

Statewide eBook Pilot Project

SCOPE

The goal of the Massachusetts eBooks pilot project is to identify, implement, and test a solution for providing eBook borrowing to users throughout the Commonwealth via a single user-friendly discovery platform offering a broad selection of titles. This solution will also have the goal of connecting users directly with authors, booksellers, and publishers. The results of the proof of concept will be evaluated to determine its feasibility as a long-term statewide solution.

The first phase of the proof of concept will include fifty libraries of various types and sizes – twenty-five public, ten academic, ten schools, and five special. The start-up collection will consist of approximately 10,000 titles which will be selected to accommodate the needs library types represented by pilot participants. The collection will serve users of all ages and will support a variety of learning needs.

The first phase will launch in June 2013 and end December 31, 2013. If, at the conclusion of the first phase, evaluation results show that the concept appears to be viable for the long term, and all high-impact problems identified by development partners have been successfully addressed, other libraries who wish to participate will be added on an ongoing basis.

TIMELINE

Oct. 2012

Statewide Resource Sharing Committee's
Implementation plan is approved by MBLC

Oct.-March 2013

Pilot libraries identified
Collection development committee formed.
Meetings with stakeholders
MLS selected to manage the project
RFP issued

April 2013

Responses to RFPs received

May-June 2013

Contract(s) executed
Content is selected
First phase of proof of concept launches
Work with local authors, publishers, and
booksellers
Implementation begins

July 2013

Platform implemented
Begin to add content

August – December 2013

Test system
Evaluation begins
Create links to other MA e-content
resources, booksellers, etc.
Train development partners
Funding formula for acquiring content is
developed
Finalize policies

January 2014

If first phase is successful, begin
incorporating other libraries with goal of
including all libraries who wish to
participate by end of 2015.

eBook Pilot Project FAQs:

1. Are we going to get the big 6 publishers content – or best-sellers?

No, we will start with lower excitement titles to build a model that works. We're trying out the system, not the collection.

2. Is this a Douglas County model?

No, it is not a Douglas County model. We do not have the time to build and maintain a server in such a short period of time. Also, we do not have the time to negotiate with publishers for content. However, we will be looking at the possibility of a hybrid model in the future.

3. What is the cost of this pilot project?

There is no cost to pilot libraries who are participating in this project. There are time and staff requirements as part of the responsibilities of the pilot libraries.

4. What are the responsibilities of the pilot libraries?

- Work with their network to facilitate the technical requirements of the vendor/platform that is chosen
- Develop training materials
- Outreach to other libraries about the project to build support
- Assess and evaluate the project
- Work on taskforces specifically related to the ongoing success of the project.
Such as collection development, policies and future sustainability of the funding.

5. What are some of the benchmarks for success?

- Collection – genres, types, meeting needs of users
- Device flexibility
- Recurrent users when applicable
- Ownership when applicable
- Availability of content
- Ease of use by end-user

6. This seems like a huge project, can it be done?

This is a first-step effort to provide eBooks on a statewide level, with multi-type libraries. We will not meet all the collection needs during this pilot project; however we will be able to discuss options with publishers and authors in providing eBooks directly. Also, we will be investigating ways to making local content available through this platform.

7. Is there a name for the project?

Not yet, we are working on creating a name that can be carried forward in the future.