The e-book industry today: a bumpy road becomes an evolutionary path to market maturity

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Abstract
Purpose
To provide a snapshot picture of the current e-book industry from the perspectives of various key individuals in the industry.

Design/methodology/approach
Over 20 interviews were conducted following an extensive review of the published literature and examination of product/technical information.

Findings
The interviews revealed varying opinions on the current state of the industry and even on the definition of the e-book industry itself. Key issues identified include: standards, digital rights management, content availability, pricing, device/reader technology, integration and market development.

Research limitations/implications
This industry is still relatively young, generally marking its beginnings in 2000; however, its early years have been marked by market hype, investor fallout and slow market development. Today's industry is at a pivotal point: can obstacles to maturity be overcome or will the industry be either subsumed by the larger consumer electronics or web-based industries?

Practical implications
Information professionals may find these perspectives useful in framing their own applications of e-book technology in their planning for future technology, collections and services.

Originality/value
The interviews, generally conducted with the understanding that comments and other key competitive information would remain unattributed, provide an insider's look at a technology and industry developing in a larger arena of rapid technological and market change.

Keywords
Internet, Electronic books, Standards

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"The E-book Industry Today: a bumpy road becomes an evolutionary path to market maturity", The Electronic Library, 23(1), pp. 45-53, (2005). D. Nicholas and P. Huntington, 'Big deals: results and analysis from a pilot analysis of web log data: report for the ingenta institute; in The consortium site licence: is it a sustainable model? Edited proceedings of a meeting held on 24th September 2002 at the Royal Society, London, Oxford: Ingenta, 2002 (Ingenta Institute, 2002), pp121-159, pp149, 151. Request PDF | The e-book industry today: A bumpy road becomes an evolutionary path to market maturity | Purpose – To provide a snapshot picture of the current e-book industry from the perspectives of various key individuals in the industry. | Find, read and cite all the research you need on ResearchGate. Today's industry is at a pivotal point: can obstacles to maturity be overcome or will the industry be either subsumed by the larger consumer electronics or web-based industries? Practical implications – Information professionals may find these perspectives useful in framing their own applications of e-book technology in their planning for future technology, collections and services. In a free market, competition takes place among sellers of the same commodity, and among those who wish to buy that commodity. Such competition influences the prices prevailing in the market. Prices inevitably fluctuate, fluctuations and such are also affected by current supply and demand. Whenever people who are willing to sell a commodity contact people who are willing to buy it, a market for that commodity is created. Buyers and sellers may meet in person, or they may communicate in some other way: by telephone or through their agents. In a perfect market communications are easy, buyers and