

Efficient Use of eBooks using iOS, Android Devices: a Study at St. Xavier's College Central Library, Kolkata

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Locating relevant information in time is critical for both the researcher and the information professional. Electronic books (eBooks) are used to enhance the digital library with 24 x 365 days global access and it enables users to quickly retrieve and access specific research material efficiently and effectively. The article highlights advantages, disadvantages of eBooks, various formats of eBooks and how users of St. Xavier's College Central Library use eBooks using iOS devices for research and advanced learning.

Keywords: eBooks, EBSCO eBooks

1. Introduction:

The integration of eBooks into the digital library has not only created opportunities for librarians, but also created several challenges. Librarians must develop innovative policies, procedures, and technologies to access the eBooks. eBooks challenges for librarians can be grouped into three categories—(a) acquisition and collection development, (b) standards and technology and (c) access methodology. In this article we are trying to explain access methodology i.e. how user of St. Xavier's College Library access eBooks using iOS and android devices.

2. eBooks:

An electronic book (or eBooks) is a book available in digital form, consisting of text, images, or both, readable on computers or other electronic devices. In general eBooks defined as "an electronic version of a printed book". Commercially produced and sold eBooks are usually intended to be read only using e-reader devices. However, in most of the cases computer devices alone can be used to read eBooks. In some other cases smart phones and tablets are now being used.

Format:

2.1 Plain Text Files: eBooks in plain text published as *.txt* and are very small in size.

- 2.2 Hypertext Markup Language: Published as *.htm* or *.html* and used for most web pages.
- 2.3 Amazon Kindle (AZW) Format: Published as *.azw* and created by amazon.com. It is based on Mobipocket standard.
- 2.4 Open Electronic Book Package Format: Published as *.opf* and is based on XML.
- 2.5 Tombe Raider: Published as *.tr2* or *.tr3*. It has versions for windows, mobile, palm.
- 2.6 Arghos Diffusion: Published as *.arg* and it is XML based proprietary format.
- 2.7 Flip Books: A ‘Flip Book’ is a type of eBooks distinguished by virtual pages that actually ‘flip’, much like turning pages of paper in a real book. It was developed by Interactive Media for Nishe Media (Canada).
- 2.8 NISO Z39.86 Format: Commonly known as DAISY and XML based eBooks format created by the DAISY International Consortium of Libraries for people with print disabilities.
- 2.9 Fiction Book: Published as *.fb2* and it is an XML based eBooks format, support by free readers such as Haali Reader and FB Reader.
- 2.10 Plucker: It is a free eBooks reader application with its own associated file format and software automatically generate plucker files from HTML files.
- 2.11 Portable Document Format: Published as *.pdf* and created by Adobe Systems. Acrobat Reader software is required to open and read the *.pdf* document.
- 2.12 DjVu: Published as *.djvu*. Their main characteristic is that the compress ratio is about 10x better than in *.pdf* format at the same quality.
- 2.13 eReader: Published as *.pdb* and is a freeware program for viewing Palm Digital Media electronic books. Versions are available for PalmOS, iPhone, Symbian, Windows Mobile Pocket PC/ Smartphone, Desktop Windows and Macintosh. The eReader shows text one page at a time.
- 2.14 iPod Notes: Notes is a feature of iPod that allows short text notes to be displayed on the iPod screen.
- 2.15 Libris: Published as *.lbr* or *.bin* and it is a java based eBook reader for mobile devices such as cell phones.
- 2.16 Mobipocket: Published as *.pre* or *.mobi* and it is based on the Open-eBook standard using XHTML and can include JavaScript and frames.
- 2.17 Reader: Published as *.pdg*. This digital eBook format used by a popular digital library company in China.

2.18 EPUB An open format defined by the Open eBook Forum of the International Digital Publishing Forum (IDPF).

2.19 DTB - Digital Talking Books are books for blind, visually impaired, physically handicapped, learning-disabled, or otherwise print-disabled readers.

2.20 KFX - Amazon's latest format, only available on some Kindles.

Advantages:

eBooks offer a number of advantages over their print counterparts.

Library:

- Hundreds of thousands of eBooks may be carried together on one device.
- Economically and environmentally viable by avoiding expenditure on paper.
- Distributed instantly among *n* number of users.

Users:

- Display size and content page may be adjusted as per user requirement.
- It can be stored in virtual book shelf for future study.
- eBooks can be downloadable to mobile devices, including iPhones, iPads, Kindle Fires and Android Devices.
- Search within a book for specific words or phrases are possible.
- Options for 'Save, print, or email chapters or sections of the eBooks are available.
- Easy to copy and paste portions of text for easy access
- Link to books or book chapters for easy reference or social sharing.
- Easy to generate citations in any format like APA, MLA etc.
- Easy to navigate between sections or chapters and the index via linking.

Disadvantages:

- Reading can be stressful or even harmful to the eyes.
- Many readers prefer printed book compared to eBooks.
- Can restrict viewing a maximum number of eBook at a time.
- The average cost of hoisting eBooks is expensive compared to the print edition.

3. St Xavier's College Central Library E-Resource Collection:

Central library has set up an e-resource access centre for the user community of St. Xavier's College for accessing electronic databases, eBooks and full text e-journals. E-Resources are

accessible via library web page, which provide IP based access to online databases and full-text scholarly research articles beyond the physical wall of the library.

e-Resources under UGC-Infonet Digital Consortium:

American Institute of Physics (18 titles), Annual Reviews (33 titles), Economic and Political Weekly(EPW) (1titles), Indian Journals (180+ titles), Institute of Physics (46 titles), JSTOR (2500+ titles), Oxford University Press (206 titles), Royal Society of Chemistry (29 titles), H. W. Wilson (3000+ titles), Cambridge Books Online (1800 titles), E-bray (125000+ titles), EBSCO Host-NET Library (936 titles), Oxford Scholarship (1402 titles) Springer eBooks (2300 titles), Sage Publication eBooks(1000titles), My ilibrary-McGraw Hill (1124 titles).

e-Resources subscribed by Central Library:

Harvard Business Review (HBR) Journal, Economist Periodical, Sage Publications (28 journals mainly on Commerce, Sociology), IndiaStat (Statistical Database), Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) Prowess IQ, Economic Outlook (Online Database by CMIE), DELNET. Down to Earth, Time Magazine etc.

eBooks purchased by Central Library:

Pearson eBooks 85 titles (Mathematics, Sociology, Political Science, Chemistry, Competitive Examination, Computer Science, and Physics), Gale Cengage Learning Online eBooks 5 titles (Human Rights), Oxford eBooks Oxford Scholarship Online 104 titles (Economics, Physics, Biotechnology, Mathematics, Commerce, Sociology), EBSCO eBooks.

Institutional Membership: British Council Library (BCL), American Library, National Digital Library (NDL).

4. How users of St. Xavier's College Central Library access eBooks using iOS devices:

In the library for reading eBooks we develop eBooks reader application which is accessible from any iOS devices (iPhone, iPad), Android devices, and Windows devices using college Wi-Fi system and through intranet from our local server. All purchased eBooks from different publishers like Pearson, Oxford, and Gale Cengage Learning Online eBooks are downloaded in an external device and then uploaded in our local server. During downloading we require internet connection but through intranet facility we can access the eBooks from the server any time, no need of internet connection at the time reading, thus savings in the cost of internet connectivity. EBooks which are purchased are kept in protected type - only for viewing purpose and which are downloaded from freely available eBooks sites are kept in unprotected status; student can read

and download these eBooks in their devices. From this application we can generate reports like usage statistics of particular eBook, day wise usage of eBooks, subject wise usage and particular user usage statistics.

Wi-Fi Authentication:

For accessing eBooks students should login to the college Wi-Fi network. After successful login they have to open any search engine i.e. Google, Google Chrome, Safari or Explorer in their mobile, laptop or tab.

User Authentication:

A user authenticates himself with his or her organizational or personal identification. The most common and familiar authentication process is login id and password based access. In our library user uses CIN No (a unique sequence of characters) to represent himself/herself. A password, another sequence of characters, provides the user with a key to the system and is kept secret from others. In our library student uses their date of birth against password [Fig.1]. After successful login name of the user will be displayed on the right top corner of the device and finally after reading user should be logged-out.

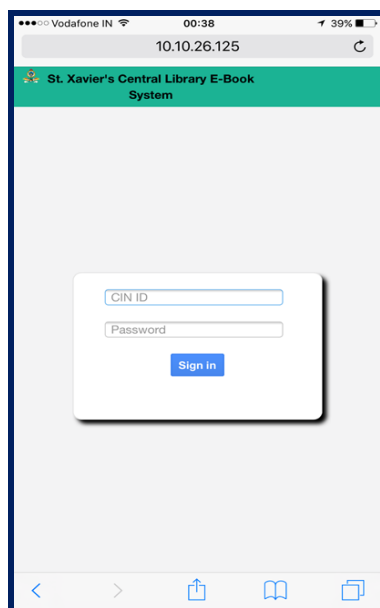


Fig.1 [User Authentication]

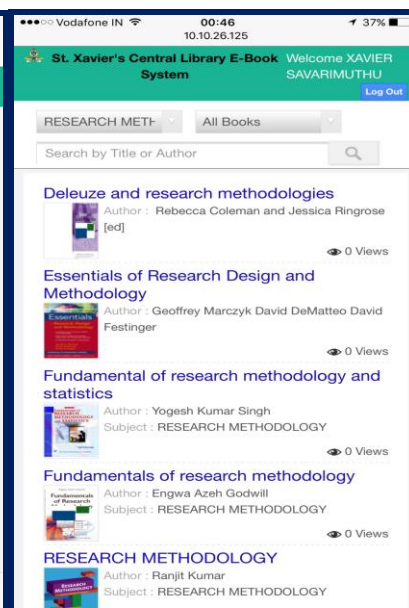


Fig. 2

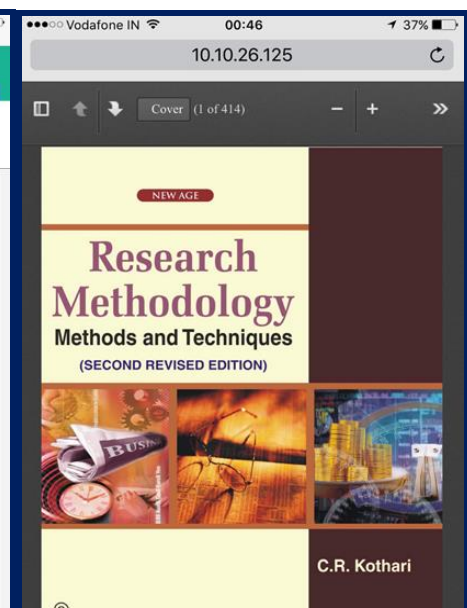


Fig. 3

Find eBooks to Read:

Once user authentication process successfully completed, he /she is ready to read the eBooks.

Search: If user knows exactly what he is looking for, he has to enter search term(s) by author, title, subject, or keyword in the search box.

Browse: If user doesn't know exactly what he is looking for, he has to select from one of the browse categories to view library eBooks available in his area of interest. He will see a list of eBooks within the subject category or a list of books that match his search term [Fig.2].

Search word or phrase within the content: To search for a word or phrase within the content, one has to select the search icon. This will return a list of pages on which his search term appears.

Navigating the eBook: User may tap anywhere on the screen to access the Book Navigation Controls and Reading Toolbar and access the Table of Contents by clicking on the contents tab within the Application. To turn pages, user may tap the forward or backward arrows or select particular page number. The application also supports for scrolling through the entire eBook to find relevant information [Fig.3].

PDF formatted eBook: Since PDF is a fixed layout format the best way to enlarge the text is to use the pinch zoom technique.

EBSCO eBooks: EBSCO eBooks are online versions of printed books that our library has purchased with a perpetual license. eBooks that are owned will be available for long term access and preservation. eBooks available via subscription are renewed annually to retain access. EBSCO eBooks are available from all major academic publishers in virtually all academic disciplines. The EBSCO eBooks app enables user to download EBSCO eBooks from eBook collection to the mobile device and tablets and access them anytime, anywhere.

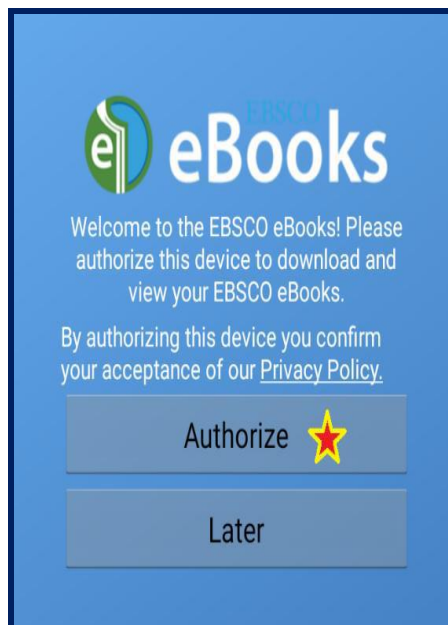


Fig. 4

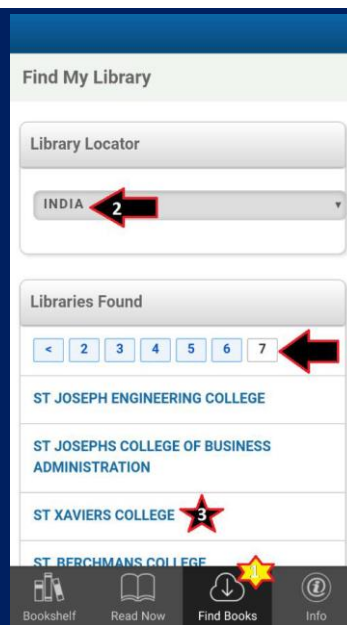


Fig. 5

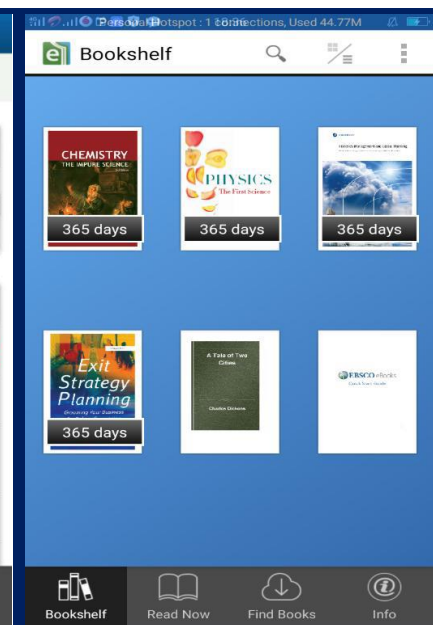


Fig. 6

Authorization of User Device:

After installing EBSCO eBook apps user will be prompted to authorize his device. The license will be tied to each user device [Fig.4]. For remote access of EBSCO eBook user should authenticate himself using ID and password [Fig.5].

Search: If user knows title of the book, enter search term(s) in the search box. User can search by author, title, subject or keyword also.

Downloading: To access an eBook, select download and if it's available, the book will be downloaded to the user device for reading 365 days. At that time, user can start reading, or search to find more books [Fig.6].

Return eBooks: When user finishes study the eBook, he can return it to his library's eBook collection so that it can be available for another user.

5. Problem:

There are various major problems and critical issues involved during use of eBooks. Based on experience about the management of e-resources, some of the major issues are identified as under:

- Lack of IT professionals in libraries
- Lack of infrastructural problem
- Lack of knowledge about various digital resources
- Internet connectivity problem
- Lack of adequate financial support
- Lack of positive attitude
- Lack of trained/ skilled manpower

6. Conclusion:

Libraries are moving forward in providing access to digital collection i.e. eBooks via mobile devices. In the near future maximum people will be able to access digital collections in the palm through mobile or tabs. One of the major challenges faced by the librarian is keeping track of various formats of eBooks and promoting their usage to the level best. If we, as librarians, do not provide new methods for library users to access electronic resources, we may become out-dated.

As stated by Toffler, “Tomorrow’s illiterate will not be the man who can’t read; he will be the man who has not learned how to learn.”

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