Final Report of the 2018 ALA-ASGCLA National Ebook Summit

January 22, 2019

From the Summit Conveners

Thank you to everyone who participated in the first ebook summit at the 2018 Annual Conference of the American Library Association in New Orleans. Your contributions were critical to this effort and we are forever in your debt. The national agenda that is set forth in this report sets the stage for cross-industry collaboration to solve challenges and to co-create positive changes to better serve readers.

Thank you as well to the readers of this report and to all those who will join us in the coming months and years to bring this agenda to life. ***This is our dare to be great moment!*** As you will see in this report, there is much work to be done by all partners and the summit was only the beginning. Please let us know how we can engage you in this important work.

We appreciate the support from ALA, ASGCLA, the Summit Advisory Committee and all participants who helped to make this summit a success. Many thanks to ALA Immediate Past President James "Jim" Neal for championing this initiative and to all those who personally and professionally supported and guided us in this effort!

Yours in library love,

Paula MacKinnon, Califa Group
Veronda J. Pitchford, Califa Group (formerly of RAILS)
Stephen Spohn, Massachusetts Library System

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Executive Summary

A National Ebook Summit was convened at the 2018 American Library Association Annual Conference to discuss challenges and opportunities in the library ebook marketplace. The summit represents the work of thought leaders throughout the industry from libraries, library consortia, publishers, distributors and other experts. It was sponsored by the American Library Association and its Association for Specialized, Government and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASGCLA) division and emerged from conversations among members of ASGCLA's Consortial Ebooks Interest Group.

Summit Goals

- To create a national agenda for ebooks,
- To create synergy among people, organizations and initiatives in the ebook marketplace,
- To build consensus on ebook strategy and principles and
- To establish a working platform for constructive and meaningful dialogue, strategy development and progress.

The National Agenda for Ebooks

The summit itself was a working day organized around five themes established by an advisory committee that helped to shape the day and the national agenda that follows.

Licensing Models

Having more flexibility to choose from among different models in order to meet different usage and circulation patterns.

1. Work with industry partners to push for the adoption of the current ONIX 3.0 standard to accommodate multiple licensing models per item and to provide input in ongoing development of the standard.

2. Nurture results-oriented dialogue among publishers and librarians to optimize available licensing models to best meet library and industry needs and budgets.

Impacts and Benchmarks

Accurately portraying the current impact of ebooks. Setting future standards and benchmarks for sales and usage statistics. Creating a research agenda and specifying needed studies to inform future action.

3. Convene library and industry leaders to develop and publish a study of ebook usage that connects with existing research efforts.

4. Educate libraries, publishers, distributors and authors about the impact of ebooks distributed via libraries.

5. Develop core training on data and data analysis for library workers.

Accessibility

Ensuring that ebooks and ebook platforms meet accessibility guidelines for people who are blind or visually impaired or for people with intellectual disabilities.

6. Promote awareness of and compliance with EPUB Accessibility standards.

7. Perform accessibility testing on major consumer and library eBook platforms and apps.

8. Develop model licensing language that creates appropriate focus on accessibility that improves adoption of the Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT).

9. Develop training for librarians on accessibility, accessible features of computers and mobile devices, accessible content and accessibility features of ebook platforms and apps.

Curation

Giving libraries greater ability to curate materials and help patrons discover them (through easier acquisition, flexible displays, improved "browsing" and "filtering" functions).

10. Support the development of standards that drive the interoperability of ebook systems for easier library curation and end-user discovery. Evaluate existing standards and identify gaps where new standards should be created.

11. Develop talking points on the importance of standards that can be used for marketplace advocacy, negotiation, development and fundraising.

12. Research the ebook supply chain and where libraries can most effectively exercise curation. Make recommendations that are applicable across library types and scalable to all sizes of libraries.

13. Support the development of standards that will drive the interoperability of ebook systems to improve end-user discovery and use.

14. Evaluate gaps in metadata that hinder curation and discovery and make recommendations for improvement.

15. Support the development and expansion of SimplyE.

16. Advocate for increased interoperability by proprietary eBook platforms with SimplyE.

Content "Deserts"

Obtaining desired but unavailable or difficult to find content (e.g. backlist, non-English language, out of print).

17. Study user demand for ebooks in the content desert.

18. Develop a coordinated approach to expand access to this content along with guideposts for similar initiatives to keep the momentum.

19. Ensure that content made available is discoverable via SimplyE to maximize access.

20. Add OpenLibrary content to SimplyE.

The full report outlines the following for each of the themes in greater detail:

- Problems, challenges and opportunities
- Priorities
- Organizational partners
- Opportunities to get involved

A Call to Action for ALA

The summit conveners respectfully call upon ASGCLA and ALA to support the National Agenda for Ebooks that emerged from this summit. The summit conveners will meet with the ASGCLA Board at the 2019 ALA Midwinter Conference to discuss next steps.

For More Information

To learn more about the summit or to get involved in efforts related to this national agenda, contact the conveners of summit:

Paula MacKinnon, Califa Group
pmackinnon@califa.org

Veronda J. Pitchford, Califa Group
veronda@califa.org

Stephen Spohn, Massachusetts Library System
steve@masslibsystem.org

Background

This summit was born from ongoing dialogue among the summit conveners and many colleagues who are passionate about ebooks and who hope to design a better path forward. We believe that the system today is not doing its best to connect ebooks to readers and that we can do better. We also believe in a constructive approach that is focused on dialogue. To that end, we were committed to engaging with many thought leaders and industry partners in the development of the summit. We needed a national conversation among all stakeholders in the ebook ecosystem - librarians, publishers, distributors and other partners.

To be clear, this summit was focused on ebooks and eaudiobooks, collectively referred to as ebooks in this report, as they are distributed via libraries. Also, the summit and the national agenda that follows were a bit more focused on issues facing public libraries. We hope that as this agenda continues to evolve in the future that its scope expands to fully address the ebook challenges and opportunities facing all types of libraries and their readers.

Our Vision

There are numerous national initiatives and conversations that must coalesce to effect positive change on the ebook reading ecosystem. This summit aims:

- To create synergy among people, organizations and initiatives in the ebook marketplace,
- To build consensus on ebook strategy and principles and
- To establish a working platform for constructive and meaningful dialogue, strategy development and action.

Preparing for the Summit

Our biggest challenge was to invite a small, representative group of thought leaders in the ebook space to tackle those themes and to ensure that the work of the summit continued beyond the day. There were so many great people that we could not invite to attend this summit, but we knew that the summit was only the beginning and that everyone would find their place in the work that is to come.

To prepare, we formed an Advisory Committee to set goals and to shape the event. We worked with the Advisory Committee to refine our vision and to consider themes that would form the basis of our work together. We also surveyed the Advisory Committee and invited participants to refine the themes and to hone the agenda.

Limited Scope

Another challenge was to limit the scope of conversations to a manageable set of themes. It should be understood that those themes are not intended to be exhaustive and that the summit itself is only a beginning. As our work continues, we expect that scope to evolve to reflect the priorities of the libraries, consortia and industry partners and maintain the momentum of the national agenda.

People and Organizations

Summit Advisory Committee

The following individuals advised on summit goals, activities and prospective attendees.

Cindy Aden
Washington State Library

Michael Bills
Baker & Taylor

Carson Block
Carson Block Consulting,
ASGCLA Liaison

Mallori Bontrager
Independent Publishers Group

Dana Bostrom
Orbis Cascade Alliance

John S. Bracken
Digital Public Library of America

Deirdre Brennan
Reaching Across Illinois Library
System

Todd Carpenter
National Information Standards
Organization

Becky Clark
Library of Congress

Mitchell Davis
BiblioLabs

Skip Dye
Penguin Random House

James English
LYRASIS

Sari Feldman
ALA Office for Information
Technology Policy

Keith Fiels
American Library Association
(retired)

Susan Hildreth
University of Washington
Information School

Laura Irmscher
Boston Public Library

Paula Mackinnon
Califa Group

Andrew Medlar
BookOps

Mary Minow
Harvard University

Brian O'Leary
Book Industry Study Group

Veronda J. Pitchford
Califa Group

Steve Potash
Overdrive

Michael P. Santangelo
BookOps

Stephen H. Spohn, Jr.
Massachusetts Library System

Lisa Wadors
Benetech

Scott Wasinger
EBSCO

Attendees

Summit participants developed the initial action plans in this report and helped to shape next steps for this important work.

Cindy Aden
Washington State Library

Greg Aden
NetRead

Tina Baich
IUPUI University Library

Michael Bills
Baker & Taylor

Michael Blackwell
St Mary's County Library

Mallori Bontrager
Independent Publishers Group

Dana Bostrom
Orbis Cascade Alliance

John S. Bracken
Digital Public Library of America

Deirdre Brennan
Reaching Across Illinois Library System

Rachel Bussey
BiblioLabs

Todd Carpenter
National Information Standards Organization

Angela Carreno
New York University

Galadriel Chilton
Ivy Plus Libraries

Becky Brasington Clark
Library of Congress

Wendy Cornelisen
Georgia Public Library Service

Mitchell Davis
BiblioLabs

Heidi Dolamore
Califa Group

Lori Donovan
Chesterfield County Public Schools

Skip Dye
Penguin Random House

Colleen B. Eggett
Utah State Library

Sari Feldman
Cuyahoga County Library

Keith Michael Fiels
American Library Association

Chris Freeland
Internet Archive

Rachel L Frick
OCLC

Teri Gallaway
LOUIS

Sara Gold
WiLS

Linette Greske
bibliotheca

Christine Lind Hage
Rochester Hills Public Library

Sarah Houghton
San Rafael Public Library

Marilyn Howard
Arizona State Library

Laura Irmscher
Boston Public Library

Sara Jones
Marin County Free Library

Michele Kimpton
Digital Public Library of America

Hong Ma
Loyola University Chicago

Paula MacKinnon
Califa Group

Carol Mandel
New York University Libraries

Micah May
Digital Public Library of America

Anne E. McKee
Greater Western Library Alliance

Andrew Medlar
BookOps

Attendees (cont.)

Robert Miller
LYRASIS

J. Elizabeth Mills
University of Washington
Information School

Mary Minow
Harvard University

Jill Morris
PALCi

Janet B. Morrow
Northeastern University Libraries

Jim Neal
American Library Association

Sharon Nemechek
Douglas County Libraries

Lisa Novohatski
Gale | Cengage Learning

Brian O'Leary
Book Industry Study Group

Kellie O'Rourke
Cambridge Press Group

Christine Peterson
Amigos Library Services

Veronda J. Pitchford
Califa Group

Jane Plass
Reaching Across Illinois Library
System

Steve Potash
OverDrive

Greg Pronevitz
Massachusetts Library System

Michael Santangelo
BookOps

Tressa Santillo
Massachusetts Library System

Rebecca Seger
Oxford University Press

Mary Soucie
North Dakota State Library

Stephen Spohn
Massachusetts Library System

Paul Swanson
Minitex

Lisa Wadors Verne
Benetech

Consultants

Luma Consulting
John Smith
William Vesneski

Luma Consulting assisted with summit planning, provided facilitation at the summit and recorded notes that were used to inform this report.

Conveners

Paula MacKinnon

Paula MacKinnon is Executive Director of Califa Group, the largest library network in California. Califa brokers the procurement of library products for California libraries, administers statewide and federal grant projects including a statewide ebook platform, and offers Continuing Education training through the Infopeople project. She is a library professional with 20+ years' experience developing and managing innovative web services for public and special libraries. Her recent projects include award-winning library services enki Library, a California ebook platform that makes ebook ownership a reality for libraries; Discover & Go, a downloadable museum pass platform for California libraries; and LiveChat, an eGovernment Customer Relationship Management service provided by libraries. Paula holds a master's degree in library science from Dalhousie University.

Veronda J. Pitchford

At the time of the summit, Veronda J. Pitchford was the Director of Membership and Resource Sharing for the Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS), a resource sharing state agency serving multi-type libraries in northern and western Illinois, where she managed eRead Illinois on the Baker & Taylor Axis 360 platform and the multi-use, statewide and geolocated Biblioboard ebook platform with content and curation partners such as the Independent Publishers Group, the Chicago Children's Museum and Publisher's Weekly. In November 2018 she became the Assistant Director at the Califa Group. Veronda works nationally with library consortia, vendors and publishers to position libraries as the purveyors of econtent in the communities they serve. She was named a Library Journal Mover and Shaker in 2005 and received the 2018 Cathleen Bourdon Service Award administered by the Association of Specialized, Government and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASGCLA). She has a master's degree in library and information science from North Carolina Central University, a historically black college in Durham, North Carolina.

Stephen Spohn

Steve is the Resource Sharing Director at Massachusetts Library System, a statewide library consortium serving nearly 1,600 libraries of all types. Following a successful pilot, Steve helped launch Commonwealth eBook Collections, a statewide eBook program in 2014. Since then, the program has evolved into a statewide collaboration among multiple entities focused on expanding access to ebooks and marketplace advocacy for library-friendly policies, pricing and technology. Beyond ebooks, Steve leads assessment and advocacy efforts at Massachusetts Library System and works statewide to nurture and support resource sharing. In his spare time, he enjoys conspiring with his colleagues - Veronda Pitchford and Paula MacKinnon - on national ebook priorities and the quest for the perfect nacho at ALA conferences. Prior to joining Massachusetts Library System, Steve was a library consultant and an academic library director. He received his M.L.S. from the University of Maryland.

The Summit

The Summit took place on Friday, June 22, 2018, at the American Library Association Annual Conference in New Orleans. There were 63 total participants including the conveners and consultants.

The Agenda

The day began with opening remarks from then ALA President James Neal. This was followed by a panel discussion with thought leaders from different parts of the industry to help set the stage for the work to come. The remainder of the day was devoted to work group sessions.

8:00 **Welcome**
James Neal, ALA President

8:15 **Overview**
Paula MacKinnon, Califa Group
John Smith, Luma Consulting
William Vesneski, Luma Consulting

8:45 **Panel Discussion**
Cindy Aden, Washington State Library
Dana Bostrom, Orbis Cascade Alliance
Skip Dye, Penguin Random House
Brian O'Leary, Book Industry Study Group
Veronda Pitchford, Reaching Across Illinois Library System-Moderator
Michael Santangelo, BookOps Library Service Center

9:45 **Work Groups I**

12:15 **Work Groups II**

1:30 **Work Group Reports**
Deirdre Brennan, Licensing Models
Todd Carpenter, Impact Data, Benchmarks & Research
Andrew Medlar, eBook Content Deserts
Michael Santangelo, Curation & Discovery
Lisa Wadors Verne, Accessibility

2:30 **Closing**
Paula MacKinnon, Califa Group
Jeanette Smithee, ASGCLA President

3:00 **Adjourn**

Work Groups and the Summit Themes

There were work groups for each of the five themes of the summit. Each work group had two facilitators who helped to guide discussions and take notes for the group. Participants were assigned groups for the morning session based on their ranked preferences submitted prior to the summit. In the afternoon, participants joined groups based on their secondary interests. The following themes were the basis of their work:

- **Licensing Models**
  Having more flexibility to choose from among different models in order to meet different usage and circulation patterns.

- **Impacts and Benchmarks**
  Accurately portraying the current impact of ebooks. Setting future standards and benchmarks for sales and usage statistics. Creating a research agenda and specifying needed studies to inform future action.

- **Accessibility**
  Ensuring that ebooks and ebook platforms meet accessibility guidelines for people who are blind or visually impaired or for people with intellectual disabilities.

- **Curation**
  Giving libraries greater ability to curate materials and help patrons discover them (through easier acquisition, flexible displays, improved "browsing" and "filtering" functions).

- **Content "Deserts"**
  Obtaining desired but unavailable or difficult to find content (e.g. backlist, non-English language, out of print).

Numerous Ebook Initiatives and Organizations

One of our important goals was to be a bridge among important ebook initiatives for interested people. In addition to the work groups, we also attempted to contact as many initiatives and organizations as we could find to share information about their efforts with participants. We placed information into the summit packet and encouraged lunchtime dialogue among on the following initiatives and organizations:

- ASCLA Consortial Ebook Interest Group
- Book Industry Study Group
- Charlotte Initiative
- COSLA Ebook Working Committee
- DPLA Ebook Exchange
- Library for All
- NISO Ebook Projects
- Occam's Reader
- Open Libraries
- Panorama Project
- SimplyE

Note that this is not an exhaustive list of related initiatives and organizations. This is simply a list of organizations who supplied information.

There were many intersections with the work of the summit and the national agenda. A substantial focus after the summit was to engage with the people behind these initiatives to refine the National Agenda for Ebooks and to recruit coalition partners. This work led to a delay in this summit report but was critical to our efforts.

A National Agenda for Ebooks

What follows is a synthesis of the ideas and aspirations from summit attendees along with follow-up conversations with key partners that will help to put this national agenda in motion.

At the summit, participants defined the problems they wished to address as well as tentative action plans to set priorities. Following the summit, the conveners meet with key partner organizations to discuss the action plans developed by participants and how they fit into existing or planned initiatives. This national agenda attempts to honor the participants, to bring light to critical existing initiatives and to focus our collective attention to maximize our progress.

The agenda remains organized around the themes of the summit and calls out the key organizational partners who will provide leadership. In addition, the agenda highlights important upcoming meetings and events along with other opportunities so that interested community members can join the efforts.

Licensing Models

Developing simpler and more flexible choices from among different models that best serve the libraries, readers and the industry.
Co-facilitated by Deirdre Brennan and Sari Feldman

Problems, Challenges and Opportunities

The first set of challenges discussed by this workgroup center on the [ONIX standard](#). The ONIX for Books standard governs the sharing of metadata from publishers on eBooks. Currently, U.S. publishers primarily use ONIX 2.1 which only accommodates a single licensing model per record. This results in multiple records for the same work available via different lending models and overcomplicates purchasing, recordkeeping and end-user discovery. The ONIX 3.0 standard allows for multiple licensing models, but its use in the United States is limited by the willingness of trading partners to adopt the standard.

Next, participants discussed the shortfalls of the current suite of licensing models. It is unlikely that there is a single ideal model for licensing ebooks. Different licensing models reflect the myriad ways that libraries make books available for long-term use and to meet short-term needs and demands. All partners in the ebook ecosystem must come together to develop a standardized menu of licensing models. Additionally, any solution to this challenge must reflect that this is an ecosystem and the "business" of ebooks needs to work as well as the library use.

Libraries have a rich history of resource sharing, that is sharing print books and physical media amongst themselves via interlibrary loan to meet demand for content that is beyond the scope of their local collections which must evolve to meet reader needs in the digital age. Participants then discussed additional areas that deserve attention, such as interlibrary loan. Digital licenses often do not have provisions for interlibrary loan or specifically prohibit interlibrary loan, placing artificial obstacles between readers and ebooks. This is both a licensing and technology challenge that must be addressed.

While the conversations in this area were mainly focused on public library distribution, conversations and solutions in this theme must reflect distribution by all types of libraries. It was noted that academic libraries

have been more proactive and have made more progress with distribution and lending of academic library content. Future work on licensing models should build upon that progress.

It should also be noted that pricing, while widely recognized as a big challenge, was not covered during the summit so that all participants throughout the industry could fully participate in the summit.

Priorities

1. Work with industry partners to push for the adoption of the current ONIX 3.0 standard to accommodate multiple licensing models per item and to provide input in ongoing development of the standard.

2. Nurture results-oriented dialogue among publishers and librarians to optimize available licensing models to best meet library and industry needs and budgets.

Organizational Partners

Book Industry Study Group (BISG) and ReadersFirst will support this area. Book Industry Study Group is responsible for the implementation and maintenance of the ONIX standard in the U.S. market. Its mission includes fostering dialogue among publishers and librarians. ReadersFirst membership represents people from libraries, publishers and distributors who are committed to better user experience for readers. Together, they are well-positioned to carry forwarded the national agenda as it relates to licensing models.

Get Involved

- Join BISG
- Join ReadersFirst
- Attend the next Readers First meeting at ALA Midwinter 2019 Seattle Conference: Friday at 12:30 in the Hyatt Junior Ballroom East
- Contact Book Industry Study Group: Brian O'Leary brian@bisg.org
- Contact ReadersFirst about this initiative: Paula MacKinnon pmackinnon@califa.org
- Contact ReadersFirst in general: Michael Blackwell mblackwell@stmalib.org

Impacts and Benchmarks

Accurately portraying the current impact of ebooks (sharing statistics and aggregating metrics across libraries, vendors, publishers with data in current form). Setting future standards and benchmarks for sales and usage statistics. Creating a research agenda and specifying needed studies to inform future action (e.g. determining who is reached by ebooks, understanding the impact of ebook marketing, gathering data to make ebooks more inclusive and representative of society).
Co-facilitated by Todd Carpenter and Rachel Frick

Problems, Challenges and Opportunities

This work group explored the need for a solid study of libraries and ebooks. How can we measure the accumulated use of a work? How can we assess the impact of library distribution on overall distribution of an individual work? How do libraries through readers advisory drive overall distribution and readership of individual works through libraries?

Currently, data on sales, distribution and library use are siloed. Libraries, in particular, have massive amounts of local data. Participants discussed how libraries can share data in a meaningful way to contribute to this work. Additionally, participants discussed potential intersections with the work of COUNTER, Project Outcome, Measures That Matter, the Panorama Project, IMLS, state libraries and other statistical programs or initiatives.

Additionally, the work group considered how national scale data might help to explore equity of access to digital content. How do socio-economic factors correlate to access and use, and how can we share and use this data while maintaining patron privacy?

Moving ahead, this work must come to agreement on metrics and practices for sharing and analyzing data. It was noted that there is an ASGCLA Research Agenda Task Force that may have some relation to the work of this group.

Finally, participants discussed a skills gap that must be addressed. Data, data analytics and ethical applications of data are not consistently or adequately addressed in LIS education today. We must establish a set of core competencies and develop/coalesce training to help librarians to effectively use data to drive decisions and understand the use and implications of access to digital content in their communities.

Priorities

3. Convene library and industry leaders to develop and publish a study of ebook use that connects with existing research efforts.

4. Educate libraries, publishers, distributors and authors about the impact of ebooks distributed via libraries.

5. Develop core training on data and data analysis for library workers.

Organizational Partners

[Book Industry Study Group](#) (BISG) will support this area. The conveners have also suggested that the [Chief Officers of State Library Agencies](#) (COSLA) partner with BISG to bring focus here. Book Industry Study Group is already working with industry partners on open access ebook usage, a project sponsored by the Mellon Foundation. A preliminary report that informed a December 2018 summit is available for review. A final report of this effort will be published in May 2019.

COSLA, in partnership with the Institute for Museum and Library Services, launched the [Measures that Matter](#) project to "examine, evaluate, and map the landscape of public library data collection in the United States." COSLA will consider points of intersection between Measures that Matter and ebooks as it moves forward with the Measures that Matter [Action Plan](#).

Get Involved

- Read the [open access ebook usage data preliminary report](#) from BISG.
- Learn more about [Measures that Matter](#) and its newly released [Action Plan](#).
- [Join BISG](#)
- Contact Book Industry Study Group: Brian O'Leary brian@bisg.org
- Contact COSLA: info@cosla.org

Accessibility

Ensuring that ebooks and ebook platforms meet accessibility guidelines for people who are blind or visually impaired or for people with intellectual disabilities.
Co-facilitated by Becky Brasington Clark and Lisa Wadors Verne

Problems, Challenges and Opportunities

This work group took an expansive view of accessibility. In addition to people who are blind or visually impaired, the group considered intellectual differences, e.g. autism, and people impacted by the digital divide due to socioeconomic and geographic factors. There are a variety of different definitions of accessibility that are shared within the industry. This leads to misunderstandings and mismatched expectations. The group felt that a shared definition of accessibility must be established and then applied to all aspects of ebook creation and distribution.

First and foremost, this group grappled with the lack of accessibility in mobile devices, ebook apps and ebook files themselves. Accessibility, it seems, is often an afterthought in the development of library ebook applications. Additionally, [EPUB 3](#) provides the greatest level of support for accessibility. However, EPUB 3 is not fully supported or implemented in all ebook platforms and very few ebooks are currently made available in EPUB 3 format. ONIX 2.1 does not adequately reflect accessibility when a library has multiple copies of an ebook from which to choose, and licensing does not often adequately convey expectations and obligations to make platforms and content fully accessible. A lack of ebook accessibility metadata in ONIX leads to a lack of metadata in library discovery systems for readers. (VitalSource is making some progress on this front.) This problem is more fully addressed in ONIX 3.0, but the standard is not widely implemented in the United States

(see Licensing Models). Also, it was noted that accessibility of ebook content in foreign languages is particularly poor in the United States.

Similar to the Impacts and Benchmarks work group, participants in this group felt that there is also a skills and training gap when it comes to accessibility. They recommend enhancements to LIS education and the development of core competencies and training to fill the gap. Public library staff in particular lack access to accessibility experts who can assist them to meet the needs of their communities or who can advise them on the procurement of accessible digital content.

Finally, participants reflected on ebook industry practices that unknowingly affect accessibility, specifically the digital divide. According to Pew and other research, mobile use is greater in lower income communities where there is a higher prevalence of older mobile devices. Many products are not fully backward compatible with older devices. One step to address these issues and increase access is to build applications that adapt seamlessly to lower-bandwidths.

Priorities

6. Promote awareness of and compliance with EPUB Accessibility standards.

7. Perform accessibility testing on major consumer and library eBook platforms and apps.

8. Develop model licensing language that creates appropriate focus on accessibility and that improves adoption of the Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT).

9. Develop training for librarians on accessibility, accessible features of computers and mobile devices, accessible content and accessibility features of ebook platforms and apps.

Organizational Partners

Accessibility efforts will be supported by the DAISY Consortium with additional support from the Book Industry Study Group. Both organizations have already been working hard on this theme, and we are delighted to help connect the broader library community to their work. In particular, the DAISY Consortium has two important related initiatives. Inclusive Publishing promotes awareness of and compliance with EPUB Accessibility standards along with related resources for publishers and authors. They also have a crowd-sourced initiative to evaluate ebook applications for accessibility.

Get Involved

- Learn about accessible digital publishing.
- Volunteer to test eBook platforms and apps.
- Volunteer to develop model licensing language on accessibility.
- Contact Inclusive Publishing.

Curation

Giving libraries greater ability to curate materials to help patrons discover them (through easier acquisition, flexible displays, improved "browsing" and "filtering" functions).
Co-facilitated by Michael Bills and Michael Santangelo

Problems, Challenges and Opportunities

Many ebook platforms are proprietary and not standards-based, making interoperability and discovery difficult especially when a library has multiple ebook providers. Library ebook platforms must be based on standards that enable libraries to streamline discovery and to fulfill their roles to lead readers to the best content to meet their needs. It was noted that standards for ebooks and ebook platforms need to be flexible, living documents, as the pace of technological change is rapid. Projects like SimplyE rely on standards such as OPDS and ONIX.

Additionally, participants noted that it is difficult to provide seamless discovery of ebooks in and out of copyright simultaneously. Public domain ebooks via open websites are often not built for effective library distribution.

Priorities

10. Support the development of standards that drive the interoperability of ebook systems for easier library curation and end-user discovery. Evaluate existing standards and identify gaps where new standards should be created.
11. Develop talking points on the importance of standards that can be used for marketplace advocacy, negotiation, development and fundraising.
12. Research the ebook supply chain and where libraries can most effectively exercise curation. Make recommendations that are applicable across library types and scalable to all sizes of libraries.
13. Support the development of standards that will drive the interoperability of ebook systems to improve end-user discovery and use.
14. Evaluate gaps in metadata that hinder curation and discovery and make recommendations for improvement.
15. Support the development and expansion of SimplyE.
16. Advocate for increased interoperability by proprietary eBook platforms with SimplyE.

Organizational Partners

NISO and the soon-to-be SimplyE governance group are poised to take supporting roles in this thematic area. FASTEN (Flexible API STandard for E-content NISO) is a NISO working group that is developing standards and tools to seamlessly integrate digital content into library discovery and delivery solutions. SimplyE is a library developed eBook discovery and delivery platform originally developed at New York Public Library with grant funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Get Involved

- Learn about the NISO FASTEN Working Group and its efforts.
- Learn about SimplyE.

Content Deserts

Obtaining desired but unavailable or difficult to find content (e.g. backlist, non-English language, out of print).
Co-facilitated by Dana Bostrom and Andrew Medlar

Problems, Challenges and Opportunities

This group considered the definition of "content deserts." (The name choice for this theme may have hindered progress at the summit.) In what parts of the content desert is user interest greatest and how can we maximize access to this content once it is made available?

Priorities

17. Study user demand for ebooks in the content desert.

18. Develop a coordinated approach to expand access to this content along with guideposts for similar initiatives to keep the momentum.

19. Ensure that content made available is discoverable via SimplyE to maximize access.

20. Add OpenLibrary content to SimplyE.

Organizational Partners

ReadersFirst will support this work along with its work on licensing models. ReadersFirst is already committed to carrying forward the work of the summit, and its members are well-suited to provide input on priorities for a focused approach to securing access to ebooks in the "content desert." It is recommended that ReadersFirst and ALA engage with the Internet Archive's Open Library Project which already facilitates access to ebooks that are difficult to find or unavailable in electronic formats.

Get Involved

- Join ReadersFirst
- Attend the next Readers First meeting at ALA Midwinter 2019 Seattle Conference: Friday at 12:30 in the Hyatt Junior Ballroom East
- Contact ReadersFirst about this initiative: Veronda Pitchford veronda@califa.org
- Contact ReadersFirst in general: Michael Blackwell mblackwell@stmalib.org
- Learn about Internet Archive's Open Library Project.

Overall Coordination and Communication

The ASGCLA Consortial Ebooks Interest Group will remain as a convener and connector for this work as it moves ahead. Other allies, such as the Book Industry Study Group and Digital Public Library of America, are also eager to provide forums for ongoing dialogue. Interest group leaders and summit conveners will meet with ASGCLA leadership at the 2019 ALA Annual Conference to discuss an appropriate place to situate this work that positions ALA to proactively and responsively provide leadership for this effort.

Meetings at ALA Midwinter and Annual

The Consortial Ebooks Interest Group holds regular meetings at ALA Midwinter and Annual on Fridays and shares space with other ebook meetings that day. These meetings will be the place to go for updates on the national ebook agenda and to get involved. The interest group also has an ALA email list that will be used for updates and to nurture participation.

Regular participants at these meetings also share informative and timely updates about library ebook initiatives that are well-received by participants. All are welcome at these open meetings.

Get Involved

We can't do this without you! This national agenda is only the beginning. Together, we can make a difference and maintain focus on this agenda as it continues to evolve to guide our efforts.

- Join the ASGCLA Consortial Ebooks Interest Group listserv.
- Attend the interest group's meeting at ALA Midwinter 2019.
- Attend the ebook meetings at DPLAfest 2019.
- Reach out to one of the partner organizations mentioned in this report.
- Share this report with your colleagues and foster involvement with the National Agenda for Ebooks.