LIS News - National

The Ebook story

The smartphone surge with the easy access of reading apps on them and dedicated ebook readers like Amazon's Kindle are redrawing the book market

The battle lines are drawn. The ones who hold a romantic view that paper books are more beautiful and glamorous and that people should be encouraged to buy them and have nice libraries the way they used to. Then there is a growing segment of book lovers, rather tech savvy power readers, who would like to flip a page of the book in their tabs or Kindle and download a vast spectre of genres on the go.

While it may be too early to write off the charm of paper books, the smartphone surge with the easy access of reading apps on them and dedicated ebook readers like Amazon's Kindle are redrawing the book market and ebook readers may soon make a foray into average households.

When Amazon launched its new-generation Kindle Paperwhite e-book reader with enhanced features earlier this year, it was not only sold through over 250 top tech outlets in India but the prices were also slashed as a festive offer last month. This was a strong indicator of the fast growing e-book market in India with every other book being e-published.

In order to cater to this fast evolving market for ebooks, there has been a flood of e-readers and ebook apps of late - GooglePlay Books was launched in India last year; Amazon launched its Kindle range of e-readers and the Kindle Store. India's leading book seller, Flipkart recently launched multiple e-books reader apps with features that facilitate easy access to any section of the book on the go, book-marking of pagesand reference to a dictionary while reading. In addition to this, there is also a text-to-speech feature where the app reads out the book to you, also useful for the visually challenged.

Says an Amazon Kindle spokesperson: "We see huge potential in the India market. India is amongst the top 10 markets for books and the third largest market for English books. This high propensity for reading, increasing Internet penetration and Internet-enabled devices plus a rapid growth of middle class population with increasing disposable income makes it a very promising market." Amazon

India offers over 2.3 million Kindle books to Indian customers, including 5 lakh exclusive titles through Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP). With Whispersync technology Kindle users can stop and start a book and pick it up right where they left off – even on different devices.

Self publishing

The jumpstart of the Indian ebook market has led to a new breed of self published writers. For instance, Amish Tripathi opted to self-publish his first book 'The Immortals of Meluha' after being rejected by around 20 publishing houses. The book became such a hit online that publishers chased him soon after, resulting in a $1-million contract with Westland India for his work 'Shiva Trilogy'. Besides Amish there are many other authors who self-publish their books. The e- book platform helps them to reach out to readers across the world.

Rasana Atreya, who holds a Masters in Computer Engineering, worked in IT sector for a few years before she took to writing. She is the author of the Amazon bestseller '*Tell A Thousand Lies'*, which was also shortlisted for the 2012 Tibor Jones South Asia Award. "When you self publish, you create your account on Amazon, smashwords etc, you upload the book and you control the pricing. This gives you complete control over your book. If you think your book cover is impeding sales, you can swap it out with a new one. If you want to price your book lower in order

to temporarily attract more readers, you can do that as well. You can run promotions and track sales hourly," says the Hyderabad-based writer.*Tell A Thousand Lies* has received close to 450 reviews across Amazon UK/US and Goodreads. It has remained on the bestseller list in Eastern fiction since the time of publication in May 2012.

Yes, it is tough on the independent book stores, in times of ebooks and ecommerce. And for those of us who love the paper book, it's definitely a big change.

Source | Business Line | 1 November 2014

Delhi University installs special technology for blind students in libraries

Delhi University is in the process of installing a special technology which can scan books and transcribe text to speech in all its libraries, a move which the varsity claims is a first-of-its-kind initiative for visually-challenged students by an Indian university.

The technology called 'Inclusive Print Access Project' is a combination of software which has been imported from abroad to suit the needs of the visually-challenged students.The various softwares have been assembled to form a suitable package by the varsity's Equal Opportunity Cell.

The 'Inclusive Print Access Project' includes a high-speed camera called 'LEXAIR' and a flat-

bed scanner. "The student will hold the book in same manner as other students and the camera and scanner will capture the images and transcribe the text into speech. The software also allows scanning the book, reading, converting it in PDF and much more. The students can book mark various portions and also right notes in the margins," he elaborated.

Another feature, is a software called NVDA which will help the students in reading newspapers and browsing Internet. A braille library and an Audio Book Resource Centre are among the facilities introduced by the university for its differently-abled students.

Source | http://www.firstpost.com/

Reliance Life to set up libraries in government schools

MUMBAI: Private life insurer Reliance Life Insurance has partnered with non-profit Room to Read to set up over 100 libraries in government primary schools across the country, the company said on Monday.

In a statement issued here, Reliance Life said the partnership with Room to Read aims to reach out to over 10,000 children across the country through this initiative.

Room to Read is a global non-profit organisation committed to promoting literacy and gender equality in education in the country by providing libraries in schools. The first library was inaugurated in a Mumbai school on Children's Day that fell on Nov 14.

Reliance Life and Room to Read will create and maintain libraries in municipal schools across Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra in the first year of their programme, the company said.

Source | http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/education/news/Reliance-Life-to-set-up-libraries-in-government-schools/articleshow/45175213.cms

Govt project to convert school texts into e-books

The ministry of education is tasked with the work of identifying the curricula and the books which will be first available on the platform

The central government is planning a project to convert all books covered under school curricula into e-books.

The project is being loosely termed e-basta and could put the government at par with some large e-book hosting platforms such as Amazon.

The Centre for Development of Advanced Computing is building the platform to host the e-books, Ram Sevak Sharma, secretary to the department of electronics and information technology, told *Business Standard*, "The platform should be ready in a month and will be like an intelligent online marketplace, where suggestions for related books, etc, will be given."

The ministry of education is tasked with the work of identifying the curricula and the books which will be first available on the platform. The books will be shortlisted in coordination with the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). Currently, several private organisations, as well as technology and education firms, offer e-books of the NCERT curriculum. However, these are scattered across platforms and are not comprehensive. The idea of a government platform is make sure all the material is available at one place, is current and easy to access.

Students might be aided with digital devices such as notebooks to make the central project successful.

Source | Business Standard | 17 November 2014

Surprising Gadgets, Not Just Books, Are Ready for Checkout at College Libraries

Justin Ellis's official title at the Georgia Institute of Technology's library is instructional-technology associate, but he thinks of himself as the gadget guy. He manages a program at the library that lets students and professors check out a growing catalog of computers, cameras, and other electronics—a selection more akin to a Best Buy store than a lending library. A colleague, Ameet Doshi, compares him to the character Q in the James Bond series because he not only has the latest device but is expert at giving "the two-minute drill on how to use it."

Georgia Tech is not alone in having a Q on the library staff. Colleges and universities across the country now lend tech hardware in addition to books. And we're not just talking laptops, netbooks, and iPads, which Mr. Doshi says have become pretty standard fare. The latest offerings are increasingly exotic.

Source | http://chronicle.com

Indian and the United Kingdom Agree to Further Strengthen the Cooperation in Education

The Sixth India-UK Education Forum Meeting took place in New Delhi today. Smt. Smriti Irani, the Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Government of India, and Mr Greg Clark, the Minister for Universities, Science and Cities of the United Kingdom co-chaired the meeting. Both the countries discussed the existing bilateral cooperation initiatives in education and also agreed to further strengthen it by taking up

several new initiatives. Both sides also acknowledged the cooperation mechanism through joint UK-India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI).

A Joint Statement was also signed by both the Ministers highlighting the educational cooperation between India and the United Kingdom and the future areas of collaboration. The areas of leadership development; research, innovation, technology and knowledge transfer; Skill Development and Entrepreneurship; enhancing people to people links and two-way mobility; quality improvement in education; use of ICT in education; development of MOOCs and e-Library and launch of UKIERI-III in 2016 have been highlighted in the Joint Statement.

The Forum was attended by Senior Government Officials, policy makers and academicians from both sides.

Source | Business Standard | 14 November 2014

Appeals Court Says Digital Library Project Doesn't Infringe Copyright

Libraries that digitize books in order to make them searchable do not infringe copyright, a US federal appellate court has ruled recently. The decision, issued by the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals, marks a major defeat for the Authors Guild of USA, which had contended that the Hathi Trust --

a joint digital book storage project of 13 universities -- infringed writers' copyright by making digital copies of the books. A three-judge panel of the appellate court said the libraries and Hathi Trust are protected by fair use principles, because the digital copies, which enable people to search through books online, are "transformative." "The creation of a full-text searchable database is a quintessentially transformative use," the appellate said in its decision.

India can connect Saarc students through e-libraries: Modi

Kathmandu: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday said India is prepared to connect students in the south Asian region through e-libraries.

"IT has removed all barriers to quality education. India is prepared to connect our south Asian students through online course and e-libraries," Modi said at the two-day Saarc summit that began Wednesday.

Modi also highlighted the need to use the strength of shared heritage and diversity.

"We should use strength of shared heritage and our diversity to encourage tourism within our region and present south Asia to the world," he said.

Set up in 1985, the Saarc is a regional association of eight south Asian countries -- Afghanistan,

Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Afghanistan joined the grouping as its eighth member state in 2007.

Source| http://www.ummid.com/news/2014/November/26.11.2014/e-library-toconnect-saarc-students.html#sthash.sazNw9JA.dpuf

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Getting the inbox to do a little thinking for you

IBM, Google and Microsoft are re-imagining the email

Bengaluru, its obituary has been written many times before, but the email has shown more resilience than the proverbial cat with many lives. Now, it's time for another makeover to suit the social media and smart-phone age.

To hold user interest, the email now needs to do much more than just be faster than snail mail, especially with the birth of chat apps like Slack which, with its file sharing and other features, has been dubbed "the email killer".

Players like Google, IBM and Microsoft have realised that for the email to remain relevant, it would have to assume capabilities that makes it more of a personal assistant.

What if the email inbox became smart enough to tell you which mail to read first? Or, if it could

sort hundreds of mails into different categories such as finance, bills, news, social and promotions? The answers to these and other questions are resulting in the metamorphosis of the email.

Source | Business Line | 27 November 2014

Forthcoming Events

Second National Workshop on Digital Libraries using Greenstone Digital Library Software from 27th to 31st January 2015 at MICA, Ahmedabad. To concentrate each one personally, the strength will be limited to 24 participants only. Last date of registration is 27th December 2014. For more information, please access following link

http://keic.mica-apps.net/wwwisis/index.php/workshop-on-greenstone/gsdl

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National Conference on Emerging Trends & Techniques for Electronic Resource Management in Libraries

Issues & Challenges on February 13-14, 2015 at Rourkela

http://library.nitrkl.ac.in/events/elpes2/callforpapers.pdf

Food for thought

Our life is nothing but the sum total of every choice we have made during every moment of our life.

Our thoughts, which we are responsible for, are as real as our deeds. We begin to realise that every word & every deed affect our liofe and has also touched thousand of lives.

We are solely responsible for our choices and we have to accept the consequences of every deed, word and thought throughout our life time. There is within each one a potential for goodness beyond our imaging, for giving which seeks no reward, for listening without judgement, for loving unconditionally.

Dr. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross