

STATEMENT ON eBook PRICING MODELS

Canada's public libraries regularly work in partnership with the Canadian publishing industry, and recognize mutual benefit from a strong interest in books and reading in Canada. CULC/CBUC member libraries spend more than \$90 million on book and electronic content purchases annually, contributing to the health of the book industry in Canada.

In this period of rapid change, CULC/CBUC members have sought to build relationships with Canadian publishers, distributors and producers of e-content that help us serve our customers, benefit our country's authors, and contribute to a healthy domestic publishing industry. In an effort to foster communication, CULC/CBUC has developed a Vision Statement about public library access to e-content and has entered into constructive discussions with stakeholders.

The pricing model recently announced by HarperCollins Publishers that imposes a cap of 26 uses on eBooks does not work for public libraries. It will be difficult for libraries to manage, difficult for distributors to support, and the circulation limit per copy is not in line with the performance of most print counterparts. However, we recognize the need to work with publishers to implement a system that allows libraries to meet the expectations of our customers, without harming the publishing industry in Canada or elsewhere. Pricing models have to work for all parties. As stated in the CULC/CBUC Vision Statement, it is important to understand that "The future of library collections depends on the ability to collect, describe, organize, and preserve these collections."

Libraries and publishers have a number of existing models for electronic content licensing and purchase, which include: Content purchase; Content licensing by item; and Content licensing by category. Public libraries are interested in continuing a dialogue with Canada's publishers, distributors, and producers of e-content to find an eBook licensing model that fits all of our needs.

We understand that publishers are also grappling with the ways that libraries provide access to materials and share resources. Many Canadian libraries purchase as part of consortia, selecting resources as part of a group and negotiating terms for that group. Many publishers and distributors of electronic content find consortia models beneficial and express satisfaction in dealing with libraries in this way. Consortia models usually result in more libraries participating, therefore buying more products than they would alone. To meet customers' demands, libraries must purchase enough copies of popular titles for the population of an area, and this is not significantly affected by a consortia model.

Barriers to borrowing reduce support for libraries, which leads to decreased funding and decreased purchasing power. Canada's urban public libraries look forward to continuing the discussion with publishers, distributors and producers of e-content to find eBook solutions that benefit us all. We hope that a productive partnership will allow us to serve our customers and build a thriving Canadian eBook industry.

ABOUT CULC/CBUC

CULC/CBUC is committed to the strengthening of vibrant urban communities through building the capacity of Canada's urban libraries. CULC/CBUC members collectively serve more than 7.5 million active users who annually make more than 384 million uses of our 522 locations and virtual services. In 2010 we loaned in excess of 185,000,000 items and expended over \$90 million on collections including \$11 million on digital resources.

Visit www.culc.ca for more information.

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