

# 10 Steps to Implementing an eBook Collection

A Guide for Librarians





# 10 Best Practices for Acquiring and Implementing an eBook Collection

Acquiring and implementing an eBook collection is a major business process upheaval, requiring significant planning and resources. Entering into an eBook arrangement without fully analyzing internal processes, user needs, and publisher offerings can disrupt existing acquisitions and operations, create intra-

departmental tension, and become extremely costly. To avoid these pitfalls and ensure that libraries enjoy the smoothest possible transition to eBooks, Springer has prepared the following list of best practices for implementing an eBook strategy.

## The 10 Steps



### 1. Determine Your Collection Development Strategy

Libraries typically assemble their eBook collections through one of two strategies – “pick and choose” or “critical mass.” The pick and choose strategy, in which librarians acquire individual titles, provides institutions with the flexibility to supplement their print catalogs with targeted selections and ease into an eBook strategy very slowly. Because pick and choose acquisition strategies require less initial investment of time and budget, they are often easier for institutions to accept. However, over the long term, greater overall costs and more restrictive Digital Rights Management (DRM) policies can make pick and choose an unattractive proposition.

The critical mass strategy consists of focusing initial acquisitions on building a mass of subject-specific content large enough to encourage intense usage. While critical mass strategies do not provide the specificity of pick and choose, they are more cost-effective, tend to have less restrictive DRM policies attached to content, and provide more overall content usage for a given budget.

When pursuing a critical mass strategy, Librarians should begin with high-demand,

frequently searched material in which content freshness is critical. Generally, reference materials and monographs, particularly in the Science, Technology and Medicine (STM) fields, are most amenable to eBook collections. STM users tend to be more familiar with online research than those of other disciplines, and their research styles expose the advantages of eBooks very quickly. Ms. Jane Miller, Electronic Information Systems & Services Librarian of Victoria University, Melbourne echoed this sentiment. “In 5 years print and eBooks purchase will be equal and eBooks will be universally accepted by users. In 10 years eBooks will be the norm ... in science and business.”

After establishing sufficient coverage in a high-demand area, libraries should seek a group of “early adopters,” willing to experiment with all available research features.

By interviewing these users about research tools and methods, librarians can begin broadening their collections with a realistic assessment of user needs.

## 2. Evaluate Different Business Models

Once they have completed their early adopter interviews, librarians should use that data to evaluate a number of critical vendor policies. The most critical features to assess are:

### ► Digital Rights Management (DRM)

DRM technologies protect content publishers' rights by limiting the end user's ability to copy, forward, or otherwise manipulate content. These protections may inhibit users' research methods, countering many of the values of electronic documents (such as cut and paste), or the ability to have multiple users access content simultaneously. Selecting a vendor with the smallest possible amount of DRM will increase user satisfaction and content usage.

### ► Number of concurrent users

Some vendors place restrictions on simultaneous access, limiting each piece of content to a small number of users. While any number of concurrent users greater than one is an improvement over printed material, libraries should seek out providers with no user limitations or very high limits, as many electronic titles, will have very high demand spikes.

### ► COUNTER compliance

The Counting Online Usage of Networked Electronic Resources (COUNTER) initiative is the de facto standard for usage measurement in the reference industry, allowing librarians to compare usage statistics between publishers and institutions. Publishers that do not provide COUNTER-compliant tools will be difficult to benchmark, making cost-justifications difficult and time-consuming, if not impossible.

### ► Availability of MARC records

Vendors should supply MARC records in an easily-imported format to allow librarians to integrate electronic collections into their OPAC

systems. Without these, electronic collections will remain an island until librarians dedicate resources to the time-consuming, expensive task of manual catalog integration.

### ► Ownership vs. subscription

Many eBook publishers have adopted an ongoing subscription model popular with other digital services. This leaves libraries' most critical assets vulnerable to contract disputes, the publisher's financial well-being, and other acts beyond the library's control. Librarians should seek out publishers who provide the same level of content ownership found in the printed book world.

### ► Archiving policies

Libraries should retain day-to-day and long-term access to eBook content, regardless of changes in a publisher's status. To fulfill these requirements, publishers should provide perpetual content access to libraries in business agreements and participate in an archiving program such as LOCKSS, CLOCKSS or PORTICO to ensure that content persists. Libraries should also require that contracts provide access to archived versions of periodicals, ensuring that users can perform historical searches in one location.

### ► Flexibility

Each library is different, and librarians should seek out publishers who are willing to provide flexible package arrangements. For example, content packages based on subject collection or research intensity allow librarians the ability to supplement their collections cost-effectively by paying for the content they need most.



### 3. Gain Internal Support

*The users must be gradually brought to accept (eBooks). That was our idea with the Springer offering, to take a big leap forward with the eBooks and try to make clear to the people what possibilities eBooks offer.*

**Dr. Peter te Boekhorst**, Head of Acquisitions, General Library, University of Muenster, Germany

Institutions should create widespread understanding and acceptance of eBooks within their library community before releasing new initiatives to users. They should begin by educating Subject Specialists and Librarian Liaisons on the benefits of eBooks versus print books and discussing the different collection develop-

ment strategies and business models of various publishers. To help internal supporters convince their peers, institutions should turn to other librarians who have made successful eBook transitions, inviting them to share their stories.

Content publishers can provide statistics, librarian referrals, and other helpful resources. For example, Springer has helped 130 libraries worldwide libraries implement eBook programs, recently fielded and in-depth international interview and survey of six leading libraries, and can provide a wealth of anecdotal and statistical information to help librarians champion eBooks.



### 4. Plan Policy Changes with Subject Specialists/ Librarian Liaisons

Any eBook introduction will require budgetary and acquisition policy changes, as well as an inventory of user behaviors and needs. Before implementing an eBook strategy, institutions should invite all relevant personnel to discuss what changes need to be made to library procedures and policies for acquiring eBooks versus print books.

Libraries should first discuss how the acquisition of e-books will impact approval plans of titles in print, and what acquisitions and processing operations will change to accommodate the purchase of e-books. After confirming procedural changes, they should evaluate budgetary sources for eBook acquisition. This is often a matter of some contention, as designated "book" librarians or individual departments may be unwilling to part with portions of their budgets for a centralized eBook acquisi-

tions department. Institutions that encounter budgetary conflicts should enlist the help of other librarians who have implemented eBook programs.

At this point, libraries should also estimate usage profiles by type or asset, since these can impact vendor choice, licensing agreements, and ultimately, budget constraints. Examples of factors to consider in this process include, the estimated number of concurrent content viewers, user search behavior, the number of access points (e.g. one library, multiple libraries, or Web-connected home PCs), and the necessity of printing documents. Librarians should also take special note of their early adopter's needs. By acquiring appropriate content for these users, libraries can build internal success stories they can use to build support for future acquisitions.



### 5. Discuss implementation with technical staff

After establishing business needs, libraries should enlist their IT or cataloging departments, or perhaps, their consortia to discuss requirements and timelines for loading MARC records into the library environment so that end users will find the texts they need.

Libraries choosing to load locally may require additional hardware and software during the initial loading phase, with processes, training, and a smaller subset of those resources in place for ongoing additions.





## 6. Choose Collections and Vendors

After determining a collection development strategy and choosing a business model, libraries can begin ordering collections. Within the categories established in Step 1, librarians should select their collections and vendors by balancing:

- ▶ Collection size and breadth
- ▶ Availability of MARC records
- ▶ Packaged content versus a pick and choose model
- ▶ Archive access
- ▶ Unlimited usage and ownership



## 7. Link eBooks to the OPAC

Once they have access to their eBook collection, librarians need to make the collection visible to users. eBook publishers should provide ways through which patrons can find eBook content.

That information can be in the form of MARC Records, or URL lists that can be inserted in the OPAC, Linkresolvers, as well as A-Z lists.



## 8. Communicate to Users

*The resources are very expensive so when we buy them we want them to be used as much as possible. So it is the library's responsibility as well to promote these new acquisitions.*

**Mr. Antero Laiho**, Head of Collections, University Library of Turku, Finland

users. The eBook vendor or Publisher should be able to provide tools to assist in this process. Librarians should check their publisher's Web site for on-site and remote training, banner ads, downloadable posters, and other promotional aids. Libraries should also use email, intranets, and departmental forums to spread the word.

To get the most out from eBook investments, libraries should promote their collection to



## 9. Download Usage Statistics

With a successful implementation completed, libraries should evaluate the speed at which users are embracing the new eBook collection and the research methods they are adopting.

If a publisher provides COUNTER-compliant statistics, libraries can compare these with other libraries in various stages of eBook adoption.



## 10. Review / Renew

After three to six months of use, libraries should interview users and evaluate their future needs. They should then contact their publisher to plan the upcoming year's renewals and purchases and discuss these needs the technology and processes that might meet their

emerging needs. Publishers should be able to provide tools, case studies, and client references to address the majority of these needs, and any new suggestions will drive business and product development in the future.

## The Springer eBooks Collection

Springer is the world's second-largest publisher of journals in the STM (Science, Technology, Medicine) sector, the largest publisher of STM books, and the largest business-to-business publisher in the German-language area. Springer offers

access to more than 20,000 English-language eBooks and journals, with a total catalog of more than 23,000 electronic titles available on Springerlink.com. The Springer eBook Collection has garnered awards and accolades from the

information and library community in the past year. Springer has pioneered the largest compilation of electronic books, and offer users unlimited, perpetual access, from anywhere around the globe.

## Springer's Support for the Ten Steps

Springer provides an unparalleled combination of experience, technology, and process knowledge to help libraries

acquire, implement, and refine their eBook collections.

Following is a list of some of the ways Springer can help.

		The Springer Advantage
Step 1		<b>Determine Your Collection Development Strategy</b> Springer offers solutions to fit the needs of any collection strategy. It offers 13 subject collection packages for those building critical mass, and also offers librarians the ability to pick and choose titles via third party vendors.
Step 2		<b>Evaluate Different Business Models</b> Springer offers a very flexible library friendly business models. Specifically, its direct model provides the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Perpetual ownership of content.</li> <li>▶ Unlimited simultaneous usage of content.</li> <li>▶ Permissive, unobtrusive DRM.</li> <li>▶ Electronic access to select book series back to 1997.</li> </ul> Springer also offers budget-friendly options via third party vendors. Learn more about Springer eBooks, please visit <a href="http://springer.com/ebooks">springer.com/ebooks</a> .
Step 3		<b>Gain Internal Support</b> Since most academic libraries already purchase Springer books, the Springer brand should help librarians gain internal support for eBook initiatives. Springer can also provide white papers, testimonials, Webinars, and other materials to help educate institutions on the benefits of eBooks. Springer offers eBook summits & panel discussions where eBook vendors and library customers discuss models and implementation practices. Current listings are available at <a href="http://springer.com/ebooks">springer.com/ebooks</a> .
Step 4		<b>Plan Policy Changes with Subject Specialists/Librarian Liaisons</b> Springer can help institutions set-up a 60-day institutional trial to help subject specialists, librarian liaisons, and users evaluate eBooks. Then you can gather usage data and internal support...
Step 5		<b>Discuss implementation with technical staff</b> Springer provides eBook customers with basic MARC records. Enhanced MARC records for the 2007 copyright year will be available via OCLC for WorldCat subscribers by the end of 2007, with 2005, 2006, and ongoing years available shortly thereafter. Learn more about Springer eBooks, please visit <a href="http://springer.com/ebooks">springer.com/ebooks</a> .
Step 6		<b>Choose Collections and Vendors</b> With its collection breadth, liberal DRM policies, absolute content ownership, and proactive archiving policies, Springer provides libraries with all the tools they need to implement a successful eBook program.
Step 7		<b>Link eBooks to the OPAC</b> In addition to providing raw data, Springer offers technical support for MARC records implementation and consultants with years of relevant experience.
Step 8		<b>Communicate to Users</b> Springer can help set up training, provide promotional materials, and assist with email campaigns.
Step 9		<b>Download Usage Statistics</b> Springer is one of the first eBook vendors to support COUNTER for eBooks.
Step 10		<b>Review / Renew</b> Springer licensing managers are happy to assist with program evaluation and help build a solution catered to a library's needs.