

Other e-reader pilots

Princeton study

From email sent around by Dan McKee:

"For those interested in eBook usage in the classroom, Princeton has recently posted the report on their pilot project testing the use of Kindles for course readings. You can see the reports (full and summary versions) here: <http://www.princeton.edu/ereaderpilot/>

The executive summary states: The goal of printing less in the pilot courses was achieved: pilot participants printed just over half the amount of sheets than control groups who did not use e-readers. The classroom experience was somewhat worsened by using e-readers, as study and reference habits of a lifetime were challenged by device limitations. This pilot suggests that future e-book manufacturers may wish to pay more attention to annotation tools, pagination, content organization, and in achieving a more natural "paper-like" user experience. In summary, although most users of the Kindle DX were very pleased with their "reading" experiences with the Kindle, they felt that the "writing" tools fell short of expectations, and prevented them from doing things easily accomplished with paper.

Syracuse study

Camille's notes from Academic Librarian 2010 (session 3) on Brief wondrous life of Syracuse Kindle

Pilot run by committee with members from access services, collections, IT, assessment

Not just the device, turned into everything and the kitchen sink

Goals-took some nailing down from "let's just test some kindles."

Final goals: Test new tech and patron reaction; Provide curricular resource support, alternative to expensive into engineering materials; Explore kindle backend-what kind of user data can you get to inform your services

Original pilot timeline-mid-July 2009. Team assembled and charge developed. Sept 2009 implementation and assessment after fall semester. Reality very different

Tasks they had to complete all in >6 weeks working with 7 different areas:

- Identified titles offered and verify availability
- Investigate legal issues
- Determine funding sources for devices and ebooks
- Purchase and load devices and ebooks
- Work on backend
- Staff training
- Marketing
- Coordination with assessment

Costs: 2 kindles, \$100 for accessories, about \$1000 for ebooks

Paralell work universe: timeline on paper and actual timeline (hallway and lunch conversations, etc). Engineering dean had a problem expressed over lunch-electrical engineering and computer science-expensive textbooks, international students not expecting to buy, coll dev can't buy enough textbooks, largest dept on campus, lots of ILL requests for textbooks, reserves issue (does prof even put stuff on reserve?), cuts into monograph budget (Dean wasn't thinking about trade offs)

Forcing new tech solution into existing (rigid) structure

Only had enough money for two Kindles, but that doesn't solve problem for hundreds of students Couldn't get full list of textbooks in use from bookstore or dept, had to go through catalog by hand 30 texts in 22 courses, only 5 available for kindle and not focused all in 1 course, no mandatory use of kindle (1 a previous edition). Only 2 of the print texts on reserve, none of the texts were all that expensive (over 100) so maybe not as much coll dev savings

Looked at top 50 ILL requests-11 on Kindle, 7 viable for pilot, added 1 extra (Strunk & White?) so 8 final

Buying these things

Bound width (bandwidth?)

In ILS creating new categories like new item type Had to add new item type to circulation matrix New loan rules Opacity text (???) Safety skins, charging cables, cases, where to put barcodes Instruction cards for kindle Policies-replacement, storage, who can check out Staff training Check in of both equipment and books (ebooks can be deleted by patrons)

Publicity and marketing-email, website, news, liaison

The unexpected

One of the librarians was at Burton Blatt Institute (BBI; international disability rights association) dinner on Oct 11 and the chance conversation (you know they're suing people for using ereaders right?) Accessibility issues-text-to-speech disabled by some publishers, no audio menu National lawsuits-ASU sued as well as 5 other schools Library worked with BBI to reject Kindle and worked with Univ of Wisconsin and national federation of the blind (joint AP press release-nov 11) Ended pilot in Dec 2009

Amazon making accessibility changes hopefully this summer

Ability to affect evolving technology

Use purchasing power for good

Collaborations

Original assessment plans

- Title selection and availability
- Price duffs (???)
- Functionality/usability/user experience
- Back end stats from kindle use and ebook formats

In fall semester 37 checkouts, not just engineering students Comment card in kindle packages, online survey from registration signup feedback

Findings for patrons

- Circ period too short (only two days)
- Patrons surprised by content (which were textbooks, not pleasure reading)
- Liked readability, though some found it hard to use (but better than library website)

Findings for library

- Not as cheap as they thought, not as big diff between e and print
- No way to get backend stats
- Everyone had hard time learning to use kindle, not personal device so constant learning curve, manual is like 200 pages, people didn't look at instruction card either

Plan assessment from beginning!

Disconnect between need and tool. Wanted to solve textbook problem but kindle wasn't right device

Scaling issue-buy kindles for everyone? How to check multiple titles every time checked in?

Phase 2-Any other readers? Look at other disciplines with better support? Look at other services (useful for people who are traveling, serve up PDFs for ILL and reserves), longer check out times

Don't be afraid to fail!