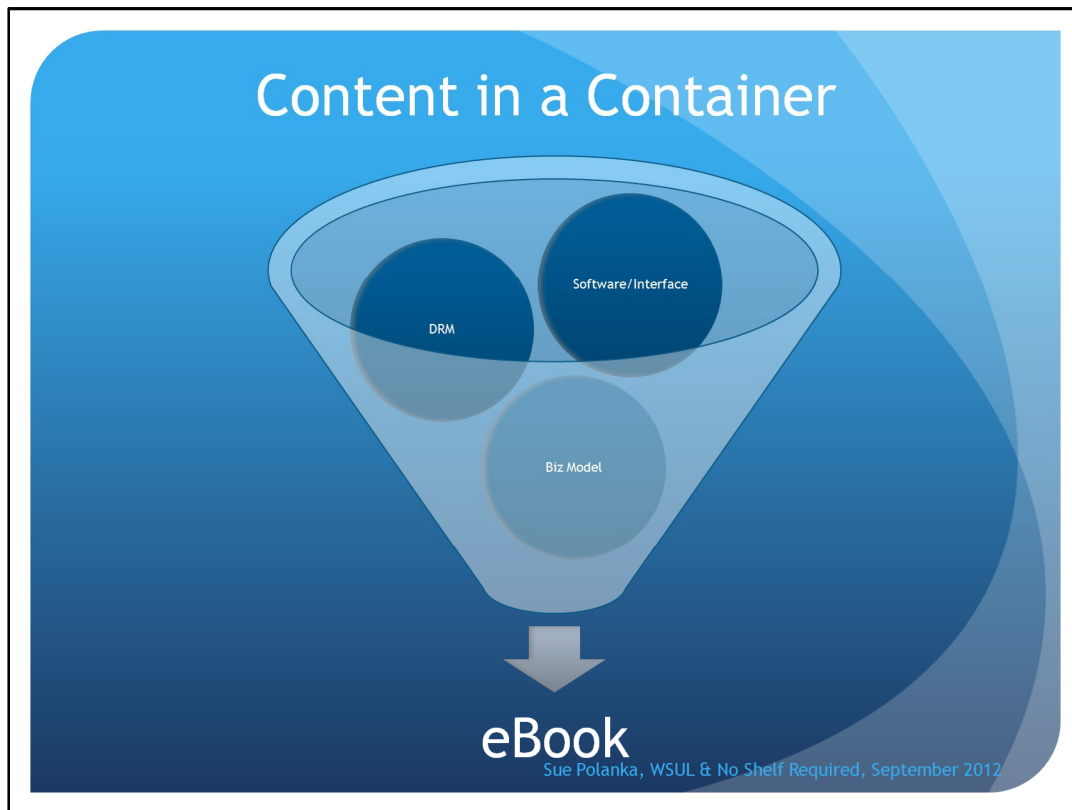




When you purchase eBooks one of the most important things to realize is that you are not just buying content.



Instead, you are buying content in a container.

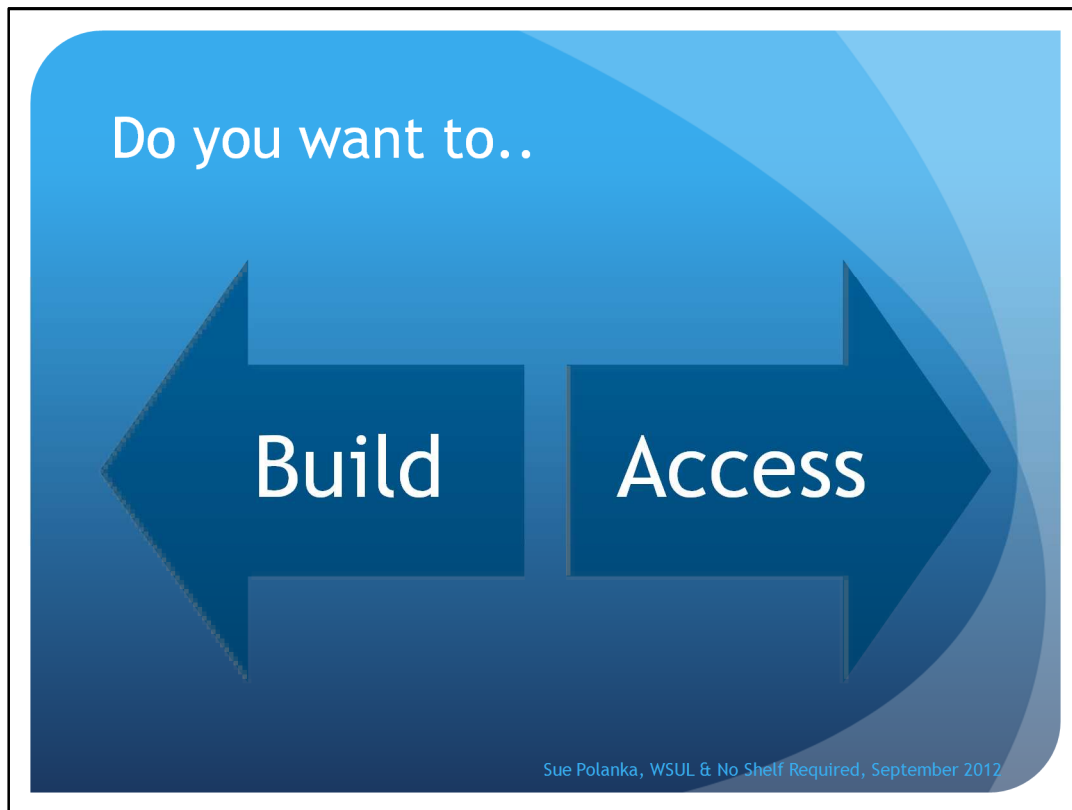
In addition to the text, images, charts and graphs, you are paying for software and an interface in order to interact with the content.

You will have to choose a business model which will determine your access to the content.

You will sign a license agreement which will indicate the terms under which you may use the content.

Much of this will be governed by DRM – digital rights management.

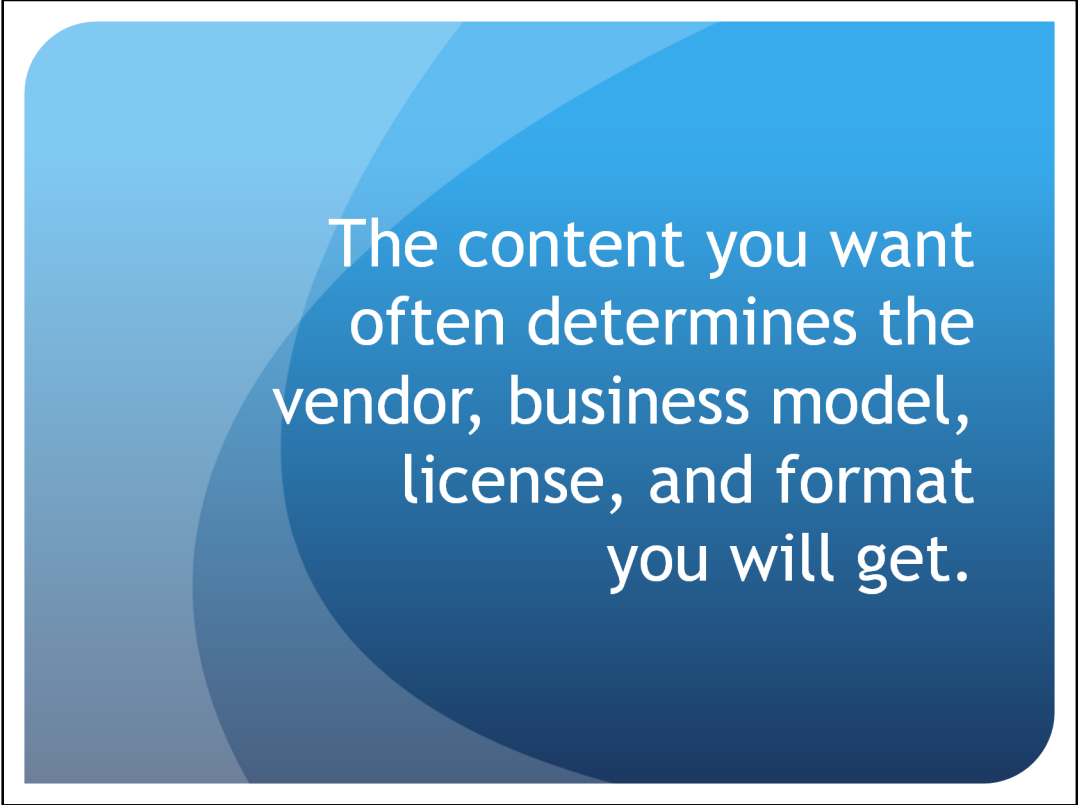
You are buying content, software, licenses, DRM, and an ongoing relationship with a vendor.



When librarians ask me for advice about purchasing eBooks I always ask them what their goals are. For example, do they want to build a comprehensive research collection or would they rather pay for access.

Some libraries prefer to build, others would rather spend their money by accessing more content for shorter periods of time, and others will want some combination of the two.

Whatever route you choose, you have options.

A graphic with a blue gradient background and white text. The text is centered and reads: "The content you want often determines the vendor, business model, license, and format you will get." The background consists of overlapping, semi-transparent blue shapes that create a sense of depth and movement.

The content you want
often determines the
vendor, business model,
license, and format
you will get.

Often, the content you want will automatically determine if you are going to BUILD or ACCESS your material. The type of content may limit the vendor, business model, license, and format that you will get. This is particularly true with US public libraries, who have limited choices for purchasing best-selling fiction.

Business Models

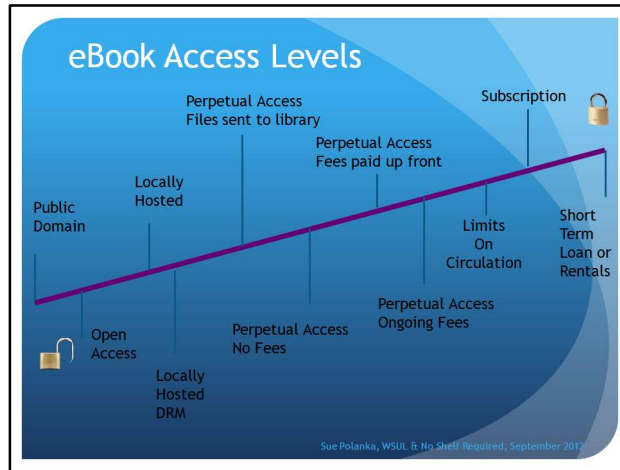
- Free
- Perpetual Access
 - Single User (checkout)
 - Multi User
 - Unlimited Use
 - Patron Driven
- Subscriptions
- Short-term Loan

Access or build a collection?

Ongoing Fees?

Sue Polanka, WSUL & No Shelf Required, September 2017

I'd like to discuss some of the ebook business models in use in the US, focusing on several that may be unfamiliar to you.



This chart will help us put the e-book access levels into perspective.

Those which grant libraries more access control are on the left and less access control on the right.

The titles on the far left offer the library more control, more access, more guarantees of using the content in the future.

They also have little or no DRM.

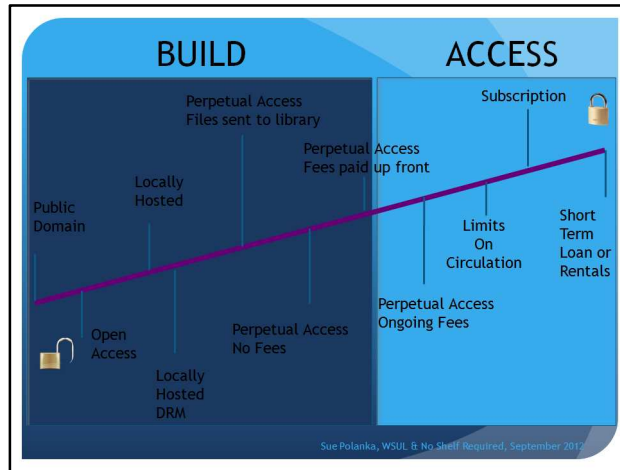
Note the line rises as it moves right, signifying the increase in vendor control and the increased risk level for ongoing access to content. It also means that DRM increases.

Thus e-books paid for through a short-term loan, on the far right, provide temporary access for one patron.

The content is not owned and cannot be accessed once the negotiated term of use has expired.

The more your library or consortia can provide eBooks using the options on the left, the safer you will be in providing access to this content in the future. i.e. BUILDING your collection.

So those of you who want to build a comprehensive collection should stay to the left. Those of you who only want to use collection funds to provide access can stay to the right. i.e. ACCESSING your collection



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