publishers, aggregators, and other entities in the e-book ecosystem to develop improved and new models for making e-books available.
 - ❖ Models that simulate the print world serve as a reasonable transitional regime for the short and intermediate term, and we should continue efforts to make them more effective for all parties.
 - ❖ Models should be developed that fully leverage the opportunities enabled by digital content and ubiquitous networking to provide much improved service to readers.
 - ❖ Since production and distribution costs are markedly lower for e-books as compared to physical books, libraries should incur overall lower expenditures for analogous services.

- The American Library Association (ALA) thanks those publishers and aggregators who have worked with libraries on e-book lending models to help make e-books available to as many people as possible. ALA calls on those e-book publishers and aggregators who have been unwilling to work with libraries to reconsider—let us work together to bring the benefits of e-books to all.