Chapter Nine

The Adoption of E-Publishing by Libraries

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Introduction

 Provision of reading materials in education institutions depends on a supply of relevant publications. Until the 1990s production of books especially for young people (apart from textbooks) was weak in most African countries and non-existent in others (Faye, 1998).

Since around 1989 there has been a spectacular growth in children's publishing, in both European and African languages. The number of titles published has exploded. One publisher in Kenya produced five titles in 1988 and 127 in 1998. Print runs now average between 4,000 and 6,000 per title.

Books need to be sold and it is only the library market that can provide that necessary base on which local publishing can thrive and develop (Read, 1992). Publishers are pressing for the development of libraries. The relationship between the two sectors is recognized as being symbiotic.

Reading culture and the book industry

In Kenya, several social factors are relevant to the provision and use of books (Odini, 2002):

- a low level of literacy meaning that a sizeable proportion of Kenyans are excluded from readership;
- the dominance of books written in English, which means that people with basic literacy skills in Kenyan vernacular languages are excluded from using the books stocked by libraries;
- the poor reading culture, which results in few individuals buying books and other reading materials;
- Kenyan culture encourages people to spend their leisure time in sporting activities, recreational places (bars, hotels) and in churches and mosques rather than spending it reading;
- the HIV/AIDS scourge has become a major hindrance to the promotion of a reading culture in Kenya as large numbers of people are affected either because they are ill or because they are caring for people who are ill;
- there is a large nomadic population, especially in the arid and semi-arid parts of the country, with no access to books and libraries: additionally, their living conditions are very unfavourable to reading.
Recent political trends have, however, been favourable to the development of the book industry. There has been greater liberalisation of, and increased access to, library and information services and materials. Government has, for example, removed restrictions on the number of books that school libraries can buy per subject. Some of the developments that have taken place during the last two decades include a larger number of information professionals graduating from training institutions.

Although Kenya has no comprehensive information policy, there are several sectoral policies in the form of legislation, regulations and guidelines governing, for instance, public libraries (the KNLS Board Act) archives (the Public Archives Act), and legal deposit material (the Books and Newspapers Act). Other relevant laws include the Copyright Act, the Industrial Property Act, the Science and Technology Act, the Museums Act, and the Libraries Act. These laws are, however, in need of major review and harmonisation. There is a need to formulate a comprehensive national information policy in the country to enhance coordination in the information sector and in the book industry.

**Library services**

Libraries occupy a central position in the distribution of books. They are often the most effective means of getting printed matter to the reader. Kenya's national library system consists of public, educational and special libraries. It is estimated that, excluding school libraries, the nation's libraries have a total book stock in excess of eight million.

Libraries in Kenya irrespective of their size face similar problems, albeit at different levels of severity. These problems include:

- inadequate funds for the purchase of publications
- inadequate physical infrastructure
- inadequate information technology and their poor use
- lack of well-defined inter-library cooperation
- lack of an all-embracing national policy on the provision of information

**Adapting to e-publishing**

According to Lapp (1997), traditional scholarly publishing and the traditional library have certain limitations; consequently, scientists are increasingly publishing their research findings in electronic form. There is also a demand for a profound structural change in library operations and services.

Libraries must become virtual libraries in addition to being classical libraries. They must develop information strategies and virtual library services. Books and journal collections must be complemented with electronic information on remote servers but accessible through library terminals.

Libraries should increasingly seek to integrate union catalogues into their online public access catalogues. They should also integrate inter-library loan services as well as access to electronic journals. Users should be provided with full internet access to local and remote Internet-based digital information.

In order to play a successful role in the new paradigm, librarians must not only develop technological systems, but also new organisational structures with the goal of enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of their services.

Cornish (1998) advises that the role of the library should not be limited to making available a range of publications and information to a specified group of users. The library is a crucial element in the publishing industry, as it provides the interface between the publisher and the untapped market; and therefore facilitates effective achievement of one aim of publishing - to reach the public. Publishers cannot hope to reach every potential outlet for their products because they do not have the direct contact with the necessary groups to achieve this. Publishers are also limited in what they can provide in terms of a repertoire which will normally be limited to their own products or those of associated companies. Librarians, however, can and do, reach a wide range of audience as they have direct access to a very broadly based user community. They can also offer a
much wider range of products that the publisher or even other intermediaries (booksellers, subscription agents, database hosts) as they are not motivated primarily by financial incentives although they may need to limit the range of resources available because of financial constraints.

Naturally, libraries as major resources of information and valuing their unique role to reach to many users want and need to be able to exploit new possibilities. However, if they are no longer going to rely on a paper-based industry the alternative will be to use materials in electronic formats of many kinds, all of which are vulnerable to a range of threats including unauthorized copying, redistribution, repackaging and even republishing under different labels.

The Impact of e-publishing on collections services and administration

According to Kovač (1999) the impact of electronic publishing (e-publishing) on library collections services and administration is complex. There are no simple solutions to the problems of managing, collecting, archiving and accessing e-publications as well as including them in library services. There are however, many good usable solutions that libraries can learn from each other.

Problems in managing e-publications for libraries and their users include:

- Providing access that matches the technological capabilities of both library and user.
- Providing access that satisfies the profit motive of commercial e-publishers.
- Acquiring skills and knowledge required in imaging electronic delivery mechanisms, as well as the subject content of e-publications.
- Archiving e-pubs in ways that avoid problems with electronic media degradation.

Some of the advantages to libraries and their users in solving these problems and using the solutions to provide library services are as follows:

- Patrons are facilitated to access more publications than individual libraries can acquire and store.
- Simplifies collection procedures would be developed to enable libraries share central storage and retrieval facilities.
- Preservation is made easier because of the relative ease of duplication and archiving of electronic publications.
- Libraries would have opportunities also for libraries to do their own e-publishing through the internet services such as e-mail and World Wide Web.

The increased role of libraries in e-publishing has coincided with some open source publishing software such as Open Conference Systems (OCS), Open Monograph Press (OMP) and Open Journal Systems (OJS) which are powerful web-based journal production environment developed by the Public Knowledge Project in Canada (PKP 2007), in collaboration with DSpace of Cornell and Penn State University. The software provides web-based tools for managing the entire cycle of electronic publishing from submission of articles through review editing, mark-up and publication (Harr, 2008). The management tools include, including “branding” to reflect institutional and other affiliations, as well as searching tools, language options and subscription alternatives.

Historical development of e-publishing in libraries

The history of e-publishing is very short in terms of publishing and libraries in general. Development of management strategies and e-publishing mechanisms has happened only within the last three decades. In the United States, the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) has been compiling the annual Directory of Electronic Journals, Newsletters and Academic Discussion Lists since 1994. This document sets out to explain the inception of the changes in the e-publishing issues in libraries in the past two decades.

Libraries are increasingly involved with e-publishing: they publish their own e-journals, e-newsletters and other materials (Kovač and Kovač, 1997). The technology to solve some of the current challenges and to make use advantages of e-publishing is either currently available or clearly being developed. How the advent and increasing presence...
of e-publications will impact the people who will read them may ultimately be of more importance than what we will do with the machines, the storage media or the delivery mechanism. Therefore, emphasis should be on the human-interaction aspects of e-publishing rather than on the technology or delivery mechanisms.

The role of research libraries in e-publishing
Research libraries are rapidly developing e-publishing services (Harlow 2008). These libraries are publishing many kinds of works: 88% publish journals, 79% publish conference papers and proceedings and 71% publish monographs. Established journals dominate this emerging publishing sector and are the main drivers of service development.

Publishing services are rapidly becoming a norm for research libraries, particularly journal publishing services. Libraries are addressing gaps in traditional publishing systems. Libraries are not replicating traditional publishing; however, they are working with a mix of existing titles and new titles. They are frequently working with publishers and editors looking for opportunities to translate their traditionally published titles and put them in the emerging networked environment of information exchange.

The question is no longer whether research libraries should offer publishing services but what kind of services libraries will offer. Consequently, there is need to ask to what extent can the users benefit from investments in library e-publishing services, particularly in the context of transformations in library services. There are both great demands for publishing services and significant benefits to be obtained from strategic investments.

Hosting services are perhaps the archetypical publishing services of a digital age, and library publishing program managers report substantial demand for hosting services. Hosting tends to be the most visible service the library provides, although a long period of development precedes public release of a work.

Research libraries often complement their publishing services by supporting digitizing older printed publications, particularly journal back runs. Converting existing digital content into new formats is also quite common. Both services enrich on-going publishing. Digitization of journals and monograph series helps build a critical mass of content to attract readers' attention, and may offer opportunities to partner with existing publishers, such as university presses.

Libraries often support streamlined peer review workflows, but they are not providing peer reviews itself. Library publication programs are not limited to producing locally authored works or publishing without quality evaluation of content. In fact, launching programs with limited resources, libraries must make careful choices of the works in which they invest. Consequently, peer reviewed works dominate library publishing programs and editors or acquisitions committees typically maintain their traditional roles in identifying quality content.

Libraries provide publishing services for both print and electronic publications, but electronic publishing dominates the output. Most library-published titles are produced only in electronic form. Where a print version of a title is produced, a publishing partner may generate it while the library handles the electronic publishing. Currently, print-on-demand services are rarely used, although a few programs are exploring this functionality.

The role of university libraries in e-publishing
Library e-publishing services are part of a range of new kinds of services some university libraries are developing such as repository and digitization services. Library publication services are developed in ways that are consonant with research library services culture, including close consultation and collaborative arrangements with researchers.

By supporting e-journals and e-monographs, the university libraries provide a great benefit to the research community at large. It also allows communities to have their own peer review research outlets. Faculty members would get ready available tools to peer reviewed journals of their research communities, tools that also have the support and encouragement of the university. University libraries would get involved in journal publishing
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without becoming full-fledged professional publishers with complex marketing and sales operations. The university libraries would be able to capture and showcase their faculty's valuable work and develop new roles vis-à-vis faculty research.

Advantages

The growth of e-publications promoted by university libraries:

* reduce scholarly publishing by the organizations,
* improve publishing opportunities for researchers,
* promote development of new focal areas for research,
* enable immediacy of access to research findings,
* improve access to publishing funded research,
* reduce costs,
* tailor publishing services to specific user communities' needs,
* gain production efficiencies, timeliness and broader readership by using digital publishing technologies,
* support academics in publishing and launching e-publications,
* provide publishing alternatives.

Libraries in universities where e-publishing is operational have a component with their budgets to support e-publishing. However, demand (existing and potential) for e-publishing services calls for increased financial support by universities. Libraries can and will need to redirect resources but there is wide agreement among program managers that broader institutional investments will be required to supplement existing library budgets, at least as long as the current cost structure of established scholarly publishing persists.

The challenges of e-publishing in libraries in Kenya and possible solutions

Adoption of e-publishing will not happen instantaneously but will require special efforts by both the library managers and university administration. The efforts are specifically intended to address actual and potential resistance to change. Generally, people do not readily accept change; they fear it and resist it as far as they can and their resistance is all the stronger when they do not understand why change is being introduced and how it will affect them.

Successful introduction of e-publishing in libraries in Kenya will require satisfactory answers to the following questions:

* What types of e-publishing activities should be given priority?
* How do we obtain support from staff and university administration?

The problems associated with the adoption of e-publishing in libraries will be minimized when these questions have been answered.

Having identified priority areas and possible impediments, the actual publishing activities will be introduced. It is important to bear in mind that e-publishing being a new innovation in libraries in the country will require a participatory approach to management of all publishing activities. No one individual has all the answers, or solutions to issues including the top library and university managers. If Managers should listen to the views of others, especially their members of staff, as they stand to gain from the contributions.
Conclusion:
Although electronic publishing in Kenyan libraries is generally underdeveloped, there are many opportunities for improvement. The free primary education system which was extended to secondary schools in 2006 is bound to increase readership and the demand for publications. Stakeholders in the library systems must harness this potential in meeting the increasing demand.

Policy makers in research institutions and university managers should review and improve budgetary allocations for libraries to support publishing ventures.
Bibliography


