



Research Article

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses what Open Access means in the context of eBooks, and the roles that Open access eBooks will play in libraries and in our society. An attempt is made to give brief idea of the meaning, history, explanation about inclusion of eBooks as Open access and significant available sources of Open access eBooks all over the world. The purpose of this study is to help in knowing various dimensions of open access eBook and possible venues to access.

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INTRODUCTION

Today the world is witnessing information explosion due to advent of Information Technology. Each moment is giving new IT tool for speeding up the information exchange. As eBooks emerge into the public consciousness, "Open Access", a concept already familiar to scholarly publishers and academic libraries, will play an increasing role for all sorts of readers and libraries.

Definition and Meaning

eBooks

An electronic book (variously: e-book, ebook, eBook, e-Book, digital book or e-edition) is a book-publication in digital form, consisting of text, images, or both, readable on computers or other electronic devices¹. The phrase 'electronic book' is believed to have been coined by Andries Van Dam in 1980 and the first widely available eBooks was Random House's Electronic Thesaurus in 1981². Books are published either in e-form or Printed, sometimes in both simultaneously. The earlier eBooks were digital versions of print books. Among the first internet-only publishers of new eBooks were Boson Books, Hard Shell Word Factory and Online Originals, all founded in the mid-1990³. The launching of the NetLibrary, Questia and ebrary in 1999, 2000 and 2001 respectively made thousands of eBooks commercially available to libraries and their users⁴.

Open access (OA)

It refers to online research outputs that are free of all restrictions on access (e.g. Access tolls) and free of many restrictions on use (e.g. certain copyright and license restrictions)

The explicit definition made by Budapest Open Access Initiative⁵

"There are many degrees and kinds of wider and easier access to literature. By 'open access' to this literature, we mean its free availability on the public internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. The only constraint on reproduction and distribution, and the only role for copyright in this domain, should be to give authors control over the integrity of their work and the right to be properly acknowledged and cited."

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repositories, databases, and directories. These eBooks offer creative possibilities for expanding access to information and bridging the knowledge gap between information rich and information poor nations.

History

Historically there is no common view about the inventor of the eBook. In 1949, Ángela Ruiz Robles, a teacher from Galicia, Spain, patented in her country the first electronic book, *la Enciclopedia Mecánica*, or the Mechanical Encyclopedia. Her idea behind the device was to decrease the number of books that her pupils carried to the school⁶. Despite the extensive earlier history, several publications report Michael S. Hart as the inventor of the eBook⁷. Seeking a worthy use of this resource, he created his first electronic document by typing the United States Declaration of Independence into a computer in plain text. Hart planned to create documents using plain text to make them as easy as possible to download and view on devices. Project Gutenberg (PG), Started by Michael Hart in 1971, produced the first Open Access eBook. PG aimed to take the text of public domain works and make them available via the Internet⁸.

eBook Formats

eBooks were dependent on technology especially computer for their use and were lacking portability feature like printed books. With the release of the Kindle (an eBooks reader) by Amazon in 2007 and the iPad by Apple in 2010, there was a revolution in the use and delivery of eBooks. Kindle was designed to access the Amazon website, allowing users to browse, buy and download eBooks with this eBook reader without the need for a separate computer⁹. The iPad of Apple was a similar device used to buy and read eBooks online from Apple's iBookstore. Presently, due to the technological developments, most of the eBooks readers are used to buy, browse, view and download not only eBooks but other documents as well.

Writers and publishers have many formats to choose from when publishing eBooks. Each format has advantages and disadvantages. The most popular e-readers and their natively supported formats are shown below:

Table 1 List of eBook formats

Reader	Native eBook formats
Amazon Kindle and Fire tablets	AZW, AZW3, KF8, non-DRM MOBI, PDF, PRC, TXT
Barnes & Noble Nook and Nook Tablet	EPUB, PDF
Apple iPad	EPUB, IBA (Multitouch books made via iBooks Author), PDF
Sony Reader	EPUB, PDF, TXT, RTF, DOC, BBeB
Kobo eReader and Kobo Arc	EPUB, PDF, TXT, RTF, HTML, CBR (comic), CBZ (comic)
PocketBook Reader and PocketBook Touch	EPUB DRM, EPUB, PDF DRM, PDF, FB2, FB2.ZIP, TXT, DJVU, HTM, HTML, DOC, DOCX, RTF, CHM, TCR, PRC (MOBI)

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services and libraries can integrate the directory into their online catalogues, helping scholars and students to discover the books. The directory is open to all publishers who publish academic, peer reviewed books in Open Access and should contain as many books as possible, provided that these publications are in Open Access and meet academic standards.

Internet Archive (<https://www.archive.org/>)

The Internet Archive Text Archive contains a wide range of fiction, popular books, children's books, historical texts and academic books.

Open Library (<https://openlibrary.org/>)

Primarily a large book catalog, it is a project of the Internet Archive. The interface connects you to scanned versions of books from the Internet Archive and connects you to other places to find the books in print. Special areas are as:

- Audio Books, both human-read and computer-generated.
- Bookshelves: Groupings of related books.
- CD and DVD Project. Download entire CDs or DVDs, or have a free disc sent to you.
- Digitized Sheet Music (dormant).
- Free Kindle Books: about free kindle books at Project Gutenberg.
- Mobile Reader Devices How-To: about kindle, nook, cell phone, and other mobile devices
- New Books Feeds: ways to keep you updated on new publications.
- Offline Catalogs: handy eBook Listings to consult offline.
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- Top 100 Books and Authors: the most downloaded books and authors.

Internet Public Library (<http://www.ipl.org/>)

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Internet Classics Archive (<http://classics.mit.edu/>)

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New Zealand Digital Library (<http://www.nzdl.org/cgi-bin/library.cgi>)

A project of the University of Waikato, collections available include historical documents, humanitarian and development information, computer science technical reports and bibliographies, literary works, and magazines in HTML and PDF.

Online Books Page (<http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/>)

This University of Pennsylvania site offers access to more than 16,000 books online.

Perseus Project (<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/>)

This is classical digital library site, with Greek & Latin texts, commentaries, an atlas, coin images, art, archaeology and more.

Project Libellus (www.hhhh.org/perseant/libellus)

The University of Washington, Seattle, provides this library of Latin texts, readable in your web browser in HTML & TeX (a subset of ASCII). Thirteen classical Latin authors represented.

Project Madurai (www.projectmadurai.org/)

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University of Virginia Electronic Text Center (<https://www.library.virginia.edu/organization/etext/>)

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CONCLUSION

Core goal of the Open Access movement is increasing access to many types of information. It's been estimated that 4 billion books are printed each year. That seems like a big number until you remember that the world's population is almost 7 billion. A large fraction of the world's population has minimal access to books. Yet the number of cell phones in the world has been estimated at 4.6 billion. As more and more cell phones become capable of delivering eBooks, the fraction

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