



It's been Geometric! Documenting the Growth and Acceptance of eBooks in America's Urban Public Libraries

Barbara A. Genco

Independent Library Consultant and Visiting Associate Professor, Pratt Institute SILS

Editor, Collection Management, *Library Journal*
Brooklyn, NY (USA)

BAGencoConsulting@Gmail.com

Meeting:

212. Acquisition and Collection Development

WORLD LIBRARY AND INFORMATION CONGRESS: 75TH IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE AND COUNCIL

23-27 August 2009, Milan, Italy

<http://www.ifla.org/annual-conference/ifla75/index.htm>

Abstract:

The first foray of many American public libraries into the eBook format began with the launch of netLibrary in 1998. In the late 90's and into the early 21st Century regional consortia licensing and small local collections helped public libraries test the viability and popularity of this new format with their library users. Interestingly though, over the last five years most American public libraries that now offer eBooks to their patrons have left [netLibrary](#) (now owned by OCLC) behind and have begun to work with a single Cleveland (OH) based company-- [OverDrive](#). In less than five years OverDrive has partnered with publishers and with 8500 public libraries in the US and Canada to license and deliver over 100,000 titles to public and school library users. Interestingly, even though netLibrary continues and major public library vendors (such as Ingram and Baker and Taylor) now offer eBooks for sale, American public libraries seem to prefer OverDrive as its sole source for eBooks, downloadable audio and music and video content.

What elements have contributed to OverDrive's dominance in the public library space? Library partners cite OverDrive's provision of a locally branded-portal to manage their eBooks, audio books, music, and video. Publishers and other copyright holders report confidence in OverDrive's secure DRM-content protection and user authentication via library card log-ins. Public library collection development staff cite download software that will allow patrons to access quality

collections assembled by local collection development librarians while leveraging the new found portability of audio books, music, and video for 24/7 access.

This paper and presentation features the results of recent survey of downloadable eContent (AKA eBooks) representation among libraries in the [Urban Library Council](#) and [Public Library Association](#). It reveals information on current and best practices among collection development librarians, selection/acquisition methodologies, and identifies trends in American public library eBook downloads, and user acceptance/non acceptance of eContent among Urban Library Council and Public Library Association member libraries.

The Survey and our Findings

The presenter, Barbara A. Genco, Library Consultant (Brooklyn, NY, USA) and Michael Santangelo, Electronic Resource Manager, Office of Materials Selection, Brooklyn (NY) Public Library USA developed a on line survey designed to capture information about current public library practice in eBooks content and discover and document the geometric increase in collection content, vendor services, titles and eformats offered. We also wanted to learn what aspects of a vendor service packages among are most desired by the forty-one (41) responding libraries.

We posted a survey link on the two list serves which enjoy the most traffic among major American Public Libraries: The ULC (Urban Libraries Council) Collection Management List and the Public Library Association's Collection Management list. Happily forty-one (41) libraries participated.

Question 1: Names of Participating Public Libraries

1. Lincoln City Libraries. Lincoln, NE
2. Hennepin County Library, MN
3. Pierce County Library System, WA
4. Chesterfield County Public Library, VA
5. Nashville Public Library, TN
6. The New York Public Library, NY
7. Sacramento Public Library, CA
8. Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library, IN
9. Tulsa City-County Library, OK
10. Gwinnett County Public Library, GA
11. Anderson County Library System, SC
12. Phoenix Public Library, AZ
13. DeSoto Public Library, TX
14. Oakland Public Library, CA
15. Barr Memorial Library, Fort Knox, KY
16. County of Los Angeles Public Library, CA
17. Brooklyn Public Library, NY
18. King County Library System, WA
19. District of Columbia Public Library, DC
20. Stark County District Library, Canton, OH
21. East Baton Rouge Parish Library, LA

- 22. Montgomery County Public Libraries, MD
- 23. Public Lib. of Charlotte and Mecklenburg Co. , NC
- 24. Multnomah County Library, Portland OR
- 25. Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
- 26. Free Library of Philadelphia, PA
- 27. Arlington Public Library, VA
- 28. Tulsa City-County Library, OK
- 29. Columbus Metro Library, OH
- 30. San Francisco Public Library, OH
- 31. Los Angeles Public Library, CA
- 32. San Diego Public Library, CA
- 33. Palm Beach County Library System, FL
- 34. Jacksonville Public Library, FL
- 35. DeKalb County Public Library, GA
- 36. Alameda County Library, Fremont, CA
- 37. Boston Public Library, MA
- 38. Lee County Library System, Fort Myers, FL
- 39. Scottsdale Public Library, AZ
- 40. Denver Public Library, CO
- 41. Durham County Library, NC

The majority of the Libraries responding served larger populations.

Question 2. How Large a population do you serve?

1 Million or more	31.7%	13
500K or more	39.0%	16
250K or more	17.1%	7
100K or more	7.3%	3
50K or more	2.4%	1
25K or more	2.4%	1
25K or more	0.0%	0

As one would surmise, larger populations correlate with the number of service locations the public library maintains.

Question 3. How many locations do you serve? (41 libraries responded)

- 1 location = 2 libraries**
- 2-5 locations = 2 libraries**
- 6-10 locations = 6 libraries**
- 11-20 locations = 9 libraries**
- 21-30 locations = 15 libraries**
- 31-40 locations = 1 library**
- 41-50 locations = 2 libraries**
- 51-60 locations = 2 libraries**
- 61-90 locations = 3 libraries**

We wanted to see if one of the locations was a Central Library (AKA a library which offers greater depth and breadth of collections and formats)

Question 4. Do you have a Central Library?

	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	80.5%	33
No	19.5%	8
<i>answered question</i>		41

We also wanted to know about the size of the library's materials budget. Here, too, the largest number of the libraries fell into the mid range.

Question 5. What is your Library's TOTAL Annual Materials Budget for all materials from all sources?

In Millions:	%	# Libraries
\$15M+	7.3%	3
\$10M-15.99M	7.3%	3
\$8M-9.99M	7.3%	3
\$6M-7.99M	12.2%	5
\$4M-5.99M	22.0%	9
\$2M-3.99M	22.0%	9
\$900K-1.99M	14.6%	6
\$700K-899K	2.4%	1
\$500K-699K	0.0%	0
\$300K-499K	0.0%	0
\$100K-299K	4.9%	2
Less than \$100K	0.0%	0

All but one of the 41 public libraries surveyed currently offered eBooks.

Question 6. Does your Library collect eBooks/Downloadable content right now?

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	97.6%	40
No	0.0%	0
Considering	2.4%	1
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

To help us better understand current collection development practice, we wanted to clarify the breadth and diversity of eContent that public libraries acquire and term 'eBooks'.

Question 7. The term eBooks has come to encompass so much more than books one 'reads.' What types of Downloadable content formats does your library collect?

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Adobe Reader	82.9%	34
MobiPocket	51.2%	21
eAudio Books	87.8%	36
ePUB	22.0%	9
Downloadable Music	58.5%	24
Downloadable Video	70.7%	29
None	4.9%	2
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

As a way for us to pinpoint the ups and downs of the eBook industry and collection/selection arcs, we asked responding public libraries when they inaugurated their eBook collections. We expected that many may have begun with the early entry of netLibrary into the public library space around 1999-2002. We also expected to see an uptick (2006-2008) as OverDrive more aggressively entered the marketplace, negotiated licenses for more content with key US publishers, successfully met current library/library customer needs, and began to contract with and service more US public libraries.

Question 8. What Year did your library begin your eBooks/Downloadable content collection?

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
1997-1999	4.9%	2
2000-2002	31.7%	13
2003-2005	14.6%	6
2006-2008	46.3%	19
2009	2.4%	1
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

We devised this question in order to provide a 'snapshot' of participating libraries' holdings in March-April 2009. This information is not readily available via standard sources like the [PLDS](#) (the Annual Public Library Data Service Statistical Report

Question 9. Approximately how many Downloadable items (all formats) does your library hold?

438,513 = Total # of units in the 33 Libraries reporting

13,288 = Average # of units in the 33 Libraries reporting

In the beginning of the eBook era (we like to call it the "eBook 1st Wave") many libraries tested the efficacy of eBook collections when they opted into local, regional,

or even state-wide library collections of eBooks licensed through consortial agreements. We wondered how many of the libraries continued this practice.

Question 10.

Is your library part of a consortium license for an eBooks or a Downloadable content collection?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	41.5%	17
No	48.8%	20
We used to be	9.8%	4
Don't Know	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Collection Development librarians are interested in how their colleagues develop their own “best practices”. We were curious to know how eBooks, eAudio, etc. are circulated among responding libraries.

Question 11. What Circulation Model do you currently use for your eBooks/Downloadables?

- **The “one person one book” model is employed by 5 libraries (12.2%)**
- **Unlimited Access/Simultaneous Use employed by only 2 libraries (4.9%)**
- **The majority--34 libraries--employ BOTH Models (82.9%)**

Not satisfied with just the ‘current state’ we also asked participating libraries

Question 12. What Circulation Model do you PREFER for your eBooks/Downloadables?

- **“One person one book” is desired by 1 library (2.4%)**
- **Unlimited Access/Simultaneous Use is desired by 24 libraries (58.5%)**
- **Less than in question 11 above, only 16 libraries (39%) wanted to use both CIRC models**

We were also very interested in learning about the current CIRC (circulation) practices of our public library colleagues. More interesting than the data (which pleasingly matched the anecdotal information we had already learned from colleagues) was the more granular, specific comments offered by survey participants.

Question 13: What is the CIRC interval for Downloadables at your Library?

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
1 day	2.4%	1
2 days	0.0%	0
3 days	0.0%	0
4-6 days	0.0%	0
7 days	4.9%	2
14 days	43.9%	18
21 days	46.3%	19
28 days	2.4%	1
Other (please specify)		15
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Detailed Comments from the responders to Question 13:

- The Greater Phoenix Digital Library uses Overdrive which has just come out with self assigned loan periods - can be 7 days to 3 weeks.
- NetLibrary and Cengage e-books -- use online only
- Overdrive Downloadables -- adjustable loans: 3 or 7 days for video or music, 7 or 14 days for e-books or audio e-books.
- Check out period is 21 days for eAudiobooks.
- Check out period is 7 days for eVideos.
- Changing to patron driven circulation intervals effective 4/17/09
- NetLibrary eBooks no longer "check-out"
- 21 days for downloadable audio/video/music; 7 days for eBooks
- Reecorded Books - 21 days, Overdrive eBooks and eAudiobooks- 14 days but about to go to a user selected period which can be 7 or 14, Overdrive video - 7 days but about to go to user selected 3, 5, or 7 day CIRC options. My Library DV - 7 days
- 7 days for video, 14 for all other but we are looking to shorten these.
- Now have the option for selecting 7, 14, 21 days with Overdrive.
- Our circ period varies by format. Audiobooks circ on 14 day intervals with customer option to choose 7 days. All other items circ at 14 days, with customer option to choose 3, 5, 7 or 21.
- The default lending period for most formats is 14 days. However, for a number of our downloadable titles the lending period can be adjusted by the user, from 7 - 21 days.
- Videos are 7 days, and renewals are allowed for all formats
- User specified via Overdrive's flexible circ option.
- Videos circulate for 7 days. E-books & E-Audio circulate for 21 days.
- Various, depending on eAudio book or eBook

In general US Public Libraries are very interested in knowing if other Public Libraries impose any CIRC Limits on patrons. Based on the data returned, we suggest a high correlation between the numbers of items allowed and the reports of high growth in CIRC numbers.

Question 14. How may Downloadables may a library customer 'check out' at one time?

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
1	0.0%	0
2-3	4.9%	2
4-5	14.6%	6
5-10	43.9%	18
10+	36.6%	15
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Both library literature and list serve posts indicate that there is a HOLDS ‘explosion’ in most major US Public Libraries. Many libraries report that more staff time than ever before is now dedicated to managing the HOLDS process for print and for media. One of the benefits of the inclusion and growing use of electronic formats in library collections is that they need not be physically handled in any way. Once added to an eCollection, they are become a true self-service, 24/7 collection with no fines and no damage or loss. Many libraries (see comments in Question 13 above) have elected to allow patrons to select their own CIRC intervals--the ultimate in customer service!

Question 15. Do you allow Library customers to place holds on Downloadable items

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	90.2%	37
No	9.8%	4
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

While most public libraries limit their eReference to licensed products (like EBSCO Masterfile, etc.) an increasing number of public libraries have begun to license individual reference titles or collections of reference titles in eBook format. The addition of these individual eBooks have further resulted in the decline of print reference budgets and the number of physical reference books in public library collections.

Question 16. Do you have non-circulating eBooks? (Reference eBooks)

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	58.5%	24
No	39.0%	16
Considering	2.4%	1
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

We were very interested in knowing if eBooks were primarily licensed for Adults. The Libraries' responses indicate that all ages are surprisingly well represented. We project that the ["digital natives"](#) among Young Adults and Children are not at all flummoxed by eBooks or other Downloadable content.

Question 17. Are eBooks/Downloadables purchased for:

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Adults	100.0%	41
Young Adults	92.7%	38
Children	82.9%	34
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

In the last few years public library collection budgets have been flat or have begun to decline significantly. We wondered how are public libraries able to build eContent collections and afford these new formats.

Question 18. Do you reallocate funds from your physical materials formats to buy electronic, downloadable copies? EXAMPLE: Is your Library buying fewer 'physical' Audiobooks and instead purchasing more electronic copies of eAudiobooks?

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	46.3%	19
No	36.6%	15
Considering	19.5%	8
Any observations to share?		15
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Observations from the responders to Question 18:

We dedicate part of our funding each year towards purchase of Downloadables.

We've gradually shifted the funds from print to electronic over time and finally settled on a regular monthly allotment within the last 2 years.

Want to add second downloadable audio vendor - will probably reallocate \$ from audiobook budget for this purpose.

Some titles are going electronic only so funds have shifted.

Collections' built to start and early growth from "additional" materials funding, and now re-allocating some physical audiobooks funds to this purpose.

For every four circulations of physical items, we have one use of our electronic resources (of all kinds including Downloadables)

Serious challenge as budget over 10 years is down 9%--new formats include electronic reference databases, eBooks, eAudio, Playaway, games, DVD formats, etc. Cannot keep up with inflation, let alone build dynamic collections for new and in-demand formats. Canceled Nettle/Recorded Books downloadable audio this year.

Since we are such a large system, every time we add a new format, it slices substantially into our overall materials budget.

Patrons want the latest movies to download, not the older ones which are the available ones.

With the current budget situation, our hours of service recently decreased from 72 per week to 48-52 per week depending on the branch. As hours are reduced and traditional access becomes more of a challenge, electronic access to databases and eBooks becomes more critical because it is 24/7 access. Downloadables don't have late fees, can't be damaged, and can be accessed anywhere, anytime.

We provide downloadable audiobooks for mp3 and iPod. They are very popular.

We haven't found any appreciable decrease in demand for audiobooks on CD - so it seems like they serve a different audience than Downloadables to some extent. We could be doing better at these both in tighter control over balancing format purchasing and better promotion of e-versions, i.e. signage over the audiobooks shelves, etc.

While we have not reduced popular book purchases, we have transferred savings from a reduction in reference expenditure to e-media. We have also reduced the number of databases we purchase and instead purchase more individual reference eBooks.

Saved money on audio books by buying from [Midwest Tape](#). This will enable us to keep up selecting downloadable items

As Collection Development librarians we are also very interested in learning how eContent is accounted for within typical library budgets.

Question 19. How are eBooks/Downloadable content represented in your Library's materials budget?

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Separate Line/Budget for eBooks ONLY	4.9%	2
Separate Line/Budget for ALL Downloadables(eBooks, Downloadable Video, Downloadable Music, eAudio)	46.3%	19
Included in Electronic Resources budget	46.3%	19
Included in Print Resources budget (example Best Sellers or Fiction)	7.3%	3
Included in Multimedia budget (example Audiobooks, CDs, DVDs)	7.3%	3
Other	7.3%	3
Any observations to share?		5
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Observations from responders to Question 19:

Downloadable books have one line (audio and eBooks); downloadable music and downloadable video have their own separate lines.

We've had a separate budget, startup, but now finding a way to integrate into our regular materials' budgets. Details are still not 100% set.

The base collection was started with a gift from the Library Foundation - paid for set-up fees plus a solid core collection. When MP3 became available, another gift from the Library Foundation is enabling us to start that collection. Budget funds are used for ongoing collection-building.

We always budget optimistically for videos, and never spend it fully.

eBooks vendor platform will be paid from Electronic Resources budget line; items will be paid for out of AV/Multimedia line

In order to better see the ebb and flow among American Public Library eBook collections and the marketplace since 1999, we wanted to know more about the choices and changes in eBook vendors that the libraries have made over the last decade.

Question 20. With what vendor(s) did you BEGIN your downloadable/eBook collection?

1. Lincoln City Libraries: **NetLibrary**; we continued with them until the State Library ended program.
2. Hennepin County Library: **NetLibrary** and **OverDrive**
3. Pierce County Library System: **OverDrive**
4. Chesterfield County Public Library: **NetLibrary** for eBooks only; **Overdrive for eAudiobooks only**
5. Nashville Public Library: **NetLibrary**
6. The New York Public Library: **NetLibrary**
7. Sacramento Public Library: **NetLibrary** and **Recorded Books**
8. Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library: **NetLibrary**, but we also did downloadable video with **Recorded books** and started downloadable audio with Overdrive. Now have downloadable video from **OverDrive**; no longer purchase from Recorded Books.
9. Tulsa City-County Library: Started with **NetLibrary** through a state contract for a collection of eBooks.
10. Gwinnett County Public Library: **OverDrive**; although technically, we had some PDF downloads years earlier from **NetLibrary**, though it was a very small collection and not developed or marketed much
11. Anderson County Library System: **NetLibrary**
12. Phoenix Public Library: **NetLibrary**
13. DeSoto Public Library: **OverDrive**
14. Oakland Public Library: **NetLibrary**
15. Barr Memorial Library: **NetLibrary**
16. County of Los Angeles Public Library: **NetLibrary, Baker & Taylor, and OverDrive**
17. Brooklyn Public Library: **NetLibrary** then added **OverDrive**
18. King County Library System: **NetLibrary**
19. District of Columbia Public Library: **NetLibrary**
20. Stark County District Library: Not sure, possibly **NetLibrary** (Safari Tech books)
21. East Baton Rouge Parish Library: **NetLibrary**

22. Montgomery County (MD) Public Libraries: **OverDrive**
23. Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg Co. :
24. Multnomah County Library: **NetLibrary** and **Overdrive** about same time.
25. Hamilton Public Library: **Audible.com** for downloadable audiobooks and **Books24x7** for e-books
26. Free Library of Philadelphia: **NetLibrary**
27. Arlington Public Library: **NetLibrary**
28. Tulsa City-County Library: **NetLibrary**
29. Columbus Metro Library: **Recorded Books**
30. San Francisco Public Library: Began with **NetLibrary** in 1999 and with **OverDrive** in 2004.
31. Los Angeles Public Library: **NetLibrary**
32. San Diego Public Library: **NetLibrary; OverDrive**
33. Palm Beach County Library System: **OverDrive, NetLibrary**
34. Jacksonville Public Library: **RocketBook** eBook Reader and **NetLibrary** eBooks as part of state consortia; then Recorded Books eAudiobooks through NetLibrary; then **OverDrive** as part of state consortium; then eBrary; then MyLibraryDV; then OverDrive directly as a single library
35. DeKalb County Public Library: **OverDrive**
36. Alameda County Library: **OverDrive**
37. Boston Public Library: **NetLibrary**
38. Lee County Library System: **OverDrive** - in process now
39. Scottsdale Public Library: **NetLibrary**
40. Denver Public Library: **NetLibrary**
41. Durham County Library: **NetLibrary**

We are also very curious to know which vendors that libraries report they use today. Which vendors have captured the public library market?

Question 21: Which vendors do you use for eBooks/ Downloadable content today?

#1 OverDrive

#2 NetLibrary

#3 Cengage (Gale)

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Amazon/Kindle	0.0%	0
Audible.com	4.9%	2
Baker & Taylor	2.4%	1
Cengage (Gale)	48.8%	20
ebrary	2.4%	1
Ingram	12.2%	5
ITunes	0.0%	0
MyLibraryDV	12.2%	5
NetLibrary	73.2%	30
OverDrive	90.2%	37
Sony Reader	0.0%	0
Other	4.9%	2
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

We are extremely curious about which vendors our survey participants felt provide public libraries the best customer/user experience. OverDrive placed highest.

Question 22. My library has had our most positive experience with the following vendor:

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Amazon/Kindle	0.0%	0
Audible.com	0.0%	0
Baker & Taylor	0.0%	0
Cengage (Gale)	0.0%	0
ebrary	0.0%	0
Ingram	0.0%	0
ITunes	0.0%	0
MyLibraryDV	2.4%	1
NetLibrary	9.8%	4
OverDrive	78.0%	32
Sony Reader	0.0%	0
Other	9.8%	4
Any observations to share?		12
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Observations from Question 22:

- We prefer to own the content and therefore prefer Overdrive's model (pay hosting fees for first three years, then just purchase eMedia) to that of netLibrary. Ingram, which has similar publishers as Overdrive, has perhaps the best pricing available if you haven't already invested in Overdrive's hosting fees. Ingram also does not require purchasing several different platforms - all their downloadables are iPod compatible.
- NetLibrary exclusively carries Recorded Books which is the best audio distributor but has the worst pricing model (high annual lease based on system wide circulation).
- If Overdrive could provide better MP3 content, we wouldn't even have considered the Ingram solution. Asking customers to have only ONE media console downloaded on their PCs is ideal, but Ingram seems to be getting better MP3 content now.
- Hands down, the best vendor for downloadables is OverDrive. Their dedication to customer service, quality products, and always looking to improve their offerings is second to none.
- none of the above
- OverDrive is both library friendly and library savvy
- I have not dealt with all the vendors
- I feel all of our vendors are overpriced but the unlimited downloads is the most popular with our customers.
- No complaints about any of the vendors. Overdrive is most popular with customers and support staff for ease of download--but, customers also complain because they liked the NetLibrary multi-user model--"Why can't Overdrive be the same?" They dislike the NetLibrary download interface and the "15 minute read" eBook access. We have a great relationship with Cengage. Overall--apples and oranges to try to compare experiences, as content is so different in scope and use (NetLibrary eBooks 90% nonfiction, purchased as preselected bundles and targeted to "supplement" and expand scope of nonfiction collections. Overdrive for eBooks and eAudio targeted to popular readership.
- Our experiences have varied so much with each individual vendor over time that I can't fairly answer this question. We are implementing OverDrive next month (May 2009).
- They are the market leader, and though some content issues remain, they are still the best partner.
- ProQuest (Safari) = other
- Switching from Overdrive to Recorded Books "one click"
- Overdrive tech support is excellent
- Working with OverDrive has been a great experience. I would recommend them to everyone

Why are these vendors successful? What elements of service and content selection, organization, or content delivery have worked particularly well for the libraries in this sample?

Question 23. What do you like the most about this one vendor? (Libraries could select up to 3 answers.)

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Ease of use for library customers (library card authentication)	60.5%	23
Multiple platforms (MP3 players, iPods, etc.)	57.9%	22
Easy to use Administrative Portal	5.3%	2
Dedicated Portal for librarian selection	5.3%	2
Maintains a portal for our library with our own Library branding	42.1%	16
Wide selection of titles and formats	42.1%	16
Price point	5.3%	2
Customer Service	26.3%	10
Flexible purchasing plans	0.0%	0
MARC Records for our OPAC	23.7%	9
Timely turnaround time from order to delivery	18.4%	7
Marketing support	5.3%	2
Any observations to share?		8
<i>answered question</i>		38
<i>skipped question</i>		3

There have been reports in the literature about libraries that download content onto a variety of electronic devices and then Circulate those devices 'pre loaded' with eContent. How prevalent is this practice within major public libraries surveyed?

Question 24. Does your library circulate any of the following?

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Kindles preloaded with eBooks	0.0%	0
SONY Readers preloaded with eBooks	0.0%	0
MP3 Players preloaded with eAudio books	4.9%	2
Playway (self contained, single title) MP3 eAudio books	34.1%	14
iPods preloaded with eAudio books	0.0%	0
None; considering adding	12.2%	5
None; not considering	53.7%	22
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Some libraries have been convinced that access to eBooks would improve if they provided their customers with on-site 'download stations.' How widespread is this practice among surveyed libraries?

Question 25. Do you allow your library patrons to download content in the library?

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	34.1%	14
No	46.3%	19
Considering	19.5%	8
Do you have a comment to share?		14
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

So...has the growth of eBook content *really* been geometric over the last 2-3 years?

Question 26. Since you first added downloadable content has library CIRC

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Increased	87.8%	36
Declined	2.4%	1
Remained the same	9.8%	4
Do you have a comment to share?		10
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Question 27. What has been the actual percentage (%) of growth?

- **Spectacular growth = 1200% @ Hennepin County PL (MN)**
- **High growth = 100-300% reported by 10 libraries**
- **Average growth = between 31-99% reported by 8 libraries of this format grown over the last 3 years?**
- **Low growth = between 5.4% and 30% reported by 7 libraries**

In a time when the % of interest for financial instruments had been hovering at between 1-3% any % above 5% seem miraculous. Indeed, the growth in eBook CIRC seems to far outstrip the CIRC of most library content –though some might posit that media (specifically DVDs) are close behind.

Brooklyn Public Library has seen individual unit turnover rates that exceed 7-10X a year. Libraries are interested in knowing if this will be short-lived phenomenon or a measurable, continuing trend. In any case, public libraries must capture share and track use statistics. But how are these use significant reported?

Question 28. Do you include the CIRC of eBooks/Downloadables in electronic content usage reports?

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
We include in Electronic Content Usage Statistics Reports	39.0%	16
We include in Media CIRC Statistics Reports	12.2%	5
We include in Print CIRC Statistics Reports	19.5%	8
We include only in a discrete eBooks/Downloadable Report	26.8%	11
We do not include in any Statistics Reports	2.4%	1
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

In addition many library collection development staff are concerned that our public library users are both unaware that their public library has the free downloadable content and perhaps even more troubling, few users know how to access and download this content. OverDrive built and toured a special [Digital Bookmobile](#). Brooklyn Public Library hosted it in August 2009 and over 400 patrons and staff visited and learned how to download and use eContent.

Question 29. Do you provide training for the public on how to use and/or download these formats?

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	58.5%	24
No	34.1%	14
Considering	7.3%	3
Do you have a comment to share?		15
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Question 30. Has your library hosted any events or programs to publicize your eBooks/Downloadables collection?

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	53.7%	22
No	31.7%	13
Considering	17.1%	7
If yes please tell us more		19
<i>answered question</i>		41
<i>skipped question</i>		0

In Summary:

- Our research validated the swift and wide acceptance of the EBook by US Public Libraries. It also documented the dramatic, even geometric growth of eBook use (circulation).
- The list of producers/vendors is fluid but there are two industry leaders (OverDrive and NetLibrary)

Public Libraries have experienced

- Growth in use (CIRC)
- Growth in demand (Holds)
- eBooks are supplanting other formats (both in percentage of acquisitions/holdings funds committed)
- eBooks are popular with all ages (including children, Teens and 20s)
- eBooks are popular and attract tech savvy “digital natives” and ‘digital immigrants”
- eBooks are emerging as cost effective choices (Loss rates, collection management) that assure 24/7 access via the web.

Reference:

Prensky, Mark. “Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants.” *On the Horizon* (MCB University Press, Vol. 9 No. 5, October 2001). Accessed via the web on 15/05/09
<http://www.marcprensky.com/writing/Prensky%20-%20Digital%20Natives,%20Digital%20Immigrants%20-%20Part1.pdf>

Selected vendor web sites:

Baker and Taylor <http://www.btol.com/>
Cengage (Gale) <http://www.gale.cengage.com/>
Digital Bookmobile <http://www.digitalbookmobile.com/>
Ingram <http://www.ingramlibrary.com/>
MyLibraryDV <http://www.mylibrarydv.com/>
netLibrary <http://www.netlibrary.com/>
OverDrive <http://www.overdrive.com/>
PlayAway <http://www.playawaydigital.com/>
Recorded Books <http://www.recordedbooks.com/>

Selected library web sites (eBooks patron interface page):

Brooklyn Public Library (NY) <http://www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/ebooks.jsp>
Gwinnett County Public Library (GA)
<http://www.gwinnettpl.org/BooksDvdsMore/DownloadMedia/index.html>
Hamilton Public Library (Ontario Canada)
<http://www.myhamilton.ca/myhamilton/LibraryServices/lookandlisten/>
Hennepin County Library (MN) <http://www.hclib.org/pub/search/Downloads.cfm>
Los Angeles Public Library (CA) <http://audiobooks.lapl.org/16C61140-24F8-433E-92DC-BB4D4E94ED25/10/289/en/BrowseSubject1.htm>
New York Public Library (NY) <http://ebooks.nypl.org/B515E9CE-0148-4322-BE64-91B5DDD7EC5B/10/225/en/Default.htm>

Phoenix Public Library (AZ)

<http://www.phoenixpubliclibrary.org/controller.jsp?N=6594>

San Francisco Public Library (CA) <http://sfpl.lib.ca.us/news/overdrive.htm>

(Example of a new service launch page)