

Beyond the printed page



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Technology is rapidly changing the nature of the global media. For example, Daniel Czitrom, in his book entitled 'Media and the American Mind: From Morse to McLuhan', states that one of three major traditions or persuasions in American thought with regard to the impact of modern mass media, views changes in communications technology as the driving force in the historical changes in such media impacts on society. This is the school of thought of the "radical media" theorists Harold Innis and Marshall McLuhan, who are said to have highlighted the thesis in different ways in their works (Czitrom 1982, p. xii).

Not only is the change with regard to the changes in the impacts of mass media on society, it is also in with regard to ownership of mass media, as both technology and economics are credited with driving a convergence of the different forms of media, and implicitly, a convergence on ownership of the different forms of media (Compaine and Gornery 2000, p. xvi). The online books have major advantages compared with print versions.

It benefits greatly from the evolution of technology, with the new emerging technologies endowing online books with the ability to dynamically update, hyperlink, provide efficient searching, real-time interactivity and multimedia. All these instruments help the online books deliver materials to readers more efficiently and more diversely, than its print version. Moreover, the online books attract more non-local readers and many younger readers, while the print version mainly focuses on the local or national market. 2. What devices and technologies exist or will soon exist for reading digital books?

There are no several devices being manufactured that will soon make the move from printed to digital books. In fact, the move to replace printed

books with electronic versions has the stamp of approval of earnest researchers, experts and scientists such that readers are now able to access thousands of books in one portable, mobile and accessible case. For instance, the Sony Reader is a new electronic book device that makes use of the display technology called the electronic ink. It was developed by the E-link in Massachusetts where the display gives a most natural reading experience for the reader, using no backlight.

It uses a form of electronic ink including displays on credit cards that do not break when bent. The food labels are able to change prices throughout the day too. How this is done is by plastic films with transparent microscopic liquid-filled spheres, the size of a hair's diameters where there floats even smaller black and white particles. The black particles are negatively charged while the white particles are positively charged. These now forms ink patterns of black and white depending on how the electric charge is applied to the film.

The Sony Reader need not be turned off and just like a printed book, it can just be set aside and the current page remains on the screen without draining any battery power. Studies have even proven that users report increased readability and a minimal eyestrain compared to other electronic book technology. (Scientists develop E-link to Replace Books and Newspapers). 3. How are publishers adapting to digital books? Apart from the interest from readers, on the business side the idea of moving pictures in a newspaper attracts more attention and brings greater business opportunity.

More and more advertisers are interested in using online video advertisements and are shifting some of their advertisements from television to the web. New kinds of video ads are becoming popular pre-rolls and post-rolls, video ads that run before or after the news video clip. Meanwhile, web news forecasts give the opportunity for TV-style commercials. In each three-minute News Journal Newscast two fifteen second ad fragments and one thirty second fragment are inserted. This idea was only proposed two months ago, and already more than eighty-five percent of the airtime slices have been sold. (Oxfeld, 2004).

Currently, publishers are looking into the digital rights. These issues are inevitable due to the large number of people involved in it. It is also complicated by the fact that these people come from different places. Laws which govern them are different. Yet publishers are quite discouraged. More so, there are not much available treaties or conventions from which rules and guidelines regarding digital rights can be seen. One of main problems with regard to digital rights is the problem on unauthorized copying and transmission of printed books and digital information. This is a problem about rights to intellectual property.

Tran (2001) says there are many interlinked communities in the web. As such, sharing different materials can be very convenient. According to him, file types frequently used are MP3s, MPEGs, JPEGs, and PDFs. There is a proliferation of many copies of these kinds of files which are transmitted from two different points. He further elaborates that the problem lies in putting a stop or even delaying the process of the undisturbed exchange rate of copyrighted digital materials. There are a lot of factors that cannot be

easily prevented such as the increasing sophistication of technology and the speed of transmission (Tran).

The problem is not as easy as it seems but publishers are still keen on the fact that there are still people who would want to have books instead of electronic devices as reading materials. WORKS CITED Compaine, Benjamin M. and Douglas Gomery (2000), ' Who Owns the Media? : Competition and Concentration in the Mass Media Industry', Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Mahwah, NJ, p xvi Czitrom, Daniel J. ' Media and the American Mind: From Morse to McLuhan', University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, NC, p. xii (1982), Guard and Nurture your Intellectual Property Rights.

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