

Electronic Book (ebook) Evaluation

9/16/2002 Final

In an effort to provide you with a full-range of library and information services, your library is experimenting with electronic books. We'd really like to know what you think about this trial program. We'd greatly appreciate it if you would take a few minutes to share your thoughts and experiences with us. Your opinions matter to us! Thanks!

1. Was this the first time you had used an ebook reader? (Please circle the appropriate response.)

YES **86**
NO **1**

2. Approximately how much time did you spend using the ebook reader? (Please check the appropriate response.)

2 a. less than 15 minutes
10 b. 15 minutes - 29 minutes
15 c. 30 minutes - 59 minutes
9 d. 60 minutes - 90 minutes
10 e. 90 minutes - 2 hours
42 f. more than two hours

3. Did you encounter any problems using the reader? (Please circle the appropriate response.)

YES (If YES, please explain) **20**
NO **67**

I got a little confused with the whole thing but I think a little time and practice will fix that.

scratch on surface - are there screen protectors such as available for Palm?

I used e-book for 1.5 weeks and read 1 book. I needed to recharge the battery and then buttons controlling the pages did not work.

Needed play time to feel comfortable, hard to read and find items from quick start guide for bookmarks.

Couldn't figure out how far into book.

Page #'s, how much read vs. how far to go.

It died.

Found that after 20 minutes eye strain was apparent

I thought instructions were good and e-book easy to use. But I did have trouble deleting a bookmark. The instructions were not intuitive.

I also found myself wanting to use my finger to touch the screen rather than the stylus.

The options were not self-explanatory, e.g. Notes.

It was rather difficult to move around in a book (trying to figure how to do it.)

Large print was not working on reader

some buttons didn't work at first or sometimes.

No problems once I got accustomed to the touch for turning pages.

Somehow I managed to hit an icon with my finger thereby changing a setting or two.

It was confusing starting, once I got the book open, went fine.

At first using the stylus to find the previous location in the book was difficult.

4. Did you read a complete book on the reader? (Please circle the appropriate response.)

YES **22**
NO (if NO, please explain why) **59**

**not enough time, didn't have time,
prefer books.**

my time was limited over the holidays.
Browsed three different books.
Did not have reader long enough, slower reader and lots to do.
Didn't like the story - had read books already that I liked.
Not enough time and no titles that interest me.
Because I had to share with my brother and Mom.
Wasn't interested in reading at that time.
I read about half a book but decided I didn't like the book itself.
I read parts of two books, so that I can explain them to customers.
I had either read the titles or didn't want to - but I enjoyed learning how to operate it.
Didn't like reading on the screen for so long.
The book I had chosen was not one that I liked.
I lost interest in the book I was reading and felt I needed to return the reader.
Read parts of different titles.
I prefer non-fiction and started several before I chose one.
Too busy playing with the dictionary.
I didn't care to hold it and it was hard on my eyes.

5. Are there specific features of the ebook reader that you particularly liked? (Please circle the appropriate response.)

YES (If YES, what are they) 75

NO 12

Large type, backlighting, page orientation, book marking, the different settings, bookmark, ability to carry many books in small space, ease of finding your place in book, having multiple titles on one unit, light and being able to change font size, orientation and automatic shut off, backlighting for reading in bed did not disturb my husband. more than one font size, ability to rotate page, underlining, page orientation, backlighting for reading in bed at night. Ease of use in bed at night. Dictionary. Orientation, bookmarks, amount of materials on reader, shortcuts The feature that displays the page you were reading when you turn the reader on again. Holds a charge for a long time All books would be same size. It was comfortable to use. It seemed to "read" fast. Easy to use on treadmill Portability. Ergonomically it was very comfortable. The Add a Note. The Allegro for the notes. Ability to read more than one book at a time. (2) Turning display to landscape. Page turner button conveniently spaced for thumb, easy to page back, ability to place bookmark. If traveling, it would be nice to load books and take just the e-book instead of hard copies. Auto page turner. Ease of use during reading. Liked to travel with more than one book. Adjusting print and position of page.

Portability - so many books in one place.
Reading at night without additional light.
Could read very rapidly with no pages to turn, bookmarks, underlining.
The dictionary look up is wonderful
Nice and compact - good for vacation use.
Compact size for car.
Does not need to be handheld, can easily sit on the table so you can eat and turn pages.
Can find place where you left off easily.
More than one book selection.
The pen was really cool, I liked the big page turning buttons.
The large print which allowed me to read at my former speed. (Macular degeneration diminishes speed as you are guessing at words not clearly seen.)
Backlighting was a good feature.

6. Are there specific features of the ebook reader that you particularly **DIS**liked? (Please circle the appropriate response.)

YES (If YES, what are they) **44**

NO **41**

Accidentally pressing an icon that I did not want.
Ordering using phone line.
It does get heavy after a while.
expensive unit, wouldn't want to be liable for this unit,
using the stylus,
when using large type, often words are completely lost and can only be viewed by returning to small print,
uneven weight distribution of the reader.
would like even larger font, want to touch screen without using stylus, can't find way to look at all "about this edition" so I can delete markings for all books.
Difficult to read small print
If battery runs out and you are away from the recharger ... can't continue reading.
A bit of difficulty finding back my page on occasion.
The menu buttons on the side, I found myself hitting them by accident and scrolling a long way from where I was reading.
Limited selections
I like the feel of a regular book and not looking at something computer-like.
No page numbers. (5)
The side bar on the right of the screen isn't graduated to indicate where you are in the book.
Some choices were more sensitive to the stylus than others.
On Large Type, you have to turn the page very often.
A little big to carry around.
The machine could be "touchy" at times. Your fingers sometime activated the screen.
Inability to page back without making a bookmark.
Having to use menu to add notes, this process interrupts the dialogue.
Found it difficult to read, adjusted the setting, but still had glare, not bright enough.
Don't enjoy small format of screen.
Not easy to skip around in the book, can't flip through pages except one at a time.
Since I use a computer at work, reading a book on the screen felt more like work than pleasure reading.
Backlight did not include Icons around perimeter.
Pages corners don't "turn down."
I really prefer to hold a real book in my hands - probably from habit.

I found going back more than a screen or two is somewhat difficult. With practice that might be easier. It is heavy to hold.

Finding specific pages would be tedious and time consuming it seems based on my limited use.

I should have gone to the training.

It was difficult to reference back with no page numbers - difficult and inefficient to move around within the book.

Heavy - hurt my hand to hold it. Found type rather faint and too small.

You couldn't tell what the book was about before you started it.

You can't tell how long a chapter is when you start it. I miss the paragraph indentations and spaces.

The carrying case for it.

Hard to find things in search.

Stylus could be connected to reader.

Too colorless.

Not enough sentences on screen so you have to "turn" the page often.

Lack of margins.

Reset button placement.

Changing books was confusing.

7. What type of books do you think are well suited to reading on an ebook reader? (Please check all that apply.)

71 a. best sellers

65 b. mysteries & other popular fiction

9 c. "How-to" books

17 d. "Reference" books

29 e. textbooks

19 f. travel books.

14 g. cookbooks **only if recipe on one page.**

14 h. children's books **if child has low vision problem.**

6 i. OTHER (Please specify) **comics, newspapers, teen books, books you don't have to page through.**

Young adult novels and biographies. Classics for young adults. Classics. Historical, good for any non-picture book. Magazines, synopsis of newspaper or news articles.

I think the best books to read on this would be books that are read from start to finish, not books that would be scanned or used as a reference. E-book could possibly reduce the back pack load of students. Good for reluctant readers - will have to see how readers hold up to children handling them. This opens up world of printed material for someone with low vision, e.g. macular degeneration, or cataracts.

8. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 representing "Least Preferred" and 5 representing "Most Preferred," please indicate how you would rank the following formats of books if you could get any desired author or title in each of the formats.

	Least Preferred				Most Preferred
a. hard-bound book	1 1	2 4	3 12	4 19	5 50
b. paperback book	1 7	2 6	3 25	4 29	5 20
c. audio book (books-on-tape)	1 22	2 15	3 26	4 14	5 6
d. handheld ebook reader	1 9	2 11	3 36	4 17	5 14

9. How did you find out about the ebook program? (Please check the appropriate response)

74 a. From a staff member at the library

b. From a sign, poster, or flyer in the library

c. From a sign, poster, or flyer somewhere other than the library

- 1_ d. From a newspaper article
- ___ e. From a report on the radio or TV
- 6_ f. From a friend or relative

11_ g. Other (Please specify) **WPLC meetings. Book club member is a librarian. Every week for six months the TV Guide has had a full page ad for e-books. My Mom.**

10. Please circle the grouping below that includes your age.

Under 18	18-24	25 - 39	40 - 55	56 - 65	66 - 75	Over 75
11	3	9	44	15	5	

11. Please indicate your gender. (Circle the appropriate response.) Female Male

72 15

Feel free to offer any additional comments or suggestions in the space below. Thanks for your help!
**Ordering process a little cumbersome and confusing, billing process not convenient for libraries.
 Difficult to use Gemstar ordering process for multiple readers. No ability to order titles for readers on Gemstar website.**

I believe these devices are high maintenance for libraries - checking reader each time, ordering titles, downloading titles, maintaining title list on reader - are just a few of the processes that take time. It was fun to try, but for me it was more of a problem.

I still prefer to read a hardbound book.

Are these readers susceptible to extremes of hot and cold as the Palms are?

The lenscloth kept falling out of the pocket.

The readers would be great for students to have their textbooks loaded on.

I kept worrying that the battery would run down.

I enjoyed using it. It won't replace books in my mind, but is still nice to use.

I can see this could be the future of books. It offers so much capability in a handy, easy to use package. I had my doubts on how much I would enjoy reading this way, but I was pleasantly surprised.

Would be cool if school books were loaded onto it.

I like it a lot more than a book - it is cool. I would definitely use it.

I suggest this thing to everybody. I can't wait til this thing gets music. Would use over a book. Would be great for schools.

My kids were competent immediately. I had a short learning period. I would like to own my own reader.

I wonder about keeping it clean and undamaged, theft (would a deposit be made at time of checkout).

Make age-group-specific readers: Adult, Teenage, Children.

Each book should have an abstract.

I think that this might be a nice choice for someone going on vacation or a student who could have a lot of books in a compact form, but if I compared a single hardcover book to an e-book, I would take the hardcover.

I also think it would be hard to navigate an e-book with illustrations or photos, such as some reference or textbooks.

I like it a lot better than I thought I would. It will take some practice and a different mindset - but I like it. I will use it for Club Mead with teens who are more open-minded to computers, palm pilots, etc. so we will see what they think. (Ed. note: There were responses from 7 teens.)

The e-book reader seems like the ideal tool for college student use (textbooks, lengthy photocopied documents) and for the business traveler who might prefer this compact device for both professional and recreational reading.

If the library had a sufficient supply, it would also meet the needs of reading and discussion groups. I enjoyed using it and demonstrating it to others.

I didn't want to take the ebook places because I was afraid of losing it or having it stolen.

Left hand compatible!

I did not have as much trouble as I expected, but I still prefer traditional paper for reading.

I have some concerns about the cost of the books and the readers - especially now when we are all unsure of our funding for the future.

I used the e-books with several groups. I passed it around at a book discussion. The group found it very attractive and liked the physical design.

Most interested was a group of inner city 6th graders. They were very comfortable with the format. They wanted to own one.

The third group is a Cardinal Stritch continuing education group made up of very senior (70ish) citizens. This group is extremely literary. They enjoyed the novelty of the format. Thought the large print. Interested in \$.

I was surprised at how much I enjoyed reading with the e-reader. For traveling it is an excellent tool. However at home I found myself returning to the paperback format.

I loved this!

If I were to lose reading materials, I would rather pay for a hardcover or paperback than an e-reader.

It's rather difficult to say how appropriate the e-book reader format would be to various types of books without actually having the experience - might, for instance, be very useful for a textbook if one had to study on a commuter train or airplane.

Good for fast readers, but it isn't as fun if you cannot find a good book to read.

What about pictures for kids?

The ebook smelled of tobacco and it even came off in my hands. I concluded that a previous user was a smoker. Because I am a non-smoker I found the saturation to be offensive. I do not recall this problem when I borrowed a hardcover book from the library.

I don't feel a week is a long enough check out time.

I look forward to using it again!

I think teenagers might use it more. They are more familiar with using products like this.

For as long as large print helps those with impaired eyesight, the e-book reader is easier to hold. Audio-taped books tend to make one doze off. Large print books are tiring to anyone with arthritis in their hands.

Paperbacks are hard to control with arthritic hands and print is often difficult to read except with special reading glasses.

Additional Comments from Mead Public Library:

I must say, that nearly everyone who used them enjoyed them. Most, like me, started out as skeptics and then found that they were fun, easy and useful. Teens got hooked on them real quickly, with fights breaking out in some households.

I met with Francha's discussion group on Thursday and they were all converts. I wouldn't be surprised if a few were to buy their own ebooks. A couple points that they made that did not appear in their evaluations:

__two of the group really liked using the ebook while exercising. Ebooks are much easier than real books when you are on a stationary bike or a treadmill. You don't need to worry about flippy pages and don't need to miss a step to push the page turning button.

__and very much appreciated for reading in bed convenience of not disturbing a spouse or a roommate

__also handy for busy, but avid readers...can load 4_6 books on board and not have to worry about what you're going to read next. There's always something. Very disappointed not to have one for ski vacation this week.

__best use...one brand new mom read 4_5 books while breast-feeding. Ebook was easy to prop up on her nursing pillow, page button was easy to press and when she switched sides for nursing she could reorient the page to advance the pages with her other hand.

One short coming I see in our evaluations is that use has been very heavily weighted toward women users. Mead's first experience was with staff who are mostly women. None of the male staff members asked to use a reader. The book group was also all women. And I found that few husbands spent much time reading a book or experimenting with the reader when their wives had them at home. Only one staff member said her husband actually read a book. I don't think he provided an evaluation.

Consider myself an above average reader - prefer nonfiction (do read some escapist works like mysteries, historical fiction), historical and critical literature. To me a book is an intimate non-judgmental friend. Find that the e-book (as with Library books) does not allow for dialogue - this is allow me to note my thoughts and responses to the author - in the margins of the book, which I can over time refer to. Maybe it is my conditioning that says the bound page - the traditional book is more stimulating.