

eBooks vs Paper Books



Will eBooks Replace Paper Books?

Compact Discs (CD's) were replaced by MP3's, DVD's/BlueRays have been supplanted by streaming, will eBooks replace paper books?

- E-Book sales reached a high point by 2010, but by 2014 they were declining in market share.**
- In 2018 the Pew Research Center reported 67% of Americans reading paperbacks, and 39% exclusively reading printed books. By contrast, only 7% of readers opt to read digital books exclusively.**
- Nearly 1-in-5 Americans now listen to Audiobooks**

Advantages of eBooks

Portability: A single E-reader weighing only a few grams can house equivalent information as bookshelves weighing tons.

Accessibility:

- **Old titles have been converted to electronic formats.**
- **Some new titles are released exclusively in electronic formats.**
- **They can be accessed from multiple devices.**
- **No reason for an eBook to go 'out of print'.**

Advantages of eBooks

Ease of Procurement: A book can be selected, bought and downloaded in minutes, as opposed to a trip to the bookstore or waiting a day or more for delivery.

Cost: eBooks are usually cheaper than real books, sometimes much cheaper and often free.

Advantages of eBooks

Customization of the Reading Experience:

- E-readers offer a wide range of customization options to suit their users reading preferences. This can range from abilities to change background color, font types and sizes, adjust background light brightness and search keywords, to adding of comments in the margin. Some of the more recent versions of E-readers can present the text of an e-book in several different languages.**
- For many millennial readers who grew up reading e-books, the natural absence of options like these in a printed book might be a turnoff.**

Issues with eBooks

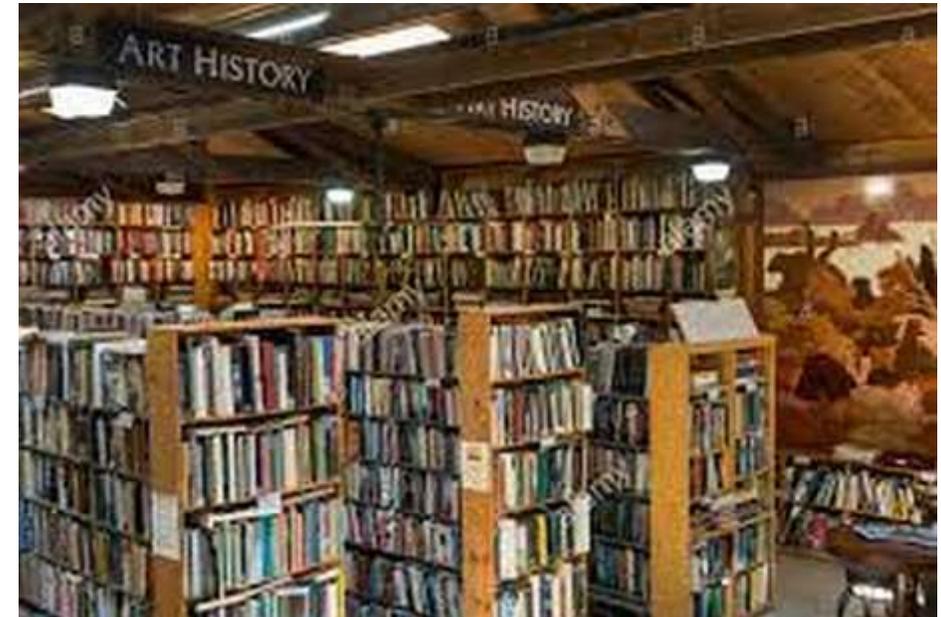
- **eBooks encourage quick scanning as opposed to an immersive reading experience.**
- **One of the banes of e-books is the platform on which they are consumed. Reading e-books often involve dealing with multiple forms of distractions like pop-up advertisements, emails and videos.**

Shopping

- **Shopping for an eBook is more efficient but far less tactile than going to a bookstore.**
- **There are a lot of titles to choose from, and they can be filtered and reshuffled by simply pressing buttons.**
- **The difference in searching for e-books on their online stores and searching for printed books in physical bookstore is quite striking.**

Shopping

A visit to a physical bookshop for printed books will usually allow buyers to check (and feel) the front and back cover of a book, the freedom for potential buyers to be able to read some of the book. Walking through rows of bookshelves just to do this is enough reason for some readers to prefer acquiring printed version of some titles rather than their electronic version.



Shopping

- **Independent bookstores are enjoying a renaissance.**
- **Even Amazon is opening physical bookstores.**
- **Vinyl records are making a comeback too!**

We Get More Easily Emotionally Attached to Our Printed Books

- **Printed books are beyond paper to most of its readers. It is a complete sensory experience. It is the souvenir to keep after an engaging intellectual trip.**
- **Acquisition of paper books comes with memories; memories that can never be replicated by dull, sterile E-readers.**
- **Paper books have smell, they can be touched and flipped, they rustle when the page is turned, they can be scribbled upon, doodled upon, highlighted, dog-eared, pasted upon and generally be made to be a time capsule for the period we are reading them.**

\$\$ Why are eBooks so expensive \$\$

- Publishers have to price in salaries, benefits, office overhead, etc. for employees including editors, proofreaders, illustrators, etc.
- Publishers have to pay royalties to the authors.
- Publishers have to market and advertise the book.
- Only the costs related to printing and distribution disappear with eBook editions.
- Therefore, book publishers normally treat eBooks like print books with 10% to 20% lower overall costs.
- Publishers may even price an eBook higher than the print version if they have an overstock of printed books they have to move.

\$\$ Why are eBooks so expensive \$\$

Smaller publishers and independent authors that self-publish have more leeway with pricing, but they still have many of the same costs:

- They must give a percentage of their e-book sales to the online distributor**
- They may have to hire:**
 - An illustrator to create the cover art**
 - Someone to proofread and edit the books**
 - Someone to convert the books into e-book format**
- They still have the marketing and promotional costs that are required to get their books noticed**