

# ePublishing Insights

An AFAICS Research Newsletter

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## Newsletter enters its third month

## The growing environmental case for e-books.

### Newsletter enters its third month

This newsletter has now been going for just over three months and, as of this issue, is distributed to 2147 publishers, editors, writers and people in publishing relate technology businesses from around the world.

I would like to take this opportunity to announce that we are expanding the information service offered by AFAICS Research to our subscribers with a series of Insight Interviews. These will be in the form of recordings of discussion with some of the key figures who are developing the new publishing technologies and some of the individuals from within the publishing industry who are pioneering the use of these technologies.

These Insight Interviews will be distributed free of charge as MP3 audio files, these can either be played directly on PC or

A regular free weekly newsletter looking at the impact of newly developed technologies on the publishing industry. In particular this newsletter will examine the development and use of e-paper display based e-readers, or e-page devices, and the opportunities presented to publisher by the next generation Internet services, known as Web 2.0. Technology developments that will accelerate the move from traditional print publishing to digital publishing.

### • The growing environmental case for e-books.

A review of the economics of climate change by British economist and academic Sir Nicholas Stern, and sponsored by the British Government, was published last week and generated a lot of headlines around the world. Its findings, which have been endorsed by no less than four Nobel Laureates, highlighted the possibly disastrous economic consequences of failure to control global warming.

This is a debate which publishers should take notice of. In the face of rising public and governmental concern the case for moving from paper based publications to digital publications becomes more

downloaded into an MP3 player for listening at your leisure.

We will be announcing details of the first of these Insight Interviews within the next couple of weeks.

persuasive. Already one Japanese manufacturer of e- book reader devices is using the positive environmental aspect as a key element in its marketing campaign. It will not be long before others, including companies like Amazon, join

binding.

All of these factors mean that the increasing use of e- books, magazines and newspapers as a replacement for printed paper publications could have a very positive impact on the amount of 'global warming' gas CO<sub>2</sub> that is produced.

According to Dave Reay, a research fellow in the School of Geosciences at Edinburgh University the production and transport of the average paperback involves the consumption of about 4.5kWh of energy by the time it gets to a reader. In terms of climate impact, this is equivalent to about 3kg of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for every book.

Research done by the Japanese consumer electronics company Matsushita shows that the average Japanese consumer purchases 18 book equivalents per annum in the form of books, magazines and newspapers. This is a figure which is probably typical of consumers in most developed countries.

This means that the books, magazines and newspapers that we all buy contribute on average of 54Kg of CO<sub>2</sub> to the atmosphere, not a lot one might say, but multiplied by the population of a country like the UK this becomes a massive 3.25million tonnes, or the equivalent amount of CO<sub>2</sub> that would be produced by putting another half million cars on UK roads.

Matsushita claim that the production of an e-book reader

produces just 14 book equivalents of CO<sub>2</sub>, and also point out that the creation and distribution of e-books requires a negligible amount of power. And, new e-ink display based readers will display up to 10,000 page views on a single battery charge. As new e-paper display and manufacturing technologies emerge over the next few years these figures will improve considerably.

With the availability by 2010 of portable, lightweight, robust, flexible e-paper display devices offering a display quality equal to that of print, we already know from discussions with some of the manufacturers that they will be making a strong marketing play out of the environmental benefits of using such devices.

In the light of current popular sentiment and changing political climate this could be a significant factor in encouraging the widespread, and eventually almost universal, use of e-page devices and digital books, magazines and newspapers.

The environment is one more reason why publishers should be planning to make the switch from print to digital.

Readers who have any comments relating to this article are invited to send them to me, selected comments will be published later in special issues of this newsletter.