

YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Midwinter Meeting, Dallas
January 20 – 24, 2012

Topic: Environmental Scan: E-books

Background: The e-content landscape is one that is rapidly growing and changing with issues of collection development, formats, circulation, budgets, policies, legal issues, and access at the forefront of topics that librarians who serve teens need to consider. Because of the volatile environment that currently surrounds e-content, librarians are not sure where to turn. YALSA members and the association are perfectly positioned to support their colleagues in their understanding of e-content by keeping up with current trends and seeking out flexible ways in which the association's member groups, publications, and staff can support others in the field. The YALSA Board may want to consider forming a member group that advises and collaborates with YALSA staff, other member groups, and the library community about the various issues surrounding successful integration of e content into library services for teens.

Action Required: Discussion

Overview

While there are books and articles on the topic such as *No Shelf Required* (Sue Polanka, ALA Editions, 2010) and *Now is the Time: Ebooks and Libraries* (Linda W. Braun, YALSA Summer 2011), these tend to go out of date quickly and don't always address teen needs specifically, and as a result teen services librarians are not sure where to turn.

The following is a synopsis of some of the areas in which librarians serving teens are facing uncertainty related to e-content and library services.

Collection Development

Developing an e-content collection is similar in some ways to developing a print collection, but there are also significant differences. Like print books, e-books are not only fiction but also nonfiction, textbooks, comics and other graphical formats, and magazines. Similarly, the definition of "books" is changing as a result of technological development, and both fiction and nonfiction-focused apps are now available and serve the purpose that print books once did.

There are fewer sources for critical reviews of e-books, enhanced e-books, and e-reading apps, and in some libraries, the person responsible for selecting and ordering e-content may not be the person who selects or orders print materials for teens. Thus the level of input into e-content selection from teens or even teen services librarians may be very different from that in the

- School Library Journals anticipating the creation of an e-books guide.
- Library Journal and School Library Journal sponsor a yearly web-based conference on the topic of e-content.

Along with the work of the groups mentioned above, resources do exist for guidance in integrating e-content into the library, such as the comprehensive guide No Shelf Required, publications and resources produced during the LJ/SLJ Ebook Summit, a YALSA webinar on e-readers in libraries, and various scattered blog posts and journal articles.

However, the quickly changing landscape of e-content means these resources go out of date rapidly, and librarians working with teens are left having to continually seek out new information that meets their and their teens' needs. Furthermore, there is not yet a focus from one or more groups on supporting the understanding and integration of e-content of those who work with teens.

Proposed Next Step

Because there is no one area in which librarians serving teens require support when it comes to e-content, the YALSA Board should direct the President to appoint a task force whose charge will be to monitor trends in e-content, including apps and enhanced eBooks. The task force will take a big picture view regarding the e-content landscape, with the following projects within their scope of responsibility:

- Develop a set of tip sheets on a variety of topics related to teens and e-content in libraries.
 - These downloadable tip sheets will be brief and will cover topics such as collection development, programming, evaluation, policies, and so on. The tip sheets could be packaged as single entities or grouped together based on theme and content. Because these documents will be compact, they will be easy for task force members to update as information and best practices change. The task force will monitor blogs, listservs, Twitter, and journals covering areas including but not limited to libraries, technology, and education in order to design and implement a plan for the future.

- Task force members will write the first four months of reviews, and then the Hub Manager and Advisory Board can identify bloggers to continue the reviews.
- Work with YALSA's Program Officer for Continuing Education and the association's Continuing Education Advisory Board to suggest topics for webinars and conference sessions about content and to identify presenters for these programs.
- Work with YALSA's Web Services Manager to market materials produced by the task force.

While awards and selected list committees have a variety of questions about content fits into their work, this task force will not be charged with evaluating and making recommendations related to these member groups. The purpose of this task force is to focus on how to support members' work with content and not how content is integrated into YALSA initiatives such as

topics.

- Now is the Time: E-books and Libraries
An overview over the world of e-books in teen services by Linda W. Braun in the Summer 2011 issue of YALS.
- Reading Unbound: E-Readers and Your Library
<http://tinyurl.com/readingunbound>
A YALSA webinar presented in July 2011 by Wendy Steadman Stephens presents ways for librarians to provide access to content and addresses technical and logistical support for teen reading.
- Survey of State Libraries Finds that 39% of US Libraries Lag Behind in Providing Ebooks
http://www.cosla.org/documents/Press_Release_on_Downloadable_Media_Survey.pdf
A November 2011 press release from COSLA outlining the results of their survey on e books in libraries.