



# Newsline

SUMMER 2007

ALS Library Services Pty Ltd 1300 136 490 [www.alslib.com.au](http://www.alslib.com.au)

## Ebooks... A New Wave

Six years ago, the world was not ready for ebooks. It was Autumn 2001, when ALS first obtained an ebook reader – the REB1100 and, despite initial skepticism, it was a delight to read and we thought it would really take off. Restrictive digital rights management (DRM) lack of publisher support and high prices however, resulted in the device being made defunct within two years.



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Fast-forward to 2007, and the publishing world has moved on. Most major publishers have been slowly developing digital repositories of their books, Google has been steadily scanning books into its Google Books programme, Sony has just released an updated version of its ebook Reader, and Amazon has plans to release a reader of its own.

The price of the technology is still high US\$300 - \$US800 for a device, and the market still small (approximately US\$15M according to The Guardian), but the infrastructure to support an ebook economy is slowly being put into place. There seems to be an inevitability about the reality of ebooks inserting themselves into mainstream culture.

Interestingly, if you read through the recent newspaper articles and Internet forum discussions, it is difficult to find arguments of the "will they replace paper books" sort that were prevalent when ebooks were first released 5-10 years ago. Instead there are people desperate to obtain the technology and find good content to read. There are also reviewers amazed with the quality and ease of use of the current devices. They give the impression that there is a considerable groundswell of demand forebooks.

One of the ongoing arguments against ebooks, is the proliferation of different formats [think VHS vs Beta]. That, however, is set to change. The International Digital Publishing Forum [IDPF] has been working on and has released their Open Publishing Structure [OPS] which sets a standard for .epub electronic book files. The IDPF is comprised of major publishers and other companies with an interest in digital content delivery. Members include industry heavyweights Hachette, HarperCollins, Random House, Pearson [who own Penguin] as well as Amazon.com, Adobe, Sony, Bowker and many others. That's quite a bit of persuasion power!

A single format will be hugely significant in pushing ebooks beyond the early adopters to take a significant slice of worldwide reading time. The remaining hurdles will be for ebook technology to become cheap enough for the masses, and for ebook content to be conveniently available to consumers.

Getting the DRM correct will be the key to accessibility of content [see page 2], but with technology prices dropping every minute, the pieces of the ebook revolution are steadily falling into place.

### Who's Your Favourite Author?

A recent survey of British 16-34 year olds has named Roald Dahl as most popular children's author. Perhaps surprisingly, J.K. Rowling was also pipped by CS Lewis and JM Barrie to take fourth place.

Here is the complete list:

1. Roald Dahl
2. CS Lewis
3. JM Barrie
4. JK Rowling
5. Anthony Horowitz
6. Jacqueline Wilson
7. Dr Seuss
8. Philip Pullman
9. Francesca Simon
10. Enid Blyton



## Childrens Books

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## Ebooks...



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## What about DRM?

One of the biggest issues facing the ebook industry is DRM, or Digital Rights Management. Designed to protect copyrighted material, DRM for ebooks has as many variants as there are devices. If you purchase a Sony Reader, for example, the only place you can legally buy copyrighted content is from the Sony online store.

This is fine if you live in the US [or the UK from 2008] but they won't sell to anywhere else at the moment presumably due to lack of international selling rights for publications. It also restricts you to the range provided by Sony for the publishers it has relationships with.

DRM can be layered on top of the .epub files described in the front-page article but often at some inconvenience to consumers (it usually means you can't legally lend your book content to a friend, for example or buy a file designed for one device and use it on another).

The ePublishing industry seems to be several steps behind the digital music industry. In 2002, legal music downloads were struggling to make significant inroads into the music buying public. In April 2003, Apple opened its now famous iTunes Store, making music downloads easy, with DRM that was largely invisible to the regular end user. Four years on, and Apple (along with Amazon and other digital music retailers) are selling DRM free music for participating record labels. There is no evidence showing that music sales have slowed down as a result.

Lets hope that the publishing industry doesn't have to go through the same long process of discovery. Their customers [the reading public] want to buy their books, but they want it to be easy and they want to be able to view it on whatever device they choose.

The pirates will always find a way around the system. The target market of publishers [i.e. people who buy books] won't bother.

“ At this moment we're not going to have our titles on eMusic or with anyone else who sells non-DRM until the landscape shakes out and we feel very comfortable and confident that our titles will not be pirated ”

- Penguin Audio publisher Dick Heffernan quoted in the New York Times after senior Penguin management pulled his plan for audio book sales on eMusic. They just don't get it!



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## Multinational Publisher Goes Green

Being 'carbon neutral' is very trendy at the moment, but it's hard to knock HarperCollins initiative to print all its mass-market and general trade paperbacks on FSC certified environmentally friendly paper. This represents 55% of its total publishing output and requires the paper to be manufactured from sustainable timber plantations.

## SIMON SAYS



Simon Woodley  
General Manager

Why would you say 'No' to an attractive opportunity?

ALS's founder Len Woodley (my uncle) told me last year, of his plan to step back from day-to-day involvement, and asked me to consider assuming his role. I thought it over carefully and declined. I know what I'm good at! Contract Management, staff administration, research and development. But I'm not enthusiastically entrepreneurial.

Replacing his particular skill sets was not going to be easy.

The appointment of Patricia Genat as our Managing Director from November, however, has delighted the whole team. You'll see why when you read about her in this edition's staff profile. After a transition period Len will assume a consulting role, and enjoy 'retirement'. (See back page article).

In the meantime as forward thinking public libraries in all states critically review their processes for efficiency, ALS' client list continues to grow. And – the issue of e-books, again comes to the fore.

Sincerely,  
**Simon**

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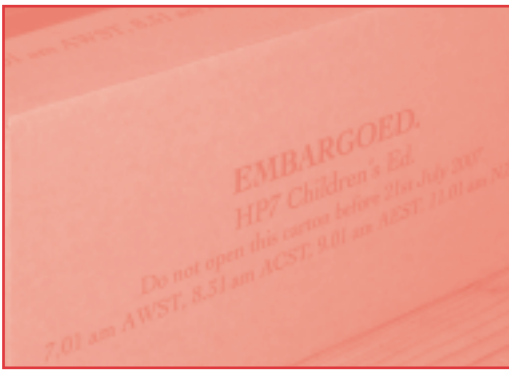
## Which Standard?

Libraries have always had a sweet spot for standards, but choosing a standard is becoming more difficult. Last issue of Newsline (Winter 2007) reported on alternatives to Dewey. Here are two current standards initiatives.

Four national libraries (National Library of Australia, Library of Congress, British Library and Library and Archives Canada) have agreed on joint coordination of the implementation of Resource Description and Access which succeeds AACR2. It is expected to take place during 2009.

Moving in another direction, in line with a noticeable trend in Public Libraries, are two American libraries that have recently changed their catalogue to use BISAC subject headings instead of Dewey headings. BISAC is a book industry standard followed by most bookshops and lends itself to a browsing model for customers with broad headings such as 'Computers' and 'History' as well as multiple sub-headings.





**HP7 – Ready to leave ALS premises at 8.31am on 21st July – Fully Shelf Ready!**



## ALS STAFF PROFILE

### Patricia Genat Managing Director

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After gaining her B.Ed from University of Melbourne, Patricia Genat spent two years as a lecturer in the Department of Language and Literature at Deakin University, before becoming Promotions and training Manger of the renowned Oldmeadow Booksellers (a division of Scholastic Publishing).

A move to D. W Thorpe as Sales and Marketing Manager, provided a comprehensive understanding of the entire Australian book world, and was followed by seven years in senior management at ACER (Australian Council for Educational Research), and a period as Managing Director of NCS Pearson (Australasia).



She moved to South Australia in 2003 to become Managing Director of Bookwise International; a position she relinquished in June this year.

Tricia's experience and her Grad. Dip. Information Management, and Master of Business (Monash) equip her well to lead the ALS team, as it is on the brink of significant further development.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING...

### Audio

Online music store eMusic has begun selling audio books in MP3 format in direct competition with market leader, Audible.com. The downloads will be device independent and cost US\$9.99 each (on a subscription basis).

Moving in the other direction, online bookseller Amazon.com has opened a digital music store, with DRM free MP3 downloads.

Doctor Who spinoff, the *Sarah Jane Adventures* have been commissioned by BBC Audiobooks as audio-only titles. Other audio-only titles will follow.

### China

Global publishers HarperCollins and Random House have both announced significant new deals in China. HarperCollins with a deal to bring a Chinese children's series to the West and Random House planning to translate its Vintage Classics series into Mandarin.

Meanwhile, the US government has lodged a complaint with the World Trade Organisation over lax anti-piracy for books, movies and music in China.

### Afghanistan

Due out later this year is the movie adaptation of the acclaimed novel, *The Kite Runner*. Although the film has been completed, its release has been delayed until the end of the Afghani school year to protect its young actors from controversy surrounding material in the film.

### Iraq

Iraq's national library lost much of its collection during the initial war following the defeat of Saddam Hussein. Now it has been made a terrorist target since the Iraqi army occupied it and made it a temporary military base. You can read the diary [up to July] of the National Librarian, Saad Eskander here: <http://www.bl.uk/iraqdiary.html>



### eMusic Audiobook Store

<http://www.emusic.com/audiobooks/index.html>

### John Twelve Hawks

Author of *The Traveler* and *The Dark River* (first two books in the Fourth Realm Trilogy). Explore the six realms in this very clever site: [www.randomhouse.com/features/johntwelvehawks](http://www.randomhouse.com/features/johntwelvehawks)

### CreateSpace

Publish your own books with Amazon.com. [www.createspace.com](http://www.createspace.com)

or

submit your masterpiece to the Amazon Breakthrough novel competition: [www.amazon.com/abna](http://www.amazon.com/abna)

### Animalia TV Series

[www.animalia.tv](http://www.animalia.tv)

### Khaled Hosseini

Author of *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* [www.khaledhosseini.com](http://www.khaledhosseini.com)

### Monica McInerney

*Those Faraday Girls* no.1 on the Dymocks Bestsellers chart. (25.10.2007) [www.monicamcinerney.com](http://www.monicamcinerney.com)



## 50 Years in the Book Industry!

*Photo - Len with some of the ALS team celebrates his 50th anniversary in the Book Industry in their new premises.*

Len Woodley was "very young" when he was appointed managing director of a technical bookshop on North Terrace (Standard Book) in 1964 – even younger when he started there in 1957! By the late 1970's he had moved it to Rundle Mall, where it employed 50 people and was South Australia's largest bookselling chain with shopping centre and university campus branches. Len is an innovator who was, the first Australian bookseller to advertise on television – 1965; the first Australian bookseller to use an integrated computer stock control system – 1979; the first South Australian retailer to introduce point of sale product scanning – 1979

As federal president of the Australian Booksellers Association 1979-1981, he initiated significant amendments to Australia's copyright Act. He was convenor of the ABA's Library Supply Group for several years. He has undertaken book industry consultancy in Argentina, India, Peru, the Philippines, United Kingdom, and Egypt. He reviewed books on ABC radio from 1984 to 2000 and more recently on Radio National.

Len established ALS as a separate part of Standard Book in 1973, and it was separately incorporated in 1980. ALS is now a valued and innovative supplier to public libraries nationally, and supplies catalogued and shelf ready books, DVDs and music to all public libraries in SA and WA.

Now with a new MD appointed, he will move soon to a consulting role, devoting more energy to his "spare time" role as National Secretary of SPCK-Australia, where he organises the Australian Christian Book of the Year Awards, and provides funding for Christian literature in many countries. His bushwalking, and time with four grandchildren, will benefit too. And he still reads books!

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## All in a days work

Staff in the Alice Springs Dymocks could be forgiven for thinking that an unknown person writing in some of their book stock was a vandal. As it turned out, it was Stephen King, on holidays in the Alice, signing copies of his latest book – completely unannounced! One lucky customer was able to buy one and the remaining five were auctioned off for charity.

Two new book-based TV series are set to hit the screens. Enid Blyton's Famous Five have been reunited as middle age adults in a yet to be written mystery series. And the Mr Men series have been updated with several changes including several Mr Men that have been made 'Little Misses', to include more female characters. Find out more here: [www.mrmen.com](http://www.mrmen.com)

A church library in the UK recently gave away the bargain of the century. It sold a large collection of old and rare books to a book dealer for £36,000 in order to clear shelf space. It was later discovered as individual items came up for auction, that the value of the collection was actually £500,000! A spokesman for the diocese was quoted as saying it was a 'terrible shame'. I'll say!

## Oxford University Press wins Old Technology Prize



In a world where computers are obsolete the moment you take them out the shop, Oxford University Press has won a competition for the oldest running HP-UX server, which has been tracking the life-cycle of its books for ten years – and still going! HP have awarded them with a brand new server.

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