

Corporate Overview

Manage, Protect & Fulfill

OverDrive is a leading full-service digital content distributor and technology provider. We enable publishers, libraries, schools, retailers, aggregators, and other enterprises to securely manage, protect (via digital rights management/DRM) and fulfill their digital audiobooks, eBooks, music, and video through custom and end-to-end solutions.

Customer-Driven Solutions

Library
K-12 School
Higher Education
Retail
Publisher

OverDrive serves a variety of marketplaces with: **Digital Library Reserve®**, **School Download Library®**, **College Download Library**, **MIDAS** retail solution, **Content Reserve®**, and **Private Reserve** (see reverse for details on each). OverDrive's global client list includes hundreds of leading publishers and thousands of libraries, schools, retailers, aggregators, and enterprises serving millions of end users. We provide the technology infrastructure for such global leaders as HarperCollins, Random House, Hachette Book Group, McGraw-Hill, Scholastic, John Wiley, Borders, WHSmith Online (UK), Microsoft, the National Association of Realtors, as well as dozens of community colleges and college bookstores. We also power digital catalogs for public library systems large and small, including major U.S. markets such as New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Boston, Seattle, and Miami, and internationally in Singapore, Mexico, Canada, and Australia.

Best Download Service

eBooks
audiobooks
music
video

Our customers benefit from the circulation or sales our solutions help drive. Three main categories define what we do (see reverse for more detail):

Manage: OverDrive enables the upload, hosting, and sharing of popular audiobooks, eBooks, music, and video, as well as local content. An easy-to-use admin portal simplifies content selection, purchase, and activity tracking via real-time reports. In addition, we provide expert training and support as needed.

Protect: Whether you're the rights holder or the public-facing channel, end users will be enabled to download your DRM-protected content. We provide user authentication for OverDrive-hosted websites, and integrate smoothly with your authentication if you're the host.

Fulfill: A single platform for audiobooks, eBooks, music, and video simplifies the browse and download experience on a custom-designed and hosted or existing website. Our free download software, OverDrive Media Console, enhances usability and portability of audiobooks, music, and video with advanced navigation, transfer wizard (to supported mobile devices), and accessibility features.

Technical Expertise & Innovation

Much of OverDrive's success can be traced to the innovative digital media ecosystem built from the ground up by our talented engineering team. We have developed intelligent and intuitive solutions for each step of the "manage, protect, fulfill" download process. OverDrive boasts extensive experience working with the most popular eBook formats, including Adobe PDF, Mobipocket PRC, Microsoft LIT, and the new industry standard EPUB, as well as digital audiobooks, music, and video in Microsoft® Windows Media® format, and the DRM free MP3 format, compatible with iPod® and Mac®. As a principal member of the International Digital Publishing Forum (www.IDPF.org), OverDrive is strategically focused on driving and promoting standards for the rapidly evolving electronic publishing industry.

Contact

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OverDrive Product Descriptions



Reach your patrons online all of the time. OverDrive [Digital Library Reserve](#) provides libraries popular audiobooks, eBooks, music, and videos to lend to patrons for download. OverDrive will create and host a website customized to look like your existing library website and integrate with your ILS for easy authentication. You then build your digital collection from our catalog of more than 150,000 titles and soon, you'll be enjoying the benefits of 24/7 availability and increased circulation.



Make [School Download Library](#) a part of your school's library and give your students download access to 600+ curriculum-based and recreational audiobook and eBook titles. Students can check out titles anywhere with a web browser, download to a PC or laptop, and transfer them to MP3 players, digital readers, and other portable devices. Titles span many subjects and are organized by grade level.



Extend your college library with digital eBooks, audiobooks and more with OverDrive's [College Download Library](#). We'll create and host a branded website linked to your college website, then you decide what material to make available. Choose from OverDrive's inventory of more than 100,000 popular and classic titles in virtually every subject--and upload your own digital material, too (such as syllabi, lesson plans, etc.). Ideal for community colleges, universities and distance learning programs.



OverDrive's [Private Reserve](#) makes it easy for you to offer your digital content via download and to protect this content from unauthorized use wherever it goes. You can seamlessly integrate this solution with your channels: Upload your content, set title-specific usage permissions (DRM) for dynamic content protection, and then allow your customers to download this content from your website.



OverDrive's [MIDAS](#) is an OverDrive-hosted, white-label eRetail store that enables you to sell digital media in various formats. It requires no additional hardware or software. This online digital media store, developed, maintained, and hosted by OverDrive, can be designed to look like your current website so customers feel right at home. You can choose to upload and sell your own content and/or select eBooks and audiobooks from our online warehouse.



Sell titles from OverDrive's vast inventory of popular digital audiobooks and eBooks on your site. OverDrive is a distributor for hundreds of publishers through [Content Reserve](#), our e-warehouse that lets you choose from a growing list of digital audiobooks and eBooks, including thousands of popular and best-selling titles.



Are you looking for a new way to distribute your digital audiobooks, eBooks, music, and videos? OverDrive is a distributor for hundreds of publishers through [Content Reserve](#), our e-warehouse that provides digital content for download to more than 8,500 libraries, schools, and retailers. You simply upload your digital media and metadata and OverDrive takes care of the rest--making your premium content available to new channels safely and easily.



Librarian Testimonials

Best Service

"Every OverDrive staff member we have dealt with in the past two years has simply been wonderful. Each member of the OverDrive team, no matter what department, has been a valuable guide in setting up our digital site and has kept the communication open to help us continually improve our service."—*Linda Stevens, Harris County Public Library (TX)*

"(OverDrive has) a great product combined with a dedicated, smart, friendly staff. In the end, it is all about delivering on the promise of the brand and building relationships. OverDrive does both."—*Joanne P. Roukens, Highlands Regional Library Cooperative (NJ)*

Best Selection

"OverDrive offers materials from several vendors and has a strong reputation for being a front-runner in the acquisition of digital media rights. We were confident that in selecting OverDrive as our electronic media vendor that we were receiving the widest possible selection for one stop shopping. We are able to select content that our customers want."—*Kim Edson, Rochester Public Library (MN)*

"As the catalog has expanded, our ability to reach a larger audience has expanded. Enriching the diversity of our downloadable titles makes it possible to reach different interests, from fiction readers to IT guys looking for a quick answer to someone trying to open a restaurant."—*Michael Santangelo, Brooklyn Public Library (NY)*

Best User Experience

"I am and have been a big user of downloadable audiobooks for several years. Other products with one big file were the pits. I like being able to just click on the transfer button (my level of expertise) compared to trying to mess around with Windows Media Player or my SanDisk software. I am not a big eBook fan, but I do like the using Adobe Digital Editions. Everything on the website is browsable and I like have the book cover and a short synopsis of the story to make my decisions. Checkout is also easy and direct."—*Evelyn Janoch, Rocky River Public Library (OH)*

"The transfer wizard in OverDrive Media Console has made it so easy for our patrons to get material onto their portable devices. I've even heard from one particular senior citizen on Cape Cod who is now the star of her bridge club because she knows how to use an MP3 player thanks to OverDrive!"—*Michael Colford, Boston Public Library (MA)*

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Steve Potash

Tech pioneer provides digital access, 24/7

BY CALVIN REID

Back in the early 1980s, Steve Potash—founder, president and CEO of OverDrive Inc., a digital services, media and distribution company—was a technology-minded lawyer in Cleveland, trying to figure out how to automate his law practice by digitizing his reference books and legal forms. “Why can’t we make this stuff electronic?” Potash says in an interview looking back over a career that has essentially defined the development of today’s digital publishing marketplace. In fact, by 1983 Potash had done just that—automated his law practice and moved on to develop a series of digitized law books on those now-ancient 6”x8” large-format floppy discs. “I had a vision to marry the PC and digital content,” Potash says. “People started calling me the PC lawyer.”

Potash saw very early that the personal computer would be central to the future not only of book publishing and distribution but the dissemination of content of all kinds. In 1986, Potash founded OverDrive and began publishing tax and accounting forms and general reference works on searchable CD-ROMs. OverDrive was among the first wave of digital services companies to usher in the new era of electronic distribution. “This was the basis for OverDrive,” Potash says. “We partner with publishers to create new revenue channels for their materials.”

From law books on floppies and searchable CD-ROMs in



CHANGE MAKERS

the late 1980s,

Potash has seen digital publishing grow into a viable publishing platform in the early 21st century. OverDrive’s library business—yet another pioneering digital venture initiated by Potash—grew 76% last year. These days, OverDrive supplies more than 8,500 libraries with digital content, and traffic at those library accounts has grown from more than three million digital checkouts in 2007 to more than five million checkouts in 2008. Today, OverDrive offers more than 150,000 individual digital titles, providing library and retail consumers with digital downloads of everything from bestselling e-books and video to MP3s and audiobook downloads of all kinds.

OverDrive provides the digital infrastructure to institutions like the New York Public Library, public school and university libraries across the country, private e-book retailers and even publishers like Harlequin or international book retailers like W.H. Smith, while remaining completely in the background. “Our mission is the same today,” Potash says. “License and partner with publish-

ers to take print products and create new revenue streams for them.”

Not only did Potash create a business model to support digital media, but by 2000 he was among a group of visionaries that formed the Open E-book Forum (now called the International Digital Publishing Forum), a nonprofit industry association focused on creating technical standards for a new digital publishing industry. Through his work at the IDPF—Potash is president and a member of the board—he’s overseen the development of .epub, a new e-book file standard that cuts costs for publishers and offers consumers “interoperability”—nonproprietary e-book software that works on different devices. About the standard, Potash says, “It will reduce the cost of getting into the e-book market.” And he’s instrumental in organizing and hosting the annual IDPF show, an international forum that showcases everything from new digital business models to digital accessibility for the visually impaired.

Like Potash, OverDrive seems to be everywhere—government agencies; providing e-books to troops overseas; and even sponsoring the Digital Bookmobile, a rolling digital classroom-in-a-truck that promotes digital reading at libraries and schools. Potash says there’s still much work to do to bring about a new world offering complete access to digital content. “Mobile services are growing. We’re looking at new business models. There’s an acceleration of e-books into the library market. We’re creating communities using social networks and programming content that cuts across markets,” says Potash. “And we’re still at the beginning of this. Only a small part of the audience realizes that the book they want is available 24/7. The other 95% of the market is still unaware.” ■

PROFILE

Name: Steve Potash **Age:** 56 **Job:** CEO, OverDrive Inc. **First job:** Director, Around the World Auto Race (U.S. Bicentennial event, 1976) **Publishing in the future will be...** providing customized products and titles tailored to each individual’s preferred method of reading.

April 20, 2008

What's New at the E-Library

By JENNIFER V. HUGHES

ANTHONY TORREGROSSA has always been an avid reader, but when his eyesight started to deteriorate from macular degeneration about a year ago, he knew he had to find a way to keep up his hobby.

A frequent patron at the Bethpage Public Library on Long Island, Mr. Torregrossa decided to try something he had never heard of before: audio books downloaded onto an MP3 player.

"I call them reading books," said Mr. Torregrossa, 82, of Plainview. The library has four MP3 players available for a two-week loan with some 1,850 titles. Most recently Mr. Torregrossa finished "Three Empires on the Nile: The Victorian Jihad, 1869-1899."

With the explosion of new technologies that have moved readers, especially younger ones, from the library stacks to computer screens and earphones, public libraries are struggling to find ways to remain current. One of the biggest innovations is downloadable books, which allow readers to "check out" books without setting foot in a library.

And best of all, there are no overdue book fines when a patron "borrows" a book or video this way. Once the book is downloaded, it "returns" itself by expiring after a certain period.

The new technology has turned out to be popular not just with young people who do not remember a time before research was done on the Internet, but also with many older people like Mr. Torregrossa.

The device is "so small — like a little pack of matches," he said. "I might be sitting for a while listening and then I'll get up and move around and this whole thing moves with me. It's kind of funny when you think about it."

Maxine Bleiweis, director of the Westport Public Library in [Connecticut](#), said the transition to more technology is in keeping with libraries' basic mission, providing access to information.

"One of our goals as a library is to make information accessible through new technology so that people are comfortable with it," she said. In addition to downloadable books, many libraries also offer podcasts of library programs, and some offer game nights with the Wii game system. And more than 100 libraries in the region subscribe to a company called Next Reads that sends patrons e-mail messages that tailor book suggestions according to their interests, taking a page from [Amazon.com](#).

According to the [American Library Association](#), about 38 percent of 9,100 libraries nationwide offer e- and audio books and about 16 percent provide downloadable video.

If a library does not have certain technological offerings, said Loriene Roy, president of the group, it may be

a result of budget constraints or a lack of staff familiarity and community interest. She said her group is always trying to get the word out on technology at conferences and other gatherings.

“We do advocate on behalf of the opportunity,” she said.

It is hard to say whether libraries have drawn in more patrons with new technologies, she said. But in the 10 years or so since the Internet has been widely available at many libraries, Dr. Roy said, the number of visits has increased, going up 65 percent from 1994 to 2005. “You can infer that the rise is because of those resources,” she said.

Technology does not come cheap, but libraries are forming consortiums with other libraries to build their electronic collections. The Westchester Library System is composed of 38 libraries in that county, serving about 460,000 patrons.

The group has a contract with an audio and e-book provider, Overdrive, paying it \$18,000 a year. It will spend up to \$40,000 a year on new titles. In contrast, Wayne Hay, information technology manager for the Westchester Library System, said individual libraries in the group spend \$27,000 to \$882,000 a year on books and other hard resources.

Downloadable audio, video and e-books remain on a patron’s computer for a set period, usually a week or so, before they either expire or become inaccessible unless they are renewed. One snag in library audio books is that the technology does not work with the iPod brand of MP3 players because of a blocking mechanism, said Matthew Walker, national sales director of Recorded Books, an audio book company. In recent months, however, publishers have been announcing they will be releasing more titles without that blocker.

In the fall, the Sparta Public Library in [New Jersey](#) purchased two Kindle e-book reading devices, and there are now about a dozen people on the waiting list to use them. Patrons choose the one book they want to download to the device, and the library foots the \$6 to \$10 bill.

“It kind of shakes off our dusty image a little bit,” said Diane Lapsley, assistant director.

“Technology is not something we’re afraid of, it’s something we’ve embraced and our patrons have embraced,” Ms. Lapsley said. “Technology is a steppingstone — we don’t know what else is coming down the pike, but we do know that everything we use will allow us to build on that technology and have our patrons build on that knowledge.”

While Blu-ray DVDs are popular among tech-savvy buyers, many libraries are holding off because not enough patrons are using the high-definition technology, said Mike Morea, manager of electronic resources for the Nassau Library System, which encompasses 54 libraries.

“You don’t want to put just five Blu-ray discs on the shelf and call it a collection,” he said. “You want it to be something that people can use.”

One offering that has been popular is the e-book Internet program for children called TumbleBooks. Patrons can go to their library’s home page and use a program that has hundreds of talking and animated books for children. The books are broken down by age group.

The company has about 6,000 schools and libraries subscribing nationwide, including about 180 in the region. Dianne Barber, of Plainview, N.Y., said her 4-year-old son, Jake, loves them.

“It’s never going to replace the bonding time, the warmth and closeness of reading,” she said. “But if you are sitting with your child at the computer, it can be the next best thing.”

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WITH THIS ISSUE: LIBRARY BY DESIGN Going Green

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Reed Business Information.

The VERSO Solution

Database Marketplace

Notable Government Documents

SLA Preview

IN THE BOOK REVIEW

Graphic Novels, Mystery at Home
& Abroad, Directors Go Global,
Language Learning on the Web



Audio Fixation

AUDIO

Whatever your device,
there will be lots
of audio content
to download now that
libraries are in tune

By Alan L. Kaye

FIXATI



If you aren't too busy scanning your own tunes, take a look around the bus or subway and see just how many others are bumping along to an iPod or an MP3 player. What they're listening to is their secret, but the many signature earbuds in sight should give you a real sense of just how pervasive

Alan L. Kaye is Director, Roddenbery Memorial Library, Cairo, GA. He is a previous contributor to LJ and author of the 1991 American Library Association/Library Administration and Management Association publication Video and Other Nonprint Resources in the Small Library

digital audio has become. That popularity is mirrored in library audio services, where audio circulation continues to gain momentum nationwide.

Downloadable music files are making room for audiobooks available through downloading services, and the audio industry hopes that familiarity with the MP3 format will bring more customers into the ranks of audiobook listeners. Nonprint library services now largely involve digital media: users borrow audiobooks on CD, but they also download audiobooks, music, and videos and check out Playaways that have audio pro-

grams in a self-contained, battery-powered player. The newly announced industry moves toward MP3, aimed at generating retail sales, will send library audio circulation through the roof in the next few years.

A 2007 sales survey provided by the Audio Publisher's Association (APA) highlights the increasing market hunger for aural entertainment and information. In 2006, audiobook sales rose six percent to a record \$923 million. Seventy-seven percent of sales was for CDs, a far cry from 45 percent in 2003. Fourteen percent was in downloads, up from nine percent in 2005. Seven percent of sales remains in cassettes, less than half of its 2005 figure, and one percent was in MP3-

CDs. Adults account for 87 percent of direct sales. Sales to libraries are growing and are slightly ahead of retail sales, representing 32 percent of sales (\$295 million) versus retail's 30 percent. Unabridged audiobooks represent 71 percent of total sales, and fiction represents

69 percent. Sales data for 2007 is being gathered for the 2008 report, and APA plans to do sales surveys annually.

At the forefront

"Libraries are doing an excellent job of making audio more visible to patrons—moving their entire collections to the front of the library, integrating listening into audiobook clubs, trying new formats, and generally encouraging patrons to give audio a try," says Michele Cobb, library marketing director at BBC Audiobooks America and current president

LIBRARIANS TELL US AUDIOBOOKS ARE STILL GROWING IN TERMS OF CIRCULATION AND THAT GROWTH IS OUTPACING MOST OTHER AREAS.

—BRIAN DOWNING, PUBLISHER, RECORDED BOOKS

of the APA. "Now is an exciting time for audio, as we reach new listeners and find more ways to integrate multiple elements into the traditional idea of the audiobook."

Of course, as Richard DiRusso, manager of collection development at the Pima County PL in Tucson, AZ, notes, "The impetus for us to acquire audiobooks is driven by library users. They want and use them at a phenomenal rate, and we're striving to meet their needs." Pima County, with 25 locations, has standing order plans (SOPs) through several audiobook suppliers (downloadables and ebooks can also be chosen through SOPs).

INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

Steve Potash of **OVERDRIVE** announced the addition of the MP3 format to the company's Windows Media Audio (WMA)/digital rights management (DRM) offerings at the Public Library Association (PLA) meeting in Minneapolis. OverDrive's David Burleigh, on the exhibit floor, said that more than 3000 of the firm's 100,000 titles (all formats) would download in MP3 by summer's end for the 7500 libraries using its services, after introducing the new format through Borders.com and at Digital Centers inside select Borders stores in May. Although there was some thought that a few publishers might charge more for MP3 than WMA, Potash says that the price of MP3 audiobooks should be comparable with WMA.

The company will also release an enhanced version of its OverDrive Media Console this summer to improve the manageability of downloads. Version 3.0 will be for Windows, and there will be a new Mac version for MP3 audiobooks. Version 3.0 for Windows will handle MP3 and WMA audiobooks as well as OverDrive Music and OverDrive Download Video. Files can be transferred to iPods from either the Mac or Windows version of the software. *LJ* recently reported that copyright warnings and instructions will appear in the OverDrive Media Console and the company will require similar messages on library download pages.

OverDrive partner libraries now have two options for audiobook circulation. If they purchase titles under the one-copy-one-user plan, titles that are checked out are unavailable to the rest of the user group until checked in. Purchased titles stay in the collection in perpetuity. Alternatively, **BLACKSTONE AUDIOBOOKS** has begun a service to OverDrive libraries called Maximum Access with a group of lease titles that would be available to an unlimited number of simultaneous users, with no holds or wait lists throughout the subscription term; the titles then must be renewed or dropped.

At **TANTOR**, Laura Colebank announced a new product line called AudioEbook Classics. Each one includes a free PDF ebook that is compatible with e-readers. Tantor will add five classics per month to this series and will be reissuing Tantor's entire line of classics (over 100 titles) in the AudioEbook format.

AMAZON has purchased **AUDIBLE.COM**, instantly giving Amazon serious market share in downloadable audiobooks. *LJ*'s Norman Oder (*LJ* 3/1/08) speculates that Amazon's Kindle device will gain a ready catalog for wireless downloading. Cory Doctorow mentions in a Boing Boing blog post (www.boingboing.net) that Audible remains in the DRM camp for now, being the exclusive supplier of audiobooks to the iTunes store, which at this point is still a DRM environment. Both iTunes and Audible have studied the potential for abandoning DRM.

RANDOM HOUSE is working closely with **OVERDRIVE** and **NETLIBRARY** to provide prepub information for upcoming **BOOKS ON TAPE** and **LISTENING LIBRARY** titles. New digital download titles for July, August, and September were listed by May 1, a significant improvement. Responding to popular demand, Random is expanding coverage of African American fiction and Christian Interest titles in CD SOPs.

The **APA** has announced the finalists for the prestigious Audiobook of the Year Award, aka the Audies. This year for the first time librarians can go to the APA web site (audiopub.org), download a list of the finalists provided by *AudioFile*, and enter the Audies Librarians' Pool by telling APA who they think should win in each of 30 categories. Audie winners will be announced on May 30, and participating librarians could win an iPod.

Indeed, libraries have claimed a pioneering role in terms of exploring alternative formats if only because patron demand (or anticipated demand) warrants it. In 2006, the APA conducted a consumer survey that showed one in every four respondents had listened to an audiobook in the previous year. And over 50 percent of audiobooks listened to were borrowed from a library, up from 38 percent in 2001. Among the consumer respondents, 34.8 percent said they had an iPod or MP3 player—and that was two years ago! Listening averaged nearly five hours a week. APA hopes to do consumer surveys every two years.

Delivery on demand

"Librarians tell us that audiobooks are still growing every year in terms of circulation and that growth is outpacing most other areas. Our downloadable audio stats continue to increase every month. Perhaps in a down economy people are turning more toward this sort of entertainment and information," speculates Recorded Books publisher Brian Downing. Although Recorded Books is being sold by its parent company, Hights Cross Communications, it will remain a strong player in the audio market.

At the District of Columbia (DC) Public Library, associate director for collections Michael Ciccone (who recently accepted a position in Hamilton, Ont.) also sees audio circula-

tion starting to rival that of the print collection. The library works with every audio format, including Playaways, and has offered all available downloadable formats since last September—a service that has already doubled in circulation and continues to grow rapidly. Ciccone favors audiobooks over other downloadables such as movies because publishers cover much of what is popular in print.

Ciccone also sees Playaways as more of a bridge between CD and downloadables, adding that downloadables are much easier to work with than tangible items. He anticipates that the digital divide will shrink over time to make downloadables the top choice for patrons and librarians. Ciccone looks forward to solving iPod compatibility issues in the near future (as does everyone else!)—and this year's digital rights management (DRM)-related announcements bring us closer to that much anticipated development (see sidebar "What's on That Disc?").

CDs still spinning

Los Angeles Public Library's Giovanna Mannino, assistant director of information technologies and collections, still sees heavy CD circulation. "The demand for audio CDs continues to increase at a rapid rate and has not been diminished in the least by the advent of digital audios." Nevertheless, she reports, "The downloadable service has been very successful. [It] has



Is a CD just a CD? Laura Colebank of Tantor Unabridged Audio Books says her firm offers "librarians the flexibility to choose their own formats, whether library edition CD, trade CD, or MP3-CD." To produce and market this material, Tantor employs 40 narrators and six library sales reps.

But what does it all mean? MP3-CDs hold up to 12 hours of material, while regular audio CDs only hold up to 80 minutes of programming. Entire books can be placed on one or two disks rather than ten or 12—fewer units for the library to handle and for

patrons to lose. BBC Audiobooks America has nearly 400 titles available on MP3-CD, available à la carte, through SOPs, or in special Starter Kits featuring popular titles at a discount.

THE QUALITY QUESTION

Digital audio recordings start in some uncompressed native format such as a raw .wav file for Windows. Later they can be made into CD audio files, which have a standard of quality that is good but might be a little less perfect than the original. More programming time will fit on a disc if the recording is saved in the MP3 (MPEG Audio Layer 3) format, a compression method that drastically reduces file size and returns a version of the audio program that is a highly acceptable substitute for the original. File sizes can be ten percent of the original or less.

Although MP3 uses a compression algorithm with inherent loss in quality, MP3 files still sound good and are easy to transfer and use on just about any digital device. That includes all but the oldest MP3 players, Macintosh computers, the entire iPod and iPhone family, Microsoft Zune Digital Media Players, cell phones, pocket PCs, Palms, BlackBerrys®, and GPS devices.

Another form of compressed programming is Windows Media Audio (WMA). WMA compression typically reduces file size even more than the typical MP3, although some variables can affect that ratio. Until recently, almost all audiobooks available through the mainstream library downloading services and direct consumer downloading sites were compressed in the WMA format and subject to strict use limitations enforced by DRM (digital rights management) security encoding.

SAYING GOODBYE TO DRM

DRM controls copying, printing, and sharing of digital files. Every author and publisher combination has a different set of conditions for use that can be enforced by DRM. The publisher sets the permissions, and the distributor, such as iTunes or OverDrive, encodes them into the security protocol for each title.

But 2008 appears to be the year in which downloadable audio



AUDIO TO GO OverDrive's DIGITALBookmobile hits the road this summer

expanded our existing audiobook user group—24/7 access to digital audios enables us to extend our services to the homebound, long distance commuters, and others who find it difficult to use the library during open hours." Patron flexibility is a key component of the digital allure.

Mannino points to a number of additional advantages of downloadable audio: "There is no shipping required. They are instantly available for checkout once the online order is placed. There is no physical processing, no shelving, and no handling, which saves both shelf space and the cost of storage cases. They encourage self-checkout by design. They are never lost and never late. They have no parts to get dam-

vendors will abandon DRM security encoding and make a move from WMA files to MP3. Audiobooks distributed in the WMA format have been playable on some MP3 devices but not nearly all. While WMA files can be downloaded and copied more quickly, the MP3 advantage of nearly universal compatibility with digital devices is simply enormous for retail sales and possibly library circulation.

The move to MP3 can be traced back to eMusic, the closest (but still distant) competitor to Apple's iTunes service. Company promotions in 2007 called eMusic "the world's first audiobook service offered exclusively in the MP3 format." iTunes provides music in a proprietary format that can be converted to MP3 but is subject to limitations imposed by DRM security encoding. eMusic sold more than 100,000 audiobooks to end users in the first four months of its MP3 service, according to CEO David Pakman (*Publishers Weekly* 3/3/08).

EXPERIMENTATION CONTINUES

The eMusic MP3 audiobook service was actually a marketing test by Random House and others that were still committed to WMA/DRM at the time. In February 2008, Random's Madeline McIntosh announced that the publisher would be the first to drop the requirement that its retail partners use DRM when selling audiobooks by digital download and that it would move toward non-DRM MP3 distribution unless an author, publisher, or retailer considered DRM necessary. Penguin Audio tested with eMusic, then backed off, and is now back on board and ready to distribute on MP3. For now, the Random House decision appears to be a plan to sell MP3 downloadables only in retail stores like Barnes & Noble, Wal-Mart, and Borders.

Audiobook publishers have been watching major music labels for some time as they have moved away from DRM encryption in the digital music they sell on Amazon, notes Penguin Audio publisher Dick Heffernan in the *New York Times* (3/1/08). Publisher Chris Lynch of Simon & Schuster Audio is following suit with an initial list of audiobook titles without DRM.

aged or go missing. Also, they are not bound by a physical location," she says.

With downloadables from Recorded Books/NetLibrary (NetLibrary will market Recorded Books' audiobooks through August 2008 and will service library subscriber contracts through August 2009) and OverDrive already available in some larger Georgia libraries, a diverse group mostly from the statewide PINES system is contracting with OverDrive to provide a Georgia Download Destination, starting in early summer and building to about 1000 titles in the first year.

At this point, publishers don't expect downloadables to overtake the CD format for a number of years. Cheryl Herman of Books on Tape/Random House points out that "CDs are—and will—remain the highest circulating format for years to come because the most popular point of listening is in cars, and most cars on the street now have standard CD players. Although some newer cars come with MP3 or iPod capability or adapters, CD is currently the format of choice for the majority of library patrons."

Audio in balance

Jeffrey Gegner, senior librarian and popular materials specialist at Hennepin County Library (HCL), MN, attempts to balance the selection of audiobooks on CD with the two major online services, one from Recorded Books and NetLibrary and the other from OverDrive. HCL merged with Minneapolis Public Library in January, sending the total number of facilities from 26 to 41, with well over a million patrons and circulation in the range of 16 million. His challenges are the challenges of most AV librarians today: to keep up with an ever-increasing catalog of titles available, meet the demands of the public, and find the money to cover all the services the library offers.

Other hurdles include deciding whether a nonfiction title will take off and how to meet the immediate demand for audio versions of print best sellers. There is also the question of how big the audio service should become, as it burgeons into the budgetary/space territory occupied by the print collection.

HCL buys directly from publishers, and, to help stretch the budget, Gegner frequently purchases trade editions of CD audiobooks and repackages them. With trade editions there is no replacement guarantee, but at the Public Library Association (PLA) meeting in Minneapolis in March, vendor Midwest Tape launched a repackaged trade service called Shelf-Ready Audiobooks. Gegner is also looking forward to using OverDrive's download standing order plan (DSOP) and seeing more new material among the music and video titles available.

Despite the inherent difficulties in juggling formats, the downloadable era is in full swing, as is the marketing by both vendors and libraries. To promote digital services in its partner libraries, OverDrive will be crossing the country in its DIGITALBookmobile, a self-contained community outreach vehicle. Introduced at PLA, the 69' 18-wheeler is outfitted with a number of computer stations with high-definition monitors and a satellite broadband connection. The rolling lab will provide locally customized interactive orientations to digital content and services in the libraries it visits. Watch for the DIGITALBookmobile to come to your area, and keep an eye on library audio, road ready in any form. ■

'To injure no man,
but to bless all mankind'

BOSTON · THURSDAY
SEPTEMBER 4, 2008

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

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downloaded
DIGITAL BOOKMOBILES
GO INTO OVERDRIVE, 13
any good books lately?

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

Thursday, September 4, 2008

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INNOVATION

The next phase of libraries rolls into town

By SARAH MORE MCCANN
CORRESPONDENT

In a time when practically any question can be answered through a Google search, brick-and-mortar libraries are evolving to remain relevant.

Rather than cede ground to search engines, e-book readers, and download services, more than 7,500 US libraries are adopting their competitor's tricks and offering digital means to access books, music, and movies — free of charge.

The embodiment of this effort parked outside Boston's City Hall last week.

Inside the 75-foot-long, 18-wheel bookmobile are computer workstations, portable download devices, even a souped-up lounge replete with a "pleather" couch and a flat-screen TV — all designed to teach Bostonians how to use the newest in librarian tech: the digital lending library.

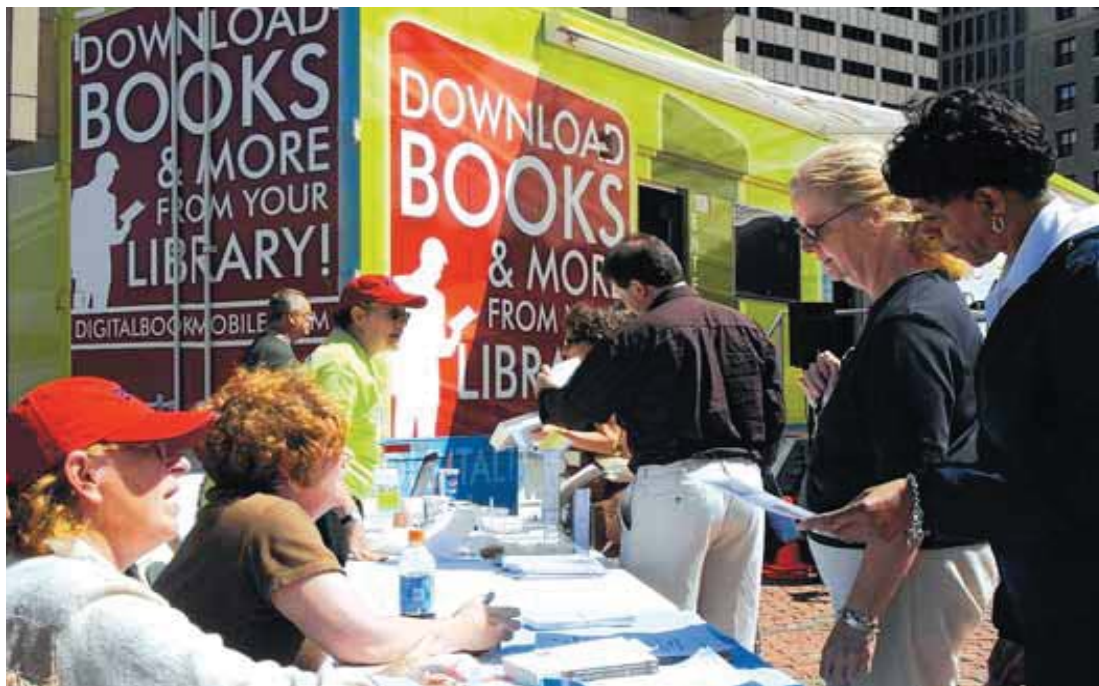
The bookmobile reveals the best-kept secret librarians don't want to keep, say Boston Public Library staff and employees of OverDrive Inc., a Cleveland-based supplier of electronic and audio books, video, and music. Many of the nation's libraries use OverDrive for 24-hour access to digital collections that patrons can "check out" on their own laptop, BlackBerry, MP3 player, or other hand-held devices.

This newfound digital omnipresence means Web-enabled devices can complement — rather than supplant — local libraries, says Jim Rettig, president of the American Library Association.

"We build intellectual capacity with little loans that, together, make a big difference," he says.

Some 53 percent of Americans visited a library last year, according to a study by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, and [See LIBRARIES page 14](#)

FREE DIGITAL SERVICE LETS PEOPLE
DOWNLOAD BOOKS, MUSIC, AND MOVIES.



JOANNE CICCARELLO/STAFF

BOOKMOBILE: OverDrive's 18-wheeler rolled into Boston last week on its cross-country tour to publicize a partnership with more than 7,500 libraries that lets people download books, music, and movies to their home computers or hand-held devices free of charge.

New push to let public pick the president

By GREGORY M. LAMB
STAFF WRITER

To John Koza's way of thinking, the United States won't be holding a true national election for president this November. And that's made him eager to make a change: Revise the system to send the candidate with the most votes to the White House.

The problem is the Electoral College, which decides the election's winner. Since electoral votes are tallied state by state, it turns out that the results from only about a quarter of the 50 states really matter. These so-called "battleground states" still have a chance to tilt toward one candidate or the other. As a result, John McCain

three-quarters of the states [have been] ignored," Mr. Koza says.

Making those neglected voters relevant is one of the chief reasons Koza founded the National Popular Vote initiative (nationalpopularvote.com) in 2006. But it's not the only reason. Four times in US history — 1824, 1876, 1888, and 2000 — the

ideas

The National Popular Vote campaign encourages states to enact legislation that would give their electoral votes to the presidential candidate who receives the most votes nationwide, thus ensuring that the candidate with the most popular votes always wins the election.

Efforts to change or abolish the Electoral College are hardly new. Some

Congress nearly sent such legislation to President Nixon, who was ready to sign it; the amendment easily passed the House, but a filibuster by a handful of lawmakers in the Senate killed it.

Today, national and state polls consistently show about 70 percent of Americans favor direct election of the president.

The National Popular Vote drive differs in its tactics, though not its aims, from these previous efforts. Rather than a top-down strategy aimed at Congress, it seeks to enact change at the grass roots — state legislatures.

So far, four states — Hawaii, Illinois, New Jersey, and Maryland — with 50 combined electoral votes have enacted bills

horizons

What's new in sci-tech

Sweet secret to stopping mold

When it comes to keeping your favorite loaf of bread from turning green, scientists in Spain appear to have found the best thing since, well, sliced bread – a wax-paper wrapper infused with cinnamon oil.

It falls under the heading of “active packaging,” an approach to stalling spoilage that tries to avoid preservatives in the bread itself or the use of ultraviolet light to try to kill off the fungus that form mold. The team from the University of Zaragoza had previously experimented with clove and oregano oils – and it worked with one form of wax paper. This time around, the team focused on cinnamon oil and with a different form of the waxed wrapper.

The main component of the oil, cinnamaldehyde, has proven effective as a fungicide and insecticide, and can help fight corrosion in steel. The Spanish team also has shown it to be effective against several types of bread-busting fungus. So they fortified the oil with additional cinnamaldehyde, incorporated it into the waxed paper, and used the paper to cover petri dishes containing the fungus.

The paper inhibited fungus growth through the vapor the paper gave off. Among other things, this experiment showed that cinnamaldehyde could retain its properties after passing through the heat of wax-paper manufacture. When the team used the paper with sliced bread, they found that after three days at 77 degrees F, bread in the treated packaging had between 10 and 20 percent of the fungus colonies that bread in untreated wrapping showed. And the treated packaging didn't need to touch the bread in order for the cinnamaldehyde to be effective. The results appear in the current issue of the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*.

'Spore' ready to bloom

“Spore,” the long-awaited (and long-delayed) follow-up from video game guru Will Wright launches Friday in Europe and Sunday in North America. Mr. Wright, who made pop culture history when he created the massively popular PC world known as “The Sims,”

calls his new creation “the ultimate God game,” allowing players to guide a home-brewed species from primordial ooze up to galactic conquest.

Fans of the Wright way of looking at video games as a toolbox have watched in frustration for years as the master has tinkered and tweaked the game. During an early demonstration of the game, Wright

explained that he wanted to give players an experience that was both fun and meaningful, allowing users to goof around with their creatures at the same time as they explored the metaphysical implications of running an entire galaxy.

Electronic Arts (EA) released “Spore Creature Creator” in June, a download that allows fans to build their own fantastical critters and

share them through online social networks and fan minisites. But, the company declined to release a prelaunch demo that would allow fans to get a taste for the full game, presumably hoping that the pent-up demand would create more hype around this weekend's retail sales. EA may have miscalculated by not pushing for a version that plays on all platforms. While cellphone and handheld versions are in the works, for now, the full game is only available on PC, which means that all those console players will have to brush up on their keyboard skills.

– Peter N. Spotts
and Gloria Goodale



ELECTRONIC ARTS/AP

WRIGHT'S MENAGERIE: Three examples of what players can create in “Spore.” The video game, debuting this weekend, follows your creation from single-celled organism to rulers of the universe – or game over.

Libraries: Free downloadable books and movies

Continued from page 13

patrons checked out 2.1 billion items in 2005, reports the National Center for Education Statistics.

Librarians expect circulation numbers to rise as economic concerns make borrowing books more appealing. Yet the bookmobile's conductors say even many who



PHOTOS BY JOANNE CICCARELLO/STAFF

BOSTON BIBLIOPHILES: People line up outside the Digital Bookmobile. Once inside, Rose Evans, right, reads an e-book.

frequent libraries don't know about their digital lending options.

“We're touching only a small percentage of people we could be touching ... and want to make sure that people who don't know about it get excited about it,” says Daniel Stasiewski, an OverDrive marketing associate.

Americans are increasingly prepared to tap into digital lending: Pew reports 73 percent of US adults have used the Internet, up from 46 percent in 2000, and that 55 percent have high-speed Internet access at home.

“I learned a lot today,” says Angel Chen, as her son watched Kay Thompson's “Eloise” in the bookmobile lounge. A Boston resident who visits the city's public

library twice a month with her two young children, Ms. Chen says she'll start downloading library books and movies at home. “Now I know how to do some of this,” she says.

The process is simple: Patrons enter a participating library's digital lending site through its home page and use the bar code on their library card to check out audiobooks, e-books, videos, and music.

Once selected, an item will be placed in a patron's cart – much as with online shopping websites. Most books in the digital collections only have a limited number of copies that may be checked out at a time – just as at regular libraries. But, if a book or other material is unavailable, patrons can sign up on a wait list.

Special software can be downloaded onto home computers and then used to transfer the borrowed files to an MP3 player or other device.

There are no late fees – items check back in (i.e. delete themselves) within one to three weeks.

OverDrive founder Steve Potash says he thought the main demographic would be “business geeks and road warriors” from Gen-Y – those 18-30 years old, used to surfing the Web, and who, according to Pew, report going to the library more often than any other age group.

But women in their 40s have been the top users, and the No. 1 genre of downloaded media is harlequin romance, Mr. Potash says. Pop-fiction, mystery, science fiction, self-help, and books that teach a foreign language round out the most-borrowed list.

Collections specialists in each participating library compile library-specific catalogs from OverDrive's 150,000 titles. The process requires a balancing of resources, says Laura Straub, collection development manager for the Boston Public Library. An audiobook from OverDrive is typically more expensive for the library than a print book, Ms. Straub says, because,

like a retail audiobook, recording costs are factored into the price. An e-book, however, can be less expensive to purchase than a print book.

Another financial benefit is that digital items are never lost or damaged.

“When we first looked at the idea of downloadable digital we thought, ‘It's not cheap.’ But from a circulation standpoint it's 24-hour access and full content – a no-brainer for us,” says Kim Edson, head of readers' services for the Rochester (Minn.) Public Library. “But we were also concerned. Should we spend a lot of money on something only a select few can use?”

In 2006, a year after partnering with OverDrive, the Rochester library installed a download station where patrons could plug in their hand-held devices on site.

Through OverDrive's Gear2Go program, which sells inexpensive

MP3 devices to libraries at cost, Ms. Edson purchased 10 players at \$30 apiece. Patrons supply their own headphones, or can purchase them for \$2 at the library.

“Homeless people use it,” Edson says. “The women in the shelter were thrilled. This is exactly the audience we wanted.”



Cape CLAMS-Affiliated Libraries Give Away MP3 Players

Use the CLAMS Digital Download Service for a Chance to Win!

This March, the [CLAMS network](#) is giving away two MP3 players. Since April 2008, most [CLAMS member libraries](#) have subscribed to the [OverDrive Digital Media Collection](#), which allows patrons to download audio books, music and more. With over 1,000 titles available, there's something for everyone. From best-sellers like the *Twilight* saga by Stephenie Meyer and Malcolm Gladwell's *Outliers* to children's books like *Fancy Nancy* and music from superstars like Sarah McLachlan, the CLAMS OverDrive service offers premium content at no cost to library patrons.

So check it out! Registered user barcodes will be automatically entered for a chance to win with every title downloaded. Prize is not transferable or assignable. Entrants must be a member of an OverDrive [participating CLAMS library](#), with a library card in good standing (no more than \$25 in fines, no other blocks).

Staff at participating CLAMS libraries are not eligible to win.

The drawing will be held on Friday, April 3, 2009.

The winner will be notified by phone and/or via mail. Winner must claim prize within two weeks of raffle drawing date or a new winner will be selected at random from eligible entries.

A driver's license or acceptable form of identification must be presented before claiming this prize.

The MP3 Players are provided by OverDrive, CLAMS digital download service provider.

For more information and a complete list of rules, visit the [CLAMS site](#).

Release courtesy of the [Yarmouth Public Libraries](#).



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