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Problems in E-Publishing

Sonam Bhatia¹, Amit Sharma², Ambrish Pandey³

Abstract: *E-publishing is an alternate form of publication especially attractive to new writers. E-Books are electronic versions of books, which are delivered to consumers in digital format. E-book preparation process includes various steps. In this paper study of this process is done to find out various problems. This study is done at Harper Collins Publishers, India. For this study various titles of e-book are studied to find out the problems in each step of preparation. As e-publishing is a growing field so through this study an effort is made to find out these problems.*

1. INTRODUCTION

An E-book is a book-length publication in digital form, consisting of text, images, or both, and produced on, published through, and readable on computers or other electronic devices. E-Books can also have videos, animations and active hyperlinks. E-books are usually read on dedicated devices known as e-

Readers. Personal computers and some cell phones can also be used to read e-books.

1.1 E-Book Preparation Process

E-Book preparation includes-

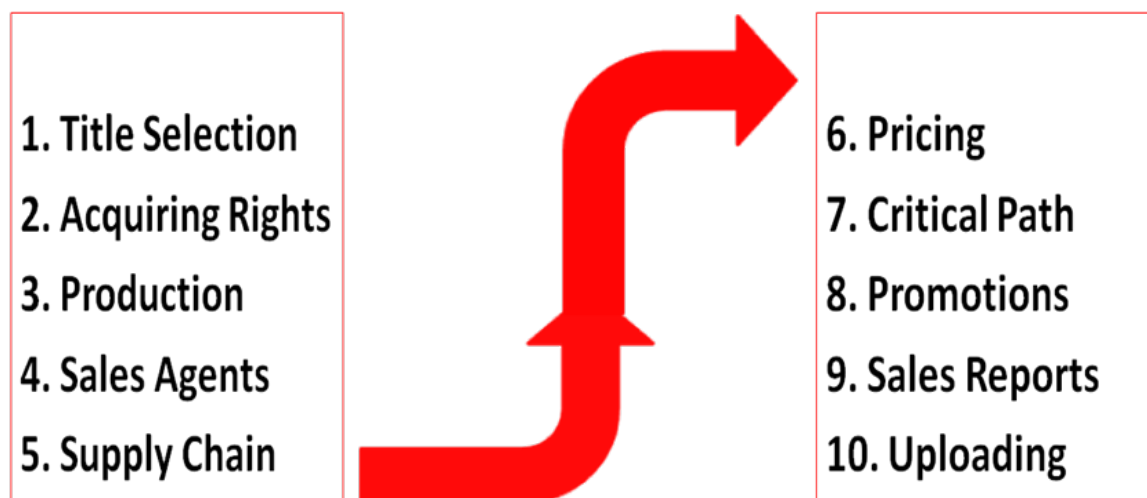


Figure: E-Book preparation process (source: ppt by Mr. Amit Sharma, DGM Production at Harper Collins Publishers, India)

Various file formats are used for e-books but the most common is epub. It is standard format accepted by International Digital Publishing Forum.

2. EPUB: EPUB is a free and open e-book standard by the International Digital Publishing Forum (IDPF). Files have the

extension .epub. EPUB is designed for reflow able content, meaning that an EPUB reader can optimize text for a particular display device. EPUB also supports fixed-layout content. The format is intended as a single format that publishers and conversion houses can use in-house, as well as for distribution and sale. It supersedes the Open eBook standard.

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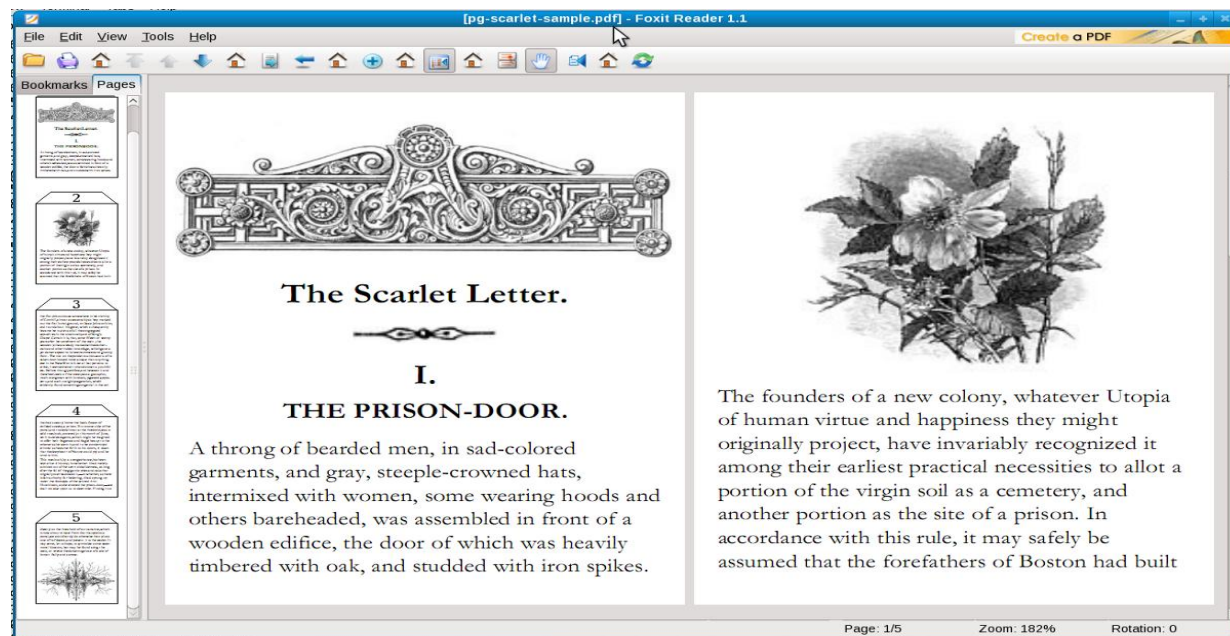


Figure: epub sample (source: <http://epub2pdf.com>)

2.1 Features of EPUB

- Free and open
- Reflow able (word wrap) and resizable text
- Inline raster and vector images
- Embedded metadata
- DRM support
- CSS styling
- Support for alternative renditions in the same file
- Use of out-of-line and inline XML islands to extend the functionality of EPUB
- Support for Audio and Video content (dependent on device support).

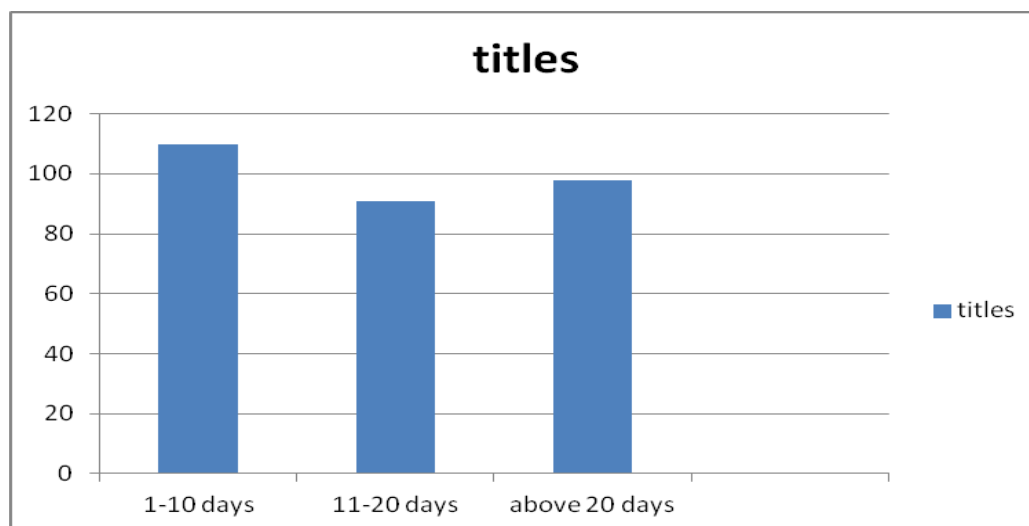
2.2 Technical process for preparing EPUB

The source/input file is received in various forms. In the first step analyzing of input file is done. The input file can be in the form of PDF, word, excel, quark express. If the source file is in PDF, quark express, excel then text extraction is done and the input is converted into word file using various softwares. And if the input is word file then conversion is done to create HTML coding and CSS as per the client requirement. After this proofreading and QC (cleaning header and footer) is done, if there is any error then send the file for correction. The next step is making of metadata which includes making of NCX and OPF file. When the epub is validated the final QC is done to compare the source file with epub using various softwares like adobe acrobat and word to word comparison is done and the

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Production at Harper Collins Publishers. India)

all the corrections the epub is
finally uploaded.

*Figure: technical process for
preparing e-pub (source: ppt
Amit Sharma, DGM*

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

There are also obstacles that must be overcome if e-books are to become widely accepted. Therefore it is important to identify the problems that arise in the field of e-publishing and for the identification of problems in field of e-publishing study of each step of e-book preparation process was done and the functions performed by each department was studied. Working on 240 titles at Harper Collins Publishers was done to identify the problems and their analysis was done.

Data collection is done for a total of 240 titles. For these titles time taken for each of the processes in e-book preparation is calculated.

This includes-

- Time for conversion
- Time for QA
- Collection of metadata
- Time for uploading

4. DATA COLLECTION

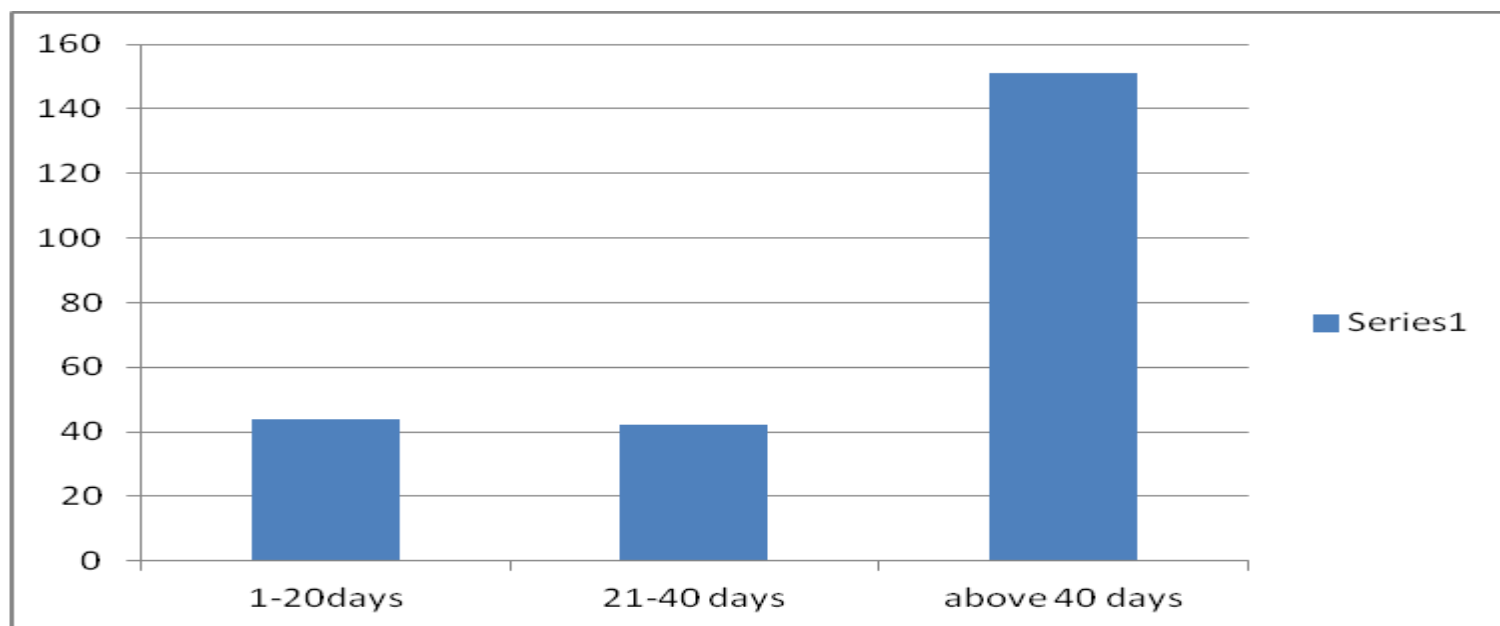
Step 1: Time for conversion: For a total of 240 titles following figures for conversion time are obtained-

Time (days)	Titles
1-10 days	110
11-20 days	91
Above 20 days	98

Step 2: Time for QA: For a total of 240 titles following figures for QA time are obtained-

Time(days)	Titles
1-20 days	44
21-40 days	42
Above 40 days	151

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Step 3: Collection of metadata: When e-pub is approved then metadata entry is done in metadata Amazon, metadata Google, metadata, Flipkart sheets. This step takes 2-3 hours for an average of 10 titles.

Step 4: Time for upload: When e-pub is approved the uploading is done. It takes 1-2 hours to upload 10 titles.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

It is clear from the graphs that there is difference between time taken for various processes in preparation of ebook for particular no of titles. The difference in the time taken for titles is due to some problems and issues that may arise in this process.

6. RESULT & CONCLUSION

The focus of this study is to find the problems and issues at each step of e-book preparation. It is clear from the data that there is difference between time taken for various process. This difference is due to various issues like

- Standards Issues
- Publisher Issues
- Font Issues
- Digital rights management (DRM)
- Copyright issues
- Rights preservation

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