

**JISC – The Challenge of E-books
Workshop 27th February 2013**

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- Ken Chad and Carol Thomas (Project Team)

Introduction: Ken Chad

Overview of the project was presented and the progress made on the three themes. The overall aim of the project is to produce information targeted at Institutional managers on the areas of ebook creation, ebook curation and ebook consumption. Each theme has an infographic provided a visual overview of the theme, moving from this there is the website/wiki linking to resources and case studies and finally there are citations from these resources drawing attention to the specific paragraphs which refer directly to each sub-theme.

The case studies are proving to be popular and are already receiving lots of hits.

The focus of this workshop is to work on the Creation and Consumption themes to review and edit the sub-themes to ensure the main issues are being addressed.

CREATION

- Production and distribution: Evidence from Zac Mensah's work and the Nottingham case study have produced a number of issues in this area including: use apple platform or other platforms to distribute ebooks. Technology changes so quickly the domain is still typified by pdf this is changing in the android/tablet environment.
- Open materials and permission to use 3rd party content – what are the rights and licensing issues?

GAPS:

- Currently the content in this section is centred on ebooks processes from authoring to reading, should it go further back beyond the assembly of content and incorporate the creation of content. The project's current case studies cover repurposing existing print content. Phil Barker described the Book Sprint process of ebook creation reducing book production time from years to just a few days. This involves a few people taking 5 days to go from an idea, to scope the content and to publish the book as e and print-on-demand. Ebooks can speed up the distribution process, so why does creation have to take so long? {NOTE: The Booksprints paper Phil Barker wrote with colleagues for the OER 2013 conference is now on the project 'case study' web page}
- There are issues relating to using legacy content and repurposing it to create ebooks. There is a need to intervene particularly with colour, diagrams, pages and technical interventions (print, mobile device etc.). If the content creator is aware of these issues then it makes it easier to produce multiple formats (print, mobile etc) with less intervention.

- A 'content management' approach to creation allows the ebook creator to create a prototype before contacting authors for advice. It is easier to consider the technology/distribution/production at the content creation stage. Too many restrictions are implemented at the content creation stage may lead to watered down content, however most of content must work on most devices and there can be room for some compromises. The Open University wants all content for all formats.
- Consider what the target market actually wants: snippets, or digitising just the chapters.
- Business Models: this section needs to include MARKETING: for institutions without a University Press, what channels are available to market their material – is it just Amazon? This could include information from the Nottingham case study they chose Apple as their marketing channel. Can also link to curation...
- RIGHTS & Licensing: an opportunity to badge the Institution's content – it can be used to restrict access to the content –but also ensure that people pay to use the content. Alternatively the content can be put on Apple or other similar platform to be distributed freely (ref to Nottingham Case study who take an OER perspective).
Alternatively it can be put in the library, but would it be discoverable?
The Institutional manager needs to know what the affordance is for choosing different platforms:
 - Open access/free is a way of promoting the University. (See Nottingham Case Study). Open access is political and not just a business model that just delivers it. There is CONFLICT between making materials available but not making money, parallel to public libraries who are being challenged to redefine their role when lots of content is available for free on the web?
 - Charging is a different business model and needs to link to institutional purchasing models. This is currently being done on an ad-hoc basis at the moment. (See Manchester University Press Case Study - who are producing from a University Press perspective). Comments: Does making something available on iBooks or Amazon makes it adequately discoverable? Just adding them to the site will not mean they will be they need to be marketed or you need to point people to it (Wikipedia pointing or iTunesU course point to textbooks)

Production decisions need to be considered as this will inform marketing strategy decisions.
ARE MORE CASE STUDIES NEEDED.

CONSUMPTION

3 papers summarising current research into information consumption were presented to stimulate debate on the potential content and headings for the Consumption theme.

Digital Residents and Visitors JISC project

<http://www.jisc.ac.uk/media/documents/projects/visitorsndresidentsinterim%20report.pdf> - facilitated by David White:

This research uses the modes of behaviour : Resident or Visitor. These are behaviours-not people-ie the same person may be a 'visitor' or Resident in different circumstances. The key consumers are the undergraduates and the research questions what is the key information they value?

- Definitions: what is the difference between educational ebooks and etextbooks? Ebooks – why are they still called ebooks and not just websites or e-content? Book is badge of and may explain why the term has remained.
- Oxford UP found that students are interested in convenience and credibility. The concept of a book is held as credible.
- Full-text searching, not having to wade through book but search inside to get to the relevant paragraphs is making research easier. Narrowing down to the bit needed is a new skill, rather than skim reading.
- Students want key source from a credible sources which can be searched to find what they need. Students still hang on to the concept of a book because of credibility, other sources seem less credible to them.
- Convenience – immediate access – 24/7 – wherever they are studying, etc.
- Area to consider: Is credibility linked with money – you pay for book but econtent is free so is it less credible? However this would make BBC less credible than Sky...
- Curation is really valued by students – items on the reading list have got to be good. Students don't want to waste time and so will greatly value this pre-approved knowledge and credibility.
- Younger students have concept that physical book is where the truth resides and everything else is less credible. Would putting a book online somehow make it less credible.
- Convenience and validity are not mutually exclusive – meeting both would be a good measure of success.
- Being able to cite in a good, accurate citation is highly valued by students – reference to blogs does not appear to be as credible... students are still not sure on ebook references..
- NOTHING in these findings relates to the quality of the content. Good content is often not used as undergraduates do not know how to cite it . Creators should provide the citation for the material to encourage students to show they are using it. Content providers have found that students use e-resource from a service but then go and find original source to cite– so it does not show use of the services. Copy/paste citations needed.
- Students have a whole strategy for learning involving the use of vast amounts of resources videos, etc... but when it comes to writing they only cite the academic stuff. Students are worried that to cite material other than books and journal papers may actually get them downgraded. Textbooks are seen as very citable as it is a book and the flow links to their curriculum.

- Technology: The move to 4G and growth in new products will mean tablet users are more likely to be online so models may need to change again. It may be possible to include video and multimedia content in ebooks as the networks may be able to access huge video files online. When this happens streaming may be better than download. Student would be able to cite the book but learn from the video.
- The digital resident is searching information using lots of sources: whereas the digital visitor will more likely print off pdfs and read it to get whole content in one format.
- Students want the ease of the 'chunk' (a relevant bit of content - they want paragraph level - easy to find) but they want the credibility of citing the whole book – so curators have a difficult job.

user behaviour

Students will cite web material if:

- Found at the top in Google,
- The Top 3 sources in Google mention it so it is credible,
- It have a credible URL,
- It come from a credible brand/institution

(Might want to look at Library training on how to evaluate websites)

Credibility issues for creators:

- Make your content credible – make students feel it is safe to read, safe to cite?
- Oxford University Press are looking at what is happening in book market and identified that they need to value their curatorial credibility, value their academic credibility as this is what will sell their content.
- Creators need to consider their market – is it UK or global? To be global there is a need to create credibility outside of your own country. Nottingham University are aggressively establishing international credibility with their OER focus (free and generous – but also internationally visible).
- The credibility of the authors of the book will become more important as open publishing grows (especially with free downloadable books). The reputation of the author will be used by the discerning user to discover credible books.

Credibility issues for curators:

- If there are no University Presses or credible publishing criteria then curators need to spend a lot of time pre-vetting books. There will be a new role curating the reading list will take more time if publishing/books become free, students may place even more value on the curator.

JOBS to be done : academic credibility is a key JTBD for students I want to be able to cite this.. Look at academic articles how many of these cite blogs/wiki etc.

Ask NOTTINGHAM now you have put stuff into a Nottingham ebooks are the students citing them?

CREATION/CURATION issues raised:

- Convenience: student can do it all off-line (after going online to download books) they can then work off-line, allowing them to work anywhere. This only works where suppliers allow ebooks to be downloaded (Coutts, Dawsons – don't allow offline reading). Managers need to know about off-line access when making decisions on suppliers of ebooks (CURATION). If it cannot be

download will it be as usable to students? Sales models need to be scrutinised carefully. One library had the same title available from different suppliers: one can be downloadable but is available on a credit model – when credits used up its gone. Another supplier has the title on a non-credit model so always available but it is not downloadable. The market is lagging behind – demand for downloading is high at the moment.

- Technology The online model was suitable for PC users, NOW students use tablets they want the downloadable model and the models need to change.
- Aging stock: there are emerging problems with collections which were bought years ago under old, expensive models. Libraries don't want to buy titles again but would prefer to access them under a different business model.
- Education markets could look back to the development of the music market: Apple exploded the market with itunes when other companies did not respond to the demand for emusic. Is the education area digging in its heels and trying to behave differently to the ebook market. Publishers are changing their models is there a different model needed for public and academic.
- Cousesmart – closed market all on the ipad but it's just for the student – this is a different model to what libraries want.
- Cuts in budgets need to be weighed against convenience when there are all sorts of unpredictable models.
- Concurrency – can't read the ebook because another user is reading it is not an acceptable model anymore, and goes back to physical book model, it protects profits but it is not convenient.
- Publishers have different models for different customers and especially for aggregators. Some aggregators don't have a title but can be easy to get it from the publisher directly! It can look like libraries are being deliberately difficult if business models can mean libraries are restricted to specified suppliers.
- Creation: When creating new content imagine all technology works across all devices, video streaming etc. then the issues change. At the moment we have to deal with tech issues – once they are gone we move to next issue. Ebooks are lots of bits of material gathered together – the genre does not matter.
- Technology convergence will lead to the credibility issue moving to who has validated it NOT is it a book or journal. For students getting used to education the intellectual brand will become more important.
- Pearson – publishers need to work out what their business? Pearson decided they are into education rather than publishing.

Research in the digital environment by David Nichols and David Clark CIBER Research Group.
http://ciber-research.eu/download/20120328-Reading_int_the_digital_environment.pdf

The research looks at digital reading, not just ebooks. The purpose of the article is to engage publishers. It notes the different behaviours of students noting the use of light reading and skimming then printing pdf, or 'squirreling' of materials. They found 40% of subjects do not read the whole article, few people spent any significant time reading in the digital environment, preferring to move to something else. It was noted that 15 minutes staying on a site is a lot. This behaviour is the modern equivalent of photocopying a chapter of a book, users print/save the pdf – but rarely read it!

Issues for creation

- Navigate through the article is now the main issue. To disassemble articles historically you read it in a more complete way to find what you need as there was no other way to do it. Now you can search for words. This technique is effective but it is not always seen as legitimate even though it can be more efficient? This skipping across the text is referred to as 'skittering' behaviour.
- What is an ebook – do you disassemble it and make it more useful.
- How do you link directly to a specific point in an ebook as in normal citation practice. Could DOI be used more for this purpose, doi for each chapter or even an electronic bookmark...evolution of citation methods is required.
- Once you make it more useful, spreading content over different formats then does it lose its credibility.
- Institutional creators could get ahead of the game by creating ebooks which match (is attuned) changing user behaviours.
- EPUB3 developers: create an ereader that has the technical ability to leap directly to point of the book required. This would be attuned to current user behaviour but user behaviour is changing illustrated by changes in search queries typed into search engines, initially keywords were used but now we type question into Google.
- To get students to discover books you give them the question which will find or lead to your book. This would be ideal for students making discovery easy and knowing it is credible especially if you also give them details of how to cite it.
- Institutional publishers would have the added advantage of referring them directly from the VLE.
- As students get used to how to cite e-content they may become more confident to cite other e-content.
- E-framework course are seen as an eventual aim for some creators.
- Lack of a mental map: the value of a book or embedded video in book – the book gives the video a place on the mental map. One way to help learners is to give them coherence or a mental map – which would help to give sense to their skittering behaviour.

Issues for Curation

- Students rarely read the contents of the books in their bibliography (certainly not fully). So it hard to make decisions on the value of purchases.
- Chunking, skittering or searching is legitimate searching behaviour. Also consider that the halcyon view that students in the past used to read is not actually true!
- Access methods – access to granularity is not developed to the level we would like – chapter 2 of XXX cannot be given as a direct link on a reading list – it is not supported by Shibboleth and

Athens needs to be further developed, sometimes it is not even possible to get to the actual article or even journal title, yet commercially its possible to get directly to a specific Utube video at the point where you last watched it.TECHNOLOGY

- Academic discourse methods have changed but our value on the communication methods has not. Initially academics communicated their important discoveries and developments via academic publishing (articles, letters to journals) these have high credibility today – now they use blogs, wikis, mailing lists but the value of these resources is not seen as credible in citations/references. How many high impact titles have articles referring communication sources other than books or articles?
- Curriculum changes may be needed to support these difficulties. Students have a lack of confidence in knowing about what is credible. To change how students value different sources they need to be taught about them.
- Generation gap with the technology. Now students are paying do we meet their habits/modes of consumption of digital material. Are their methods legitimate or do we counter it and say there are other ways to do it (how we do it) which takes longer but will be better in the long run.
- Is the technology seen as a technological issue? The Open University had 180 ebooks published (out of the 800 they will eventually publish) – the biggest criticism and instant feedback from academics was ‘where is my content’ when they downloaded the app and found their content was not there.
- Mismatch between ethical teaching and the flexibility for teaching to survive in the modern world. Taking a principled stand on copyright could be seen as hurting academic freedom and reducing discoverability, but the copyright is there to protect it. We need to build an infrastructure from academic point of view but to use the technology to help the structure to run efficiently. Students are told ‘ Dont use Wikipedia’ but students do, they don’t cite it. A change in pedagogy is needed, the response from institutions needs to be about academic credibility and responsibility
- Institutional Managers need to know that when they introduce ebook publishing it will challenge the academic strategy. They need to reconsider what is their strategy: if it is to attract students of a high level then credibility will be paramount, those with strategies for growth in numbers will have a different values.
- Technology pushes things to be more discoverable, granular and to be convenient. Ebooks bring out these different territories in academic strategy.

Alice Keller Blog report: In print or on screen? Investigating reading habits of undergraduates using photo-interviews <http://darkarchive.wordpress.com/2010/07/26/in-print-or-on-screen-investigating-the-reading-habits-of-undergraduates-using-photo-interviews/>
Reading habits of undergraduates – blog (2010)

Keller researched the print –v- digital reading habits of undergraduates discussing what people do from .pdf perspective. A photo diary method was used. At the time of the research she found no use of online books for leisure reading, illustrating the development in this market over the last 3 years. Students were passionate about books and had an emotional attachment to books.

Issues for creation:

- Students have an emotional and cultural attachment to books, they like the idea of physical books but they may not actually use them: could this be because of the credible/citable factors?
- Are ebook valued as they are the exact version of the print copy? if you stated that there is a physical copy of this on the shelf – would this then give the ebook more credibility ... we have information some of which is printed, so why is the book seen as more credible, why would it not be electronic (different viewpoint which may well start to come through – from a younger users point of view this may be the norm for them). Cultural icons are what shape your emotions – challenging the icons can upset people.
- When creating this emotional attachment has to be considered.

ISSUES RAISED OR REVISITED:

- Different models may be needed allowing libraries to opt in / opt out of either print/digital versions of textbook and other academic reading.
- Textbooks: publishers are pricing them out of affordability so they can maintain the physical sales.
- Credibility for the author will be linked to who is paying them.
- Students cannot assess the credibility of the material from the quality of the content as they don't have that ability in their first year, as they move through their course then they can be more critical and assess the quality of the material they are reading. At the start of their course they need to use markers such as publication data, reading list entry.
- Online use, downloading or printing ebook content. A student who is writing their assignment can be using lecture note, journals, books, online sources and ebooks. It can be hard to do this when only using one device/screen, so they may print out to ease reading, to facilitate annotating or to browse across several resources at one time.
- What is learning in Higher Education – it is rarely expressed.
- As budgets are cut there is a need to align the materials we bought. Budget management in institutions may start to dictate the curriculum content, for example if an academic is buying specific subject material could it also be used by academics in other areas.
- Technological advances move quickly and students' learning methods are also changing forcing new issues to the surface which can be painful for the institution.