The Portable Collection

Tablets, mobile technology and e-textbooks
The last frontiers of electronic information

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It is a Pleasure to be Here!

- Driving change
- Lessons
- Portability
- Frontiers
- Bringing it together
- Examples
- How will we get there?
- What does the future look like?
The Portable Collection

- A matter of decades?
- Everything “e”?
- Where does the library sit?
Driving Change

- Students are under increasing pressure
- Learning is more effective when it is a social experience
  - “All science is rooted in conversation”
  - Retention levels increase with greater interaction

- Walter Dale Cone of Experience

Edgar Dale: The Cone of Learning (1969)

Driving Change

• Technology and the student
  • 67% of students use technology at least once an hour
    • 40% every 10 minutes
  • Quick to substitute -- alternative sources of information that are connected
    • Google, Wikipedia, other sources
• Print textbooks remain dominant but are used in a digital world
  • Technology is in place to support the leap to “e” but are the business models?
  • The library has adapted to the digital world and continues to evolve
• Are lecturers the final frontier?
  • Traditionally slow to adapt to change so this too is impacting the rate with which eTextbooks are adopted and used
  • Lecturers aren’t bound by format
Lessons Learnt

• Students in the UK spend on average £100 - £150 per term on textbooks
  • They look for what is free
  • They buy what is essential
• A few years back JISC made e-textbooks available through the library, increase in print books sold
  • Titles included weren’t “core texts”
  • Further research was needed
• Other e-resources including e-journals, e-books and database products have increased in sales, with some publishers doubling figures year-on-year until recent times, as these have become more mainstream
• Portability is a crucial deciding factor for the end-user
Lessons Being Learned Now

• JISC Students FIRST targeted bursaries study with Anglia Ruskin University and University of East London
  • Student retention focus
  • Higher spend on books = student retention
  • “While eBooks are becoming more popular, students that we spoke with all said that they preferred a hard copy of their core texts, for note-taking. They also expressed the desire to keep their core texts from one year to the next, and after graduation.”
  • What can we learn from this?
    • Strong feature set
    • Portability
Key Elements for Portability

- Online and offline
- Proliferation of devices
  - Tablets
  - Smartphones
  - e-book readers
  - Other devices including laptops, notebooks, etc
- E-content availability
  - E-textbooks, e-books, e-journals, databases
  - Accessibility/discoverability
  - Ease-of-access
- License models in place that make content accessible
- Platforms to support this
- Integration
What is Available Today?

• Reference resources and secondary textbooks through the library
  • Some free
  • Most subscribed/licensed
• Secondary materials found free on the internet, not all relevant and even fewer of academic importance
• Learning environments (aka CMS, LMS, VLE)
  • Moodle
• Direct to end-user core e-textbook and other reading list materials
  • Purchase and rental models
  • E-books and e-textbooks, library aggregator limited period rentals
  • E-textbook rentals and purchase
The Frontiers

• Format
  • A lesson from rolling out mobile services, across devices
    • The access channel is quite important
      • Wifi?
      • Mobile data services?
    • Most of the time is spent testing across devices to make sure it displays correctly
    • Ensuring content is fit to be used across devices
      • Computers
        • Cross browser support
        • Conversion to each subset
      • Mobile devices
        • Screen type issues
        • Content type supported
        • Right image sizes
        • Page scaling
        • Group devices into like capabilities and then put something together that renders correctly on that group of devices

Interview with Mobile Services Architect, Deutsche Telekom, November 2012
The Frontiers (cont)

- Tablets are a blending of the two
- Apps require developing native to an operating system (IOS or Android and their different versions) or HTML5 (miss all of the underlying features of an operating system, but potentially work across platforms)
- Partitioning into sizeable chunks to deliver to the device where it is being used
- Image support
- User identification

- Looking to the future
  - More devices
  - Future proofing
    - What are the trends in your library?
    - How close are you to your customers?
  - Recommendation from the mobile, be as format neutral as possible or invest heavily in development

- So where does that leave our industry?
The Frontiers (cont)

• Learning from the mobile world
  • The real money is in licensing content
  • Format is everything

• Availability
  • Will publishers take the leap of faith offering simultaneous “p” and “e” or even “e” native or fully integrated digital textbooks?
  • Will core e-textbooks be made available through the library or will students/institutions have to fund these directly to the end-user?
  • Will the library focus on providing further/complimentary learning/research materials?
  • Digital rights, do we still need to consider these?
The Frontiers (cont)

- User experience
  - Flat pdf = a picture of a page
    - What to do with all the other “stuff?”
    - If we continue providing users with “pictures” of pages, they will see digital works as pages?
  - Dynamic/interactive environments require integration, particularly if they are available both on/offline
    - Editorial involvement
    - Licensing
    - Technical expertise
    - Higher rates of adoption
Let’s Tie It Together

• Lecturers
  • Want an easy life
  • Need to keep students engaged and to ensure they are on the right track

• Students
  • Want:
    • Access
    • Portability
    • Immediacy of information
  • Need
    • More so than ever, access to textbooks
    • Replicate the “p” experience with enhanced tools but make it even better or they won’t buy it

• Publishers will need to
  • Make content available in a way that drives usage, supports the student

  • Explore models
    • Direct to student/via institution, but to the individual
    • With libraries

  • Invest in technology

• Libraries will need to
  • Further evolve
  • Explore models
    • Within their institutions
    • With publishers
Take for Example

- Cengage MindTap, USA
  - Single access point for all digital assets
  - Combines content, learning and assessment tools
  - Discussion forums facilitate communication
  - Tutors can add information to tailor materials to course needs
  - Measurement and monitoring tools
  - Device agnostic
Some Others to Watch
How Will We Get There?

• Librarians, meet the publishers
  • Access to students, academics, etc
  • Feedback and a finger on the pulse
  • Continue being a reliable channel through which to access credible information
  • Make as much as possible easily accessible 24 x 7

• Publishers, meet the librarians
  • Throwing aside what kind of publishing... Content
  • Understanding of where “p” has been and where “e” is driving both sides of the business

• And if you don’t...
How Will We Get There? (cont)

• Technology
  • It’s a big www out there
  • Popular applications to support usage
    • Learning environments
    • Assessment tools
    • Social media
  • Future-proof
    • Format-neutral
    • Adaptive delivery
• Together
  • Leap of faith, experiment and explore
    • Find a business model that works for the users, institutions and the publisher
    • Consider emerging distributions channels
  • Push for more content to be formatted for content across devices and integrated into the student’s environment and other resources
What Does the Future Look Like?

• An Integrated model
  – A combination of resources
    • Textbooks or textbook like resources
    • Library resources
    • Open Source online content
  – Assessment Tools
  – Social Media Integration

• Fragmented model opens opportunities for libraries to become resource hub

• Evolutionary process
  – Ease of use
  – Accessible
Thank You

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