

Table 3., cont.

Category	Finding	Action
What would make patrons more likely to use e-books?	<p>In both the 2012 and 2014 study, respondents identified findability and accessibility of e-books as preeminent barriers to use. Furthermore, survey participants frequently expressed in open response questions a lack of awareness regarding library holdings of e-books.</p> <p>Considerably more respondents in the current survey indicated that they download and print portions of e-books than in the 2012 study.</p> <p>Respondents felt that e-books' lack of highlighting and annotation tools stymied scholarship.</p>	<p>Assess usability of library websites and discovery tools with e-books in mind. Place more emphasis on marketing library e-books and offer training on how to find, access, and use e-books.</p> <p>A publisher or other software developer could create a lightweight, digital rights management free e-book application that gives users intuitive annotation tools and allows for easy downloading and printing.</p>

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preference for electronic versions. All three affiliate statuses indicated a clear inclination for literature titles in print. For conference proceedings, reference materials, and style guides, the data suggest a clear preference for e-books across all affiliate statuses. For these format types, all affiliate statuses selected "I prefer e-books" as the most common response, with "No preference" as the second most common choice. In aggregate, these responses show a decreased resistance to e-books from that reported in the 2012 study and suggest a shift in leaning toward e-books for some types of material.

This study also provides a look at user preference for print or e-books by discipline, broadly speaking. In this study, non-STEM and STEM respondents' stated preference for scholarly monographs and edited collections was divided equally among print, electronic, and no preference. However, non-STEM respondents showed a slight inclination for print, while STEM respondents showed a slightly larger inclination for electronic. However, neither result was definitive enough to generate a clear guide for purchasing these formats. Both non-STEM and STEM users prefer electronic versions for conference proceedings, reference materials, and style guides. For all four types of materials, both STEM and non-STEM respondents selected "I prefer e-books" as the most common response, with "No preference" as the second most frequent answer and "I prefer print" coming in third. Meanwhile, literature predictably showed a clear divide between non-STEM and STEM respondents: non-STEM users showed a heavy preference for print versions of literature titles, while STEM participants were more equally divided between favoring print or e-book versions.

The findings of this study further corroborate the growing consensus that a large portion of academic library users across affiliate statuses and subject disciplines have grown comfortable with e-book versions of conference proceedings, reference materials, and style guides. Users also increasingly appreciate the access and additional features that these electronic versions provide. The results of this study join the chorus of previous studies' findings, making a strong case for purchasing these types of materials using an "e-preferred" model. For materials likely to be used for teaching and in classroom settings, such as specialized reference materials and style guides, nonlinear lending licensing options that allow multiple simultaneous users are worth considering.

For monographic materials, opinions remain sharply divided about the utility of e-book versions. A number of respondents indicated that they like having both versions of an item available. While the ability to search the full text of electronic versions of monographs can be immensely valuable, users still would rather have print versions for close reading. One possible solution is for publishers to offer a "print plus electronic" option, as journal publishers have done.¹⁸ If a print copy came free with an e-book purchase or was bundled at a discounted price, it would likely drive up e-book purchasing by academic libraries. With more libraries purchasing e-books, publishers could then dedicate the resources necessary to develop and maintain e-book platforms with more robust features, such as annotations and the freedom to print and download content, eliminating what users often identified as current barriers to adoption.

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The 2012 study concluded that e-reader ownership was an important factor for facilitating use of e-books, finding a correlation between e-reader ownership and e-book usage that other studies at the time corroborated.¹⁹ However, the current study did not find a similar correlation between ownership of a dedicated e-reader and e-book usage, findings that align with other, more recent, e-book studies.²⁰ Whether due to technological advances in the past three years, recruitment of a different group of survey participants, or changes in user behavior, users no longer seem to view e-reader access as a necessary

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acquiring e-readers. Rather, those resources should be directed toward increasing user awareness of e-books paid for by the university library that can be accessed via users' personal devices.

Furthermore, considerably more participants in the current survey indicated that they download and print portions of e-books than in the 2012 study. While 52 percent of 2012 respondents reported that they "never" downloaded an e-book to a device for offline use, in 2014 those answering "never" fell to 11.5 percent. With only 12.8 percent of participants in the 2014 study said they "rarely" downloaded e-books for offline use, the clear majority of respondents at least sometimes download e-books to a device for offline use.

One exasperated respondent pointedly stated, "I absolutely DESPISE using e-books," pleading "please do not shift UMD's resources from print to e-books." Respondents felt that e-books' lack of highlighting and annotation tools stymied scholarship. This individual continued: "E-books are difficult to use [because] when writing a dissertation, one needs to annotate books and use them in conjunction with many other sources and this is so hard to do with an e-book." This complaint will no doubt interest librarians, because users are expected to refrain from marking up the physical items loaned to them. Nevertheless, this common frustration suggests that e-books may become more popular among users if a publisher or other software developer can create a lightweight, DRM (digital rights management)-free e-book application that provides intuitive annotation tools. However, studies also have suggested that, even when provided with robust options, users overestimate their use of annotation tools, leaving the importance of e-book annotation up for further debate.²¹

In both the 2012 and 2014 study, participants identified limited findability and accessibility of e-books as preeminent barriers to use. Furthermore, survey participants frequently expressed in open-response questions a lack of awareness regarding library holdings of e-books, with users suggesting that the UMD Libraries need to place more emphasis on marketing e-book collections and offer training on how to find, access, and use them. While the percentage of respondents who chose "University of Maryland Libraries website" as their primary source for e-books rose considerably from the 2012 study, this suggests that there are still issues regarding users' familiarity with the academic e-book ecosystem. While these issues could indicate generalizable challenges

step for using e-books. Furthermore, participants in the 2014 study most often selected a computer, tablet, and smartphone as devices for accessing e-books; no e-reader of any type ranked among the top three options chosen. This suggests that libraries need not dedicate resources toward

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involving usability and lack of awareness of e-books, they also stand out as potential local issues related to UMD Libraries' website and discovery layer.

Suggestions for Future Research

To increase confidence and widen the applicability of this study's results, library and information science (LIS) researchers and practicing librarians could consider adopting this study's survey instrument and conducting a similar study at their home institutions. Other social science disciplines, such as some fields within psychology and political science, have dealt with a crisis of confidence in the validity of research findings due to nonreplicable results.²² LIS research, which is often qualitative and conducted as case studies in single sites, suffers many of the same problems. LIS researchers and practicing librarians should endeavor to confirm the results of existing studies, such as this one, at their own institutions to increase the validity of the field's evidentiary literature.

As college and university libraries continually look for more quantitative measures of their impact on campuses, considerable attention has turned to how libraries can increase student engagement, improve student learning, and lead to higher retention and matriculation rates.²³ Although recent studies by Barbara Glackin, Roy Rodenhiser, and Brooke Herzog as well as by Ee-Lon Lim and Khe Foon Hew suggest that e-books can positively impact student learning, more research is needed to determine how library collections' acquisitions models, which have become increasingly e-preferred, might affect these crucial assessment metrics and indicators.²⁴

Perhaps the largest disagreement within the profession about e-books, and one not addressed within this study, hinges on whether academic libraries ought to acquire them at all given the current difficulties surrounding their access and acquisition. For example, Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, while recognizing the potential value of e-book collections, believes that the current infrastructure and restrictions placed upon e-books "endangers the ecosystem of sharing and does a disservice to our patrons and community."²⁵ Participants in this study's survey echoed those sentiments, with one recounting the experience of trying to "set-up an e-book program . . . with the library but [finding it] very . . . expensive and . . . technically impossible." To address these issues, Macalester has published a set of standards it requires from publishers and vendors, and has urged other institutions to adopt these standards to put pressure on publishers to develop new infrastructures that facilitate access while remaining "respectful of copyright and fair use guidelines."²⁶ Others have suggested that many of these problems result from e-books' relative nascence and can be expected to improve naturally over time, pointing to e-journals as a useful analogy.²⁷ While initially unpopular and viewed with skepticism by many users, e-journals overcame low awareness and poor design to emerge as a foundational component of scholarly communication for many disciplines.²⁸ Given this example, librarians should view their users' perceptions and adoption of e-books within their academic communities as continually developing, rather than static

Libraries need to place more emphasis on marketing e-book collections and offer training on how to find, access, and use them.

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and steadfast. With these expected changes in user behavior and the inevitable improvements for e-book platforms, continued research in this area will benefit the profession.

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Appendix A

UMD Libraries E-Books Survey 2014

<http://ter.ps/e-book2014>

Q1. What is your status at the University of Maryland?

- Undergraduate student
- Graduate student
- Faculty
- Staff
- Research affiliate

Q2. If you are affiliated with a college or the University Libraries, please select it from the list below.

- College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
- School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation
- College of Arts and Humanities
- College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
- Robert H. Smith School of Business
- College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences
- College of Education
- James Clark School of Engineering
- Philip Merrill College of Journalism
- College of Information Studies
- School of Public Health
- School of Public Policy
- University Libraries
- I am not affiliated with a college. (Please specify your unit below.)

Q3. If you are affiliated with a department, please select it from the list below.

[Drop-down list of departments]

Q4. How often do you physically enter a campus library?

Daily

- At least once a week
- At least once a month
- At least once a semester
- At least once a year
- Never

Q5. How often do you access online library resources (databases, e-journals, e-books, catalog)?

- Daily
- At least once a week
- At least once a month
- At least once a semester
- At least once a year
- Never

Q6. What is an e-book?

For the purposes of this survey, an e-book is a book-length publication in digital form. E-books can be read on dedicated e-book readers (for example, Kindle or Nook), personal computers, tablets, and some mobile phones. Note that electronic journals, newspapers, and full-text archives (for example, *Early English Books Online*) are not considered e-books for the purposes of this survey.

Q7. How often do you use e-books for academic purposes?

- Daily
- At least once a week
- At least once a month
- At least once a semester
- At least once a year
- Never

Q8. Please complete the following statement: Compared to three years ago, my use of e-books for academic purposes has:

- Increased
- Stayed the same
- Decreased

Q9. What devices do you use to read e-books? (Check all that apply)

- Kindle
- Nook
- Other e-reader
- Tablet
- Mobile phone
- Computer
- I don't use e-books*

Note: If "I don't use e-books" was selected, respondents skipped to Q15.

- Q10. What is your PRIMARY source for the e-books you use?
- Commercial site (ex: Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Google e-bookstore)
 - Free website (ex: Google Books, HathiTrust, Project Gutenberg)
 - Public library website
 - University of Maryland Libraries website
 - Other, please specify
- Q11. How do you find e-books that are available from the UMD Libraries? (check all that apply)
- Search the catalog or WorldCat
 - Search within a specific e-book collection (ebrary, EBSCO e-book Collection, NetLibrary, Springer e-books, Safari Tech Books Online, etc.)
 - Search for individual books in Research Port
 - I don't use e-books from the UMD Libraries
 - Other, please specify
- Q12. Which of the following e-book collections (available from the University of Maryland Libraries) have you used in the past year? (check all that apply)
- ABC-CLIO e-books
 - Credo Reference
 - ebrary
 - EBSCO e-book Collection
 - Gale Virtual Reference Library
 - Handbooks in Economics (Elsevier)
 - IEEE [Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers]/Wiley e-books
 - OECD [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development] iLibrary
 - Oxford Handbooks Online
 - Safari Tech Books Online
 - Springer e-books
 - World Scientific e-books
 - None of these
 - I've used e-books from the UMD Libraries but I don't know which collection(s)
 - Other, please specify
- Q13. When using e-books, how often do you:
- [Choices: Never / Rarely / Sometimes / Most of the time / Always]
- Download to a device for offline use
 - Read online (via a website, while connected to the Internet)
 - Print all or a portion of the book?
- Q14. In question 15, the formats [types of materials] are defined as follows:
- Scholarly monograph: book-length, detailed study of a single subject, usually by a single author.
- Edited collection: book on a single theme with one or more editors and chapters/essays on different subjects by different authors.
- Conference proceedings: collection of papers from an academic conference.
- General reference: Examples: *Oxford English Dictionary*, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, *World Almanac*, *Bartlett's Quotations*, etc.

Specialized reference: Examples: subject encyclopedias (e.g., *Oxford Encyclopedia of Economic History*), research guides (e.g., *MLA [Modern Language Association] Literary Research Guide*), handbooks and manuals (e.g., Merck manuals), etc.

Citation manuals and style guides: Examples: *Chicago Manual of Style*, *MLA Handbook*, *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association [APA]*, etc.

Q15. Please indicate in what format you would prefer that the UMD Libraries purchase the following types of resources:

[Choices: I prefer print / No preference / I prefer e-books / It depends]

- Scholarly monographs
- Edited collections
- Conference proceedings
- General reference
- Specialized reference
- Citation manuals and style guides
- Literature (novels, short stories, poetry, etc.)

Note: Questions 16–22 only appeared for formats for which respondents chose “It depends” in Question 15.

Q16. Please explain why you chose “It depends” for “Scholarly monographs” in Question 15: [Open-ended comments box]

Q17. Please explain why you chose “It depends” for “Edited collections” in Question 15: [Open-ended comments box]

Q18. Please explain why you chose “It depends” for “Conference proceedings” in Question 15: [Open-ended comments box]

Q19. Please explain why you chose “It depends” for “General reference” in Question 15: [Open-ended comments box]

Q20. Please explain why you chose “It depends” for “Specialized reference” in Question 15: [Open-ended comments box]

Q21. Please explain why you chose “It depends” for “Citation manuals and style guides” in Question 15: [Open-ended comments box]

Q22. Please explain why you chose “It depends” for “Literature (novels, short stories, poetry, etc.)” in Question 15: [Open-ended comments box]

Q23. What, if anything, would make you more likely to use e-books for academic purposes? (Check all that apply.)

- If I owned a dedicated e-reader (for example, a Nook or Kindle).
- If I owned another device (for example, tablet or mobile phone) that could be used to read e-books.
- If e-books were easier to download to my device(s).
- If e-books were easier to find and access through the UMD Libraries website.
- If I had more training or knowledge on how to find, access, download, or use e-books.
- If e-books from commercial vendors (for example, Amazon) were less expensive.
- If there were more e-books available in my area(s) of research interest.
- If there were more e-books available in the non-English language(s) I read and/or study.
- If more of my course textbooks were available as e-books.

- If e-books were easier to print.
- If e-books were easier to highlight and/or annotate.
- If I knew more about how to cite information found in e-books / If the citation format(s) I use had better guidance for citing e-books.
- If e-books worked with my screen reader (or other adaptive technology for users with disabilities).
- If e-books were technologically improved (for example, better screen resolution, less reflective reading surface, longer battery life, etc.).
- If more e-books were available without digital rights management (DRM) restrictions.
- Nothing. I already use e-books extensively or exclusively for academic purposes.
- Nothing. I will always prefer print books to e-books.
- Other, please specify:

Q24. Please share any additional comments or suggestions on e-books at the University of Maryland Libraries.

[Open-ended comments box]

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Appendix B

Coding for Open-Ended Questions

*Unless indicated with an asterisk, codes are identical to those used for data analysis in 2012.

Questions 16–22: Please explain why you chose “It depends” for “format type” in Question 15:

Access: Respondent prefers whichever format is easiest to access, for example, print if he or she is already in the library, but e-book if he or she is online.

Both: Respondent would prefer to have both formats available.

Citations: If the respondent expects to cite material from the book, he or she prefers print because citing e-books without page numbers can be difficult.

Cost: Respondent prefers whichever format is cheaper.

E-book features: Respondent prefers e-book features, such as full-text search, convenience, and the like.

E-book for scholarship: Respondent prefers to use e-books for scholarly reading and, vice versa, would rather have print books for leisure reading.

Formatting: Respondent indicated that e-books were preferred if the print formatting was preserved and the e-book was error-free.

Illustrations: Respondent prefers print versions of books containing illustrations.

Lack of familiarity: Respondent was unable to make a determination due to lack of familiarity with the type of resource or the e-book format. Some respondents claimed it depends on the content, topic, area, and the like.

Length (in general): Respondent indicated that the length of the resource would influence which format was chosen but did not specify which format was preferred for any given length.

Long passage prefer e-book / Long passage prefer print book: Some respondents indicated they would select an e-book when reading lengthy passages or a full book but would rather have print when reviewing short passages. Others declared the opposite—that is, they would rather have a printed book when reading lengthy passages or a full book but would prefer an e-book when reviewing short passages.

Mark-up: Respondent preferred print to be able to physically mark up the text (underline, highlight, add marginal notes, notate, and so on).

Navigation: Respondent indicated that it was more difficult to “flip through” an e-book to the notes or other sections, and therefore preferred print.

Ownership: Respondent preferred to purchase and own hard copies of some titles but would favor e-books for titles he or she does not intend to keep.

Personal reasons: Respondent cited a personal reason, such as mood or feeling at the time, reading experience, or tangible things, for the selection of print versus e-book.

Print for scholarship: Respondent preferred to use print works for scholarly reading and, vice versa, liked e-books for leisure reading.

*Frequency of usage: Respondent preferred printed version if he or she believes it requires in-depth reading and he or she will use it frequently.

*Easy to copy: Respondent preferred whichever is easy to copy.

Question 24: Please share any additional comments or suggestions on e-books at the University of Maryland Libraries.

Already use e-books: Respondent is already using e-books for leisure reading, research, or both. For example, “I love my e-book readers and I take them everywhere”; “I use them avidly for leisure reading.”

Citation: Respondent reported lack of page numbers or lack of standards for citing e-books as a reason for not using them more. For example, “Consistency in page number[s]”; “If citation and page markings in e-books corresponded to their printed versions.”

Convenience: Respondent indicated “Convenience” (without any further explanation) or mentioned portability of e-books, ability to access them without going to a library, or 24/7 accessibility.

Depends on text: Respondent indicated a willingness to use e-books for certain purposes or with certain kinds of texts. For example, “I prefer e-books for shorter passages and print for larger ones”; “I prefer only to use them for reference”; “Books that I am unlikely to read more than once, but are not being used for research purposes.”

Don't like e-books/Prefer print: Respondent indicated a general preference for print books or a dislike of e-books, or said that he or she would only use e-books if there were no print equivalent available. (For example, "KEEP HARD COPIES. NO E-BOOKS!!!!!!!!!!!!" or "I like holding a physical book, newsletter, article, etc. in my hands and turning the pages.")

Ease of access/use: Respondent indicated that e-book use would increase if electronic books were more user-friendly or declared that e-books are currently difficult to find, access, or use. For example, "If they were easy to find and access through the library website," "An incredibly friendly way to use them, more advanced than what is out now." Note: Also includes respondents who answered "Accessibility," though this response could also refer to greater availability (having larger numbers of e-books available).

E-book reader: Respondent would more likely use or read e-books if he or she owned an e-book reader (Kindle, Nook, or the like). Some answers mentioned iPads in obvious reference to the survey prize, for example, "If I won an iPad!"

Environment: Respondent indicated a preference for e-books over print books because e-books do not use paper and are therefore more "sustainable."

Features: print/highlight/annotate/search: Respondent would more likely use e-books for specific features, or if specific features were available. Respondents most frequently mentioned the ability to easily print, highlight text, annotate or write in margins, and search for specific words or phrases. Note that three of these features—highlighting, annotation, and searching—are available in existing e-book formats, while printing remains prohibited or problematic for most e-books.

Greater availability: Respondent indicated a wish for a greater number or wider selection of available e-books, for example, "More choices." Also includes participants who indicated a desire for specific formats (such as "magazines," "research articles that are peer-reviewed," "audiobooks") or subjects ("literary theory," "linguistics," "biographies," "recreational reading," and the like).

Languages: Respondent indicated a wish for greater availability of e-books in foreign languages generally, or in specific languages (such as Spanish).

Lower cost or free: Respondent indicated that use of e-books would increase if they were free or cheaper than the print equivalent. Note that many responses seemed to conflate e-books with e-book readers, and it was not always possible to tell whether the individual means "if e-books were cheaper" or "if readers were cheaper." Other participants did not seem aware that the library lends e-books and e-book readers free of charge—for example, "E-books would be more feasible if there were not as many fees involved with using them, or if the readers were more affordable."

No response: No response or unusable response, for example, "Yes"; "If they made me fly."

Nothing/not sure: Respondent indicated "Nothing" or "Not sure" with no explanation.

Plan to use them more: Respondent indicated that he or she is currently not using e-books but has no objection to using them or will use them more in the future.

Publicity/training/didn't know about e-books: Respondent reported lack of awareness regarding library holdings of e-books, need for the UMD Libraries to do more publicity about e-book collections, or a willingness to use e-books if he or she had more knowledge of how to use them—for example, "Clear information about how to use. More publicity would help . . . I never even knew these were available."

Technology improvements: Respondent mentioned specific improvements to e-book formats or readers that would make him or her more likely to use them—for example, clearer screens for less eyestrain, higher quality, open formats with no restrictions on what the user can do because of digital rights management (DRM).

Textbooks: Respondent would more likely use e-books if more textbooks were available in e-format. Also includes participants who indicated that professors do not allow e-readers, laptops, and similar devices in the classroom, thereby inhibiting use of e-books for course texts.

Work with my device: Respondent would more likely use e-books if they were in a more compatible format (for example, pdf) or one that worked with a specific device (such as Kindle, Nook, iPad, or iPhone). Many respondents took this opportunity to reiterate their attitudes regarding e-books, with responses similar to those for Question 17. Therefore, we could use many of the same categories for the answers to Question 18. A few additional categories were required to capture all the responses:

Acceptance: Respondent prefers print but recognizes that e-books will likely become more prevalent in the future and therefore is willing to adapt.

Both: Respondent indicated that he or she would prefer to have books available in both electronic and print formats (for example, print is easier to read, but e-books are easier to search so I would like to have both options).

General positive response: Respondent expressed a favorable opinion of the UMD Libraries, their services, or the survey itself.

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