

E-Book Readers

RMIT University Library Initiative

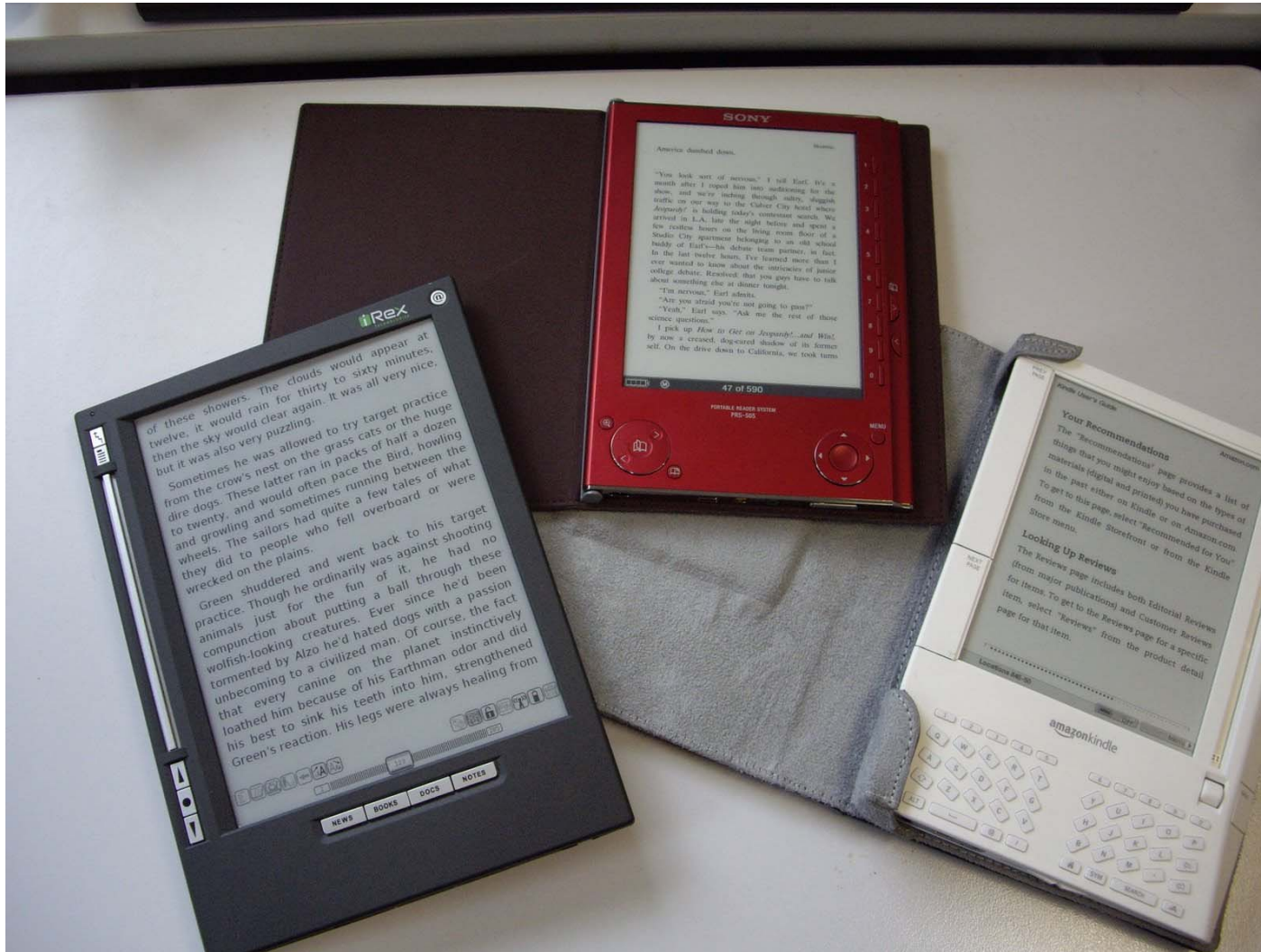
Background

- A project to first look at e-book readers was first initiated in the last quarter of 2007.
- The main reader: Illiad (Version 1, iRex Technologies).
- The project: To assess the viability of using e-book readers in an academic environment, more specifically, its usage with respect to RMIT Library.
- Are they a tool or are they a toy?
- Comparison: purchase at least two other e-book readers and compare them with the Illiad.

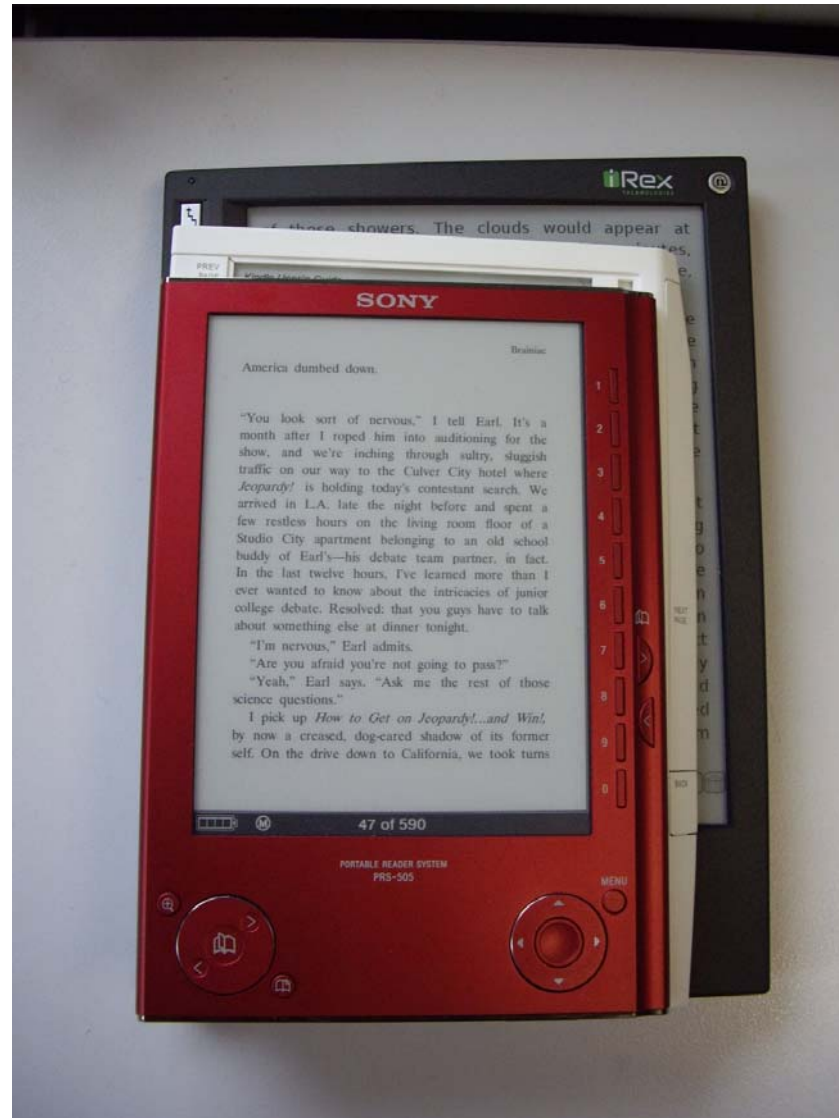
E-Book Readers - Formats

- Illiad (Version1)
 - pdfs, Mobipocket Books, HTML, TXT.
- Amazon Kindle (Version 1)
 - Kindle (AZW), TXT, Audible (formats 2, 3 and 4), MP3, unprotected MOBI, PRC natively; HTML, DOC, JPEG, GIF, PNG, BMP through conversion.
- Sony PRS-505
 - Adobe® PDFs, plus TXT, RTF, BMP, JPEG, GIF, PNG and Microsoft® Word files.
- Apple ipod Touch
 - - (Stanza): EPUB, eReader, MS LIT, Amazon Kindle, Mobipocket, and PalmDoc, as well as HTML, PDF, MS Word, and Rich Text Format.

E-Book Readers – A Picture!



E-Book Readers - Size




RMIT Library E-Reader Blog

- Homer's Iliad at RMIT University Library.
- <http://libraryiliad.blogspot.com/>
- The blog began in 2008.
- The blog records the experiences of 6 librarians using 4 e-book reading devices.
- The blog outlines issues such as:
 - Setup & configuration
 - USB issues
 - Transferring content issues
 - Features issues

RMIT Library E-Reader Blog

Homer's Iliad at RMIT University Library
Account of RMIT University Library iLiad ebook reader project.


Monday, December 15, 2008
Mahjong for Sony PRS-505



It's things like this that explain why the Sony e-book reader sold more units than the Kindle or the Iliad. Someone has coded the Mahjong game for the PRS-505, and by all accounts seems to work well. However, if you play it from an SD card, it will drain the battery somewhat. You can download the game from here.

Posted by Domenic Iannello at 2:27 PM 0 comments
Labels: mahjong, Sony ebook reader

Tuesday, December 9, 2008
PRSCustomizer for the Sony PRS-505 Reader



PRSCustomizer V1.01

Name: [] Firmware: 1.1 USA
Telephone: [] Language: English
Email: [] Icon Set: Don't replace
Fonts: Don't replace

Volume key shutdown
 Enter key shutdown
 Joypad page forward
 Uniform font size
 No right justification


Volume key page turns
 Volume key history
 Circle pad history
 Disable number keys
 Personal logo

Customize Exit

Websites of interest

- irex technologies
- Wikipedia entry for iLiad

Not Homer's but mine for a while



iRex iLiad

Previous blogs

- 2008 (60)
 - December (6)
 - Mahjong for Sony PRS-505
 - PRSCustomizer for the Sony PRS-505 Reader
 - Food For Thought...
 - The ebook reader wars
 - Copyright content on ebook readers
 - My few days with the Amazon Kindle: A short time, ...
 - November (2)
 - October (6)
 - September (8)

Examples

- Iliad: Australian Standards - *"This document has expired. To access the current document, please go to your on-line service. Please note that materials accessed via our on-line subscription services is not intended for off-line storage, and such storage is contrary to the licence under which the service is supplied"*.
- EBL: Encryption in the pdfs prevent them from being read on units that don't have Adobe Digital Editions.
- Springerbooks: Downloaded book "100% Evil" directly to ebook reader. Turned out to be an art book, with just graphics. More info on the site would be useful. Can be read. Slow though.
- CRCnetBASE: Downloaded "Practical handbook for professional investigators". Chapter by chapter directly to ebook. Cool book, can still be read from my USB drive five months later . The chapter by chapter bit was annoying, but it worked.

More Examples

- EBL: Downloaded "Building design management" for 7 days only. Couldn't find where it saved to, so never saw it, even for 7 minutes. Vanished into the cyber ether, and I couldn't find any setting to tell it where to save to. My PC defaults to save downloads to the desktop.
- Knovel: Downloaded a chapter of "Knitting Technology". My notes say "where did it download to?" but I know I found it eventually, 'cause I read a bit of it. Even the graphics looked good on the iLiad.
- NetLibrary: read online only, can't download. "Shaker textile arts". Very irritating - wouldn't use it if it has to be this way. Can't read about textiles off the web!
- Safari: Books so old! As they seem to be all IT books, it is amazing that they are mostly pre-2004. Can't download book - just read online.

General Issues

- Restrictions: work PCs do not have administrative privileges, which prevent the installation of e-book reader software, and in some cases, prevent the e-book reader from being recognised by the PC via USB.
- Content on databases not necessarily formatted and setup to be put on to mobile devices. Few exceptions (eg. MIMS).
- Iliad: wireless capacity does not work outside of U.S. Also, cannot buy any e-books from Amazon due to licensing restrictions.
- Pdfs on all e-book readers were different flavours of slow, depending on whether they had text or graphics.
- Newer generation of e-books are faster, more features, but still don't address the issues of academic copyright and content provision.
- What happens when Tablet PCs (and Macs) become thin, small, fast, and can do everything e-book readers can but more!

Format issues

- E-Book Reader tested cannot read all formats as claimed (eg. Pdf: cannot read Adobe Digital Editions and other DRM restricted pdfs).
- Conversion into supposedly supported formats not always successful (can be due to formatting, DRM, etc...).
- E-Books that work with readers: Elsevier, Springerlink (no DRM).
- E-Books that don't work with readers: EBL, Knovel (DRM or dynamic animation embedded).
- Almost all the E-Book readers required format conversion before they were uploaded to the reader.
- Ipod touch: Use safari to surf to RMIT pages to authenticate to use e-book databases: ScienceDirect, Springerlink, etc...

In Conclusion

- E-book readers in an academic environment are still an expensive novelty (most e-books on readers are novels rather than textbooks).
- Publishers are still not interested in providing their content on the move (print-on-demand is the trend they are trying to contend with at the moment).
- Article in *American Libraries* (Oct 2009) – E-Readers In Action (Anne Behler).
- Too expensive for students (both reader and e-books).
- Not enough immersion with the text.
- Students not used to devices that aren't multi-tasking.
- Many students felt current e-reader technology not adaptable to hard sciences.
- *“In terms of both available content and reading devices we are a long way from the ideal product, but there is much that libraries can do to be part of the equation when it comes to the future of reading.”*

Any Questions?

