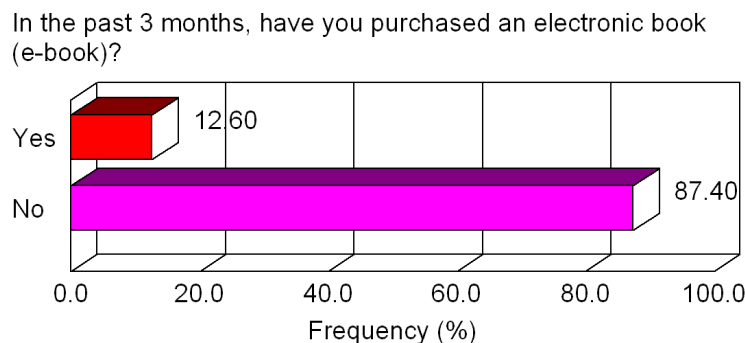


Electronic Book and e-Reader Device Report

OBERLIN, OH (Oct. 2010) – Over the past six months or so, there has been much attention given to electronic books and e-readers, particularly as to their use in higher education. To cut through the speculation, the [National Association of College Stores](#)’ (NACS) asked its [OnCampus Research](#) Division to conduct a study to see exactly how much college students are accessing e-books and on what devices.

The Electronic Book and e-Reader Device Survey was sent to the OnCampus Research Student Panel Oct. 5, 2010. Over 600 students (627) participated.

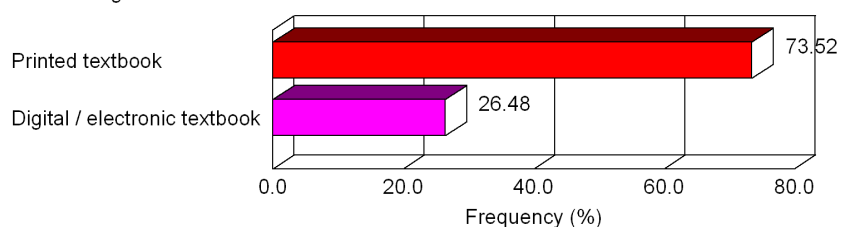


Electronic book purchases were made by 13% of college students within the past three months. Of these respondents, nearly six out of ten (56%) stated that the primary purpose of their e-book purchase was a required course material for class. One-third of students purchased an e-book specifically for leisure reading, while the remaining 10% responded “other.”

Approximately 77% of the students who said they recently purchased an e-book indicated that they used a laptop computer or Netbook to read their e-book. Desktop computer was selected by 30% of the students as the device used to read their e-book, while a much lower percentage (19%) said they used a smartphone (e.g., iPhone, Blackberry). Another 19% reported using an e-Reader (e.g., Kindle or Nook). A tablet (e.g., iPad) was the least common reading device used by students, selected by only 4%.

When asked how their electronic book experience compared to reading a print book, around one-third of students who have read an e-book indicated the experience to be somewhat to much better than a print book. Around 29% of students said the e-book was NOT as good as a print book, while 25% had a neutral experience.

If the choice were entirely up to you, what would your preferred textbook option be when taking a class?



Print textbooks remain the preferred textbook option among college students. More specifically, 74% indicated that if the choice were entirely up to them, print textbooks would be their top option when taking a class. This is the **SAME PERCENTAGE** obtained last fall from a NACS Student Watch survey. About one-quarter (26%) of students in the new survey stated they would prefer a digital/electronic textbook over the traditional print version.

Of the students that prefer print, over half indicated that they did not favor digital textbooks because they simply preferred print to digital. Around 14% said their primary reason for not preferring digital is that you lose access to content after the end of the semester. Some other reasons include: no buyback option (7%), no digital / electronic textbooks available for the classes they are taking (5%) and the professor uses the print copy (5%).

Of the students that prefer digital, 83% stated they favor digital over print because it reduces the weight of textbooks in their back pack. Another 78% of respondents like digital because all their required course materials are in one place at all times. Some other top reasons include: saving paper (69%), convenience (64%), price (63%), and prefer technology (42%).

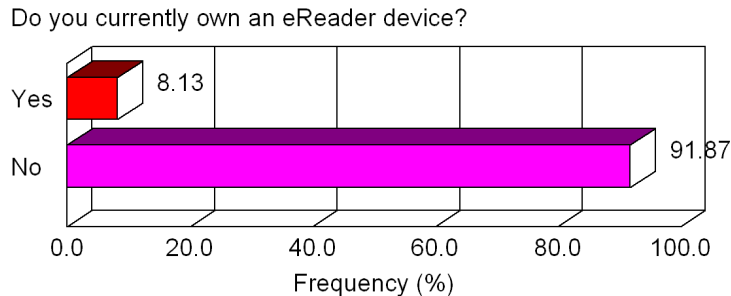
Among the open-ended comments in the survey, Cost of digital textbooks is the top factor that keeps college students from considering a digital textbook over print. Students responded that digital textbooks need to be more affordable, or more specifically, less expensive than print textbooks to be considered for purchase. Additional factors that respondents believe to be major issues when considering digital is the inability to sell back the book after the end of the semester, as well as the inability to access the digital book once the semester is over.

When compared to print textbooks, many students expressed concern that there was the inability to take notes or highlight the digital format. Included in this is the need to print out the pages from the digital book to reference their notes/highlights later, or to print out digital book chapters in order to take notes/highlight. Respondents also indicated that the digital textbook would have to be easier to read. This includes needing bigger font and concerns that reading a digital screen would hurt their eyes.

Several respondents also stated that the only reason that would allow them to purchase a digital textbook over print would be if their professor required it for a course, or if the digital version were the only option available. Some students said that they would also be more willing to purchase digital if allowed to use their laptops in class, or if the university provided them with a free laptop. Other respondents also expressed concern over not owning, or the cost of, digital e-Readers and computers, and stated this to be the reason for not purchasing a digital textbook.

Convenience was also indicated by some respondents as a reason to consider digital over print. Some stated that they would like to have all of their required materials in one place for easier access. Others believed they would purchase digital textbooks if the print version were too large or bulky to carry.

On the other hand, there were a number of students that stated they merely would never purchase a digital textbook. Many simply prefer print over digital textbooks. They like the fact they can easily pick up a book and flip to a page, without having to power up a device. Others stated they physically like to hold the book, and to highlight and take notes in it. Lastly, some respondents just do not trust technological devices, and worry about technical malfunctions or the accidental deletion of materials.



The OnCampus Research Student Panel survey found that 92% of students indicate that they **currently do not own an e-Reader device**.

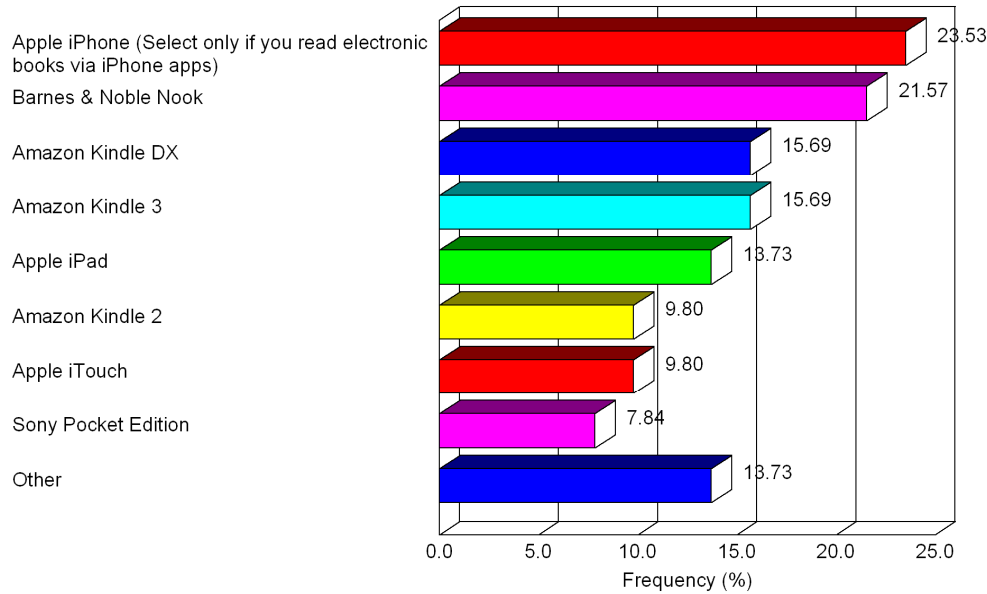
Of those, 59% said they do not plan to purchase one in the next three months. Another 36% of respondents said they were unsure whether they would buy one. Only 5% of college students stated they planned to make this purchase sometime in the near future.

Students interested in purchasing a new eReader are most interested in the following devices: Apple iPad (26%), Amazon Kindle DX (15%), and Amazon Kindle 3 (15%). Around 22% of respondents said they were unsure which specific device they are intending to buy.

When asked what their reason is for wanting to purchase an eReader device, the majority of college students (96%) indicated leisure reading. Another 74% said for school use and 37% would like to keep up with the latest technology.

However, of the students that do not plan to purchase an eReader device any time soon, around 42% stated the primary reason is that they simply prefer regular print books. One-third of college students are not quite sure how an eReader device would benefit them. And 18% believe them to be too expensive or are waiting for prices to drop.

Which of the following eReader devices do you own? (Select all that apply)



The Apple iPhone is the most popular digital reading device among college students when used in conjunction with an iPhone app. More specifically, the top devices owned by college students include: Apple iPhone (24%), Barnes & Noble Nook (22%), Amazon Kindle DX (16%), Amazon Kindle 3 (16%), and the Apple iPad (14%). Over half of the students indicated that they purchased their eReader for leisure reading. While 33% stated that they purchased this device for school use. The length of time which students have owned their eReader varies. However, almost a quarter of college students have owned their eReader device for over a year, while only 14% have purchased one in the past month.

About the OnCampus Research Student Panel

The OnCampus Research Student Panel consists of over 14,000 college students from across the U.S. who have agreed to participate in market research studies throughout the year. The student panel is periodically sent short surveys (5-10 questions) on current market research topics. The data from these surveys are used for varied purposes, such as helping us to better understand student attitudes and shopping behaviors.