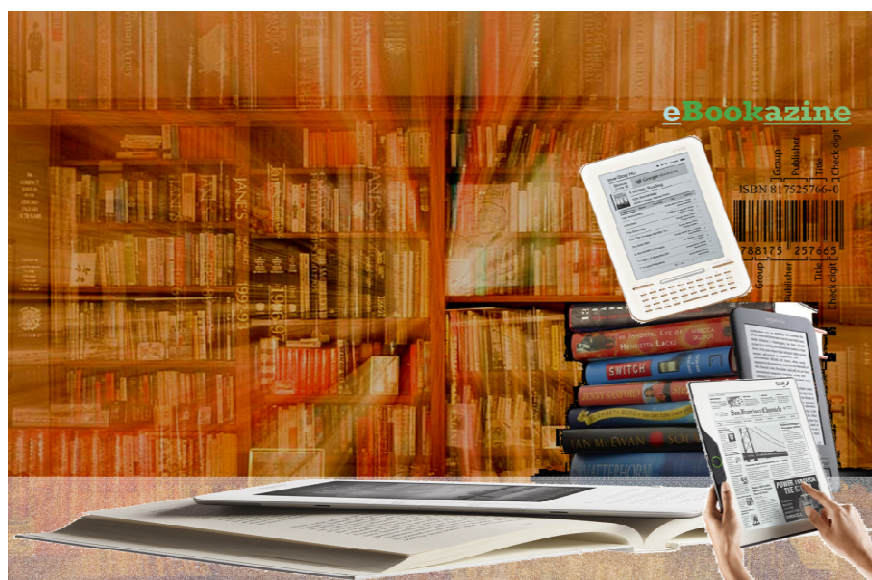


The eBooks for easy eReading

... a Beginning of the End, trailed by a Perception

Bangladesh has extraordinary human capital with regard to IT development. This has enabled it to build up a thriving industry of publishing services and online platforms that can compete against the foreign giants themselves for variety and dynamism. Among traditional publishers, digital is often seen as an interesting opportunity, although it is not without its challenges: piracy, the lack of defined business models and limitations when it comes to building a brand are some of the problems that still need to be tackled. If the country's entrepreneurs could manage to find the right tools and the right market, Bangladesh could become a global leader in electronic publishing.



Bangladesh wants to lighten the load in student's backpacks, and planning to digitize all text and reference books & magazines. The eBookazine Society involves outfitting schools, colleges, and universities with the necessary support technology of digitization and place online other educational resources including study guides, lesson plans, and workbooks, in addition to converting the textbooks to digital eBooks. Publishers are being forced to

reconsider the basis of their business and most of the times they are simply not prepared for the change since they lack the mental agility to alter their approach of digitization. Now, for the first time, we are obliged to understand what the e-readers really want on the basis of low cost ebook device technology.

Of course, it would be extraordinary to obtain 80% Internet penetration in Bangladesh or huge investments in infrastructure throughout the developing regions, but that may never happen. It isn't necessary to wait for catch up with others in terms of technology; on the contrary, it can advance with the materials already available. And in the event that it does occur some day, by then the industrialized countries will no doubt have made another technological leap, meaning that the disparity in infrastructure would still persist. So the most effective option is to start working right now, with what is available.

In a close future it is the reader who will call the shots. This means the publisher will have to open up to the world with digital formatting. Books will be thought, written, published and sold in a different way, leading publishers to become sort of librarians; not only selling, but lending by subscription method of delivery.

We need to find the courage to renounce the ancient privileges in the market, and to completely reinvent what we do. The great wave of digitalisation is here, and it's here to stay. eBookazine online distribution business will develop the publishing book market in the production and distribution

chain in the future, because it felt the potential change started eBook business in Bangladesh. Core Technology will be the proprietary unique software nationally and database application that ebook librarians/managers leverage to select optimal ebook/magazine suppliers & publishers, conduct real-time competitive bidding and efficiently manage every critical aspect of the ebook procurement process. Copying such e-books is impossible due to DRM (Digital Restrictions Management) in the eReader which is more restrictive than copyright law.

It should be a national distinct informational advantage and enables us to make the most intelligent procurement decisions possible on behalf of our publishers and end-users. The eBookazine society will build the common customer technology platform for on-demand ecommerce and marketing support applications. The foundation of our automate solutions, the technology will be a powerful platform for online ordering, source management, fulfillment, tracking and reporting and enables self service web sites for your e-readers, employees and partners to order customized marketing collateral, business identity materials, national copyrighted branded books, audio and videos, more.

For geographical reasons and because of events previously carried, in this light, we propose that a technology based national society should begin its activities as soon as possible, focusing on a particular group of competitive countries and publishers, with the inauguration of a pilot project of copyright law protection and logistics development plan to protect the rights of our publishers, i.e. authors. It could begin by working with professionals from India and the SAARC world. If possible, we suggest including eLibrary consultants with experience in distributing digital products.

Courseware development refers to electronic course design and syllabus which are usually accessible online. This has been the new ICT initiative that is targeting education sector with the aim of tapping the potential of knowledge based ePublishers platform in Bangladesh. The assistive technology services directly assists individuals and institutions with a disability or learning difficulties in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology software.

For all actions concerning infrastructure improvement, training and R&D, we recommend adopting the same trial and error strategy that we suggested for publishers. From our perspective, a pragmatic and heterodox approach will make it possible to find solutions and at the same time avoid the frustration experienced by book professionals with regard to new technologies.

Like all changes, it will be painful, difficult and maybe not everyone will survive. Now is the time to take risks, to be curious, to accept the inevitable mistakes that are to come in the future, for the only certainty is that those who will not try and make mistakes in the coming years are destined to disappear. The great wave of digitalisation is here, and it's here to stay. So, grab your surfboard and let's have some fun, but with business!

It is a matter, then, of putting the focus on the true fixed point that lies behind all the transformation and the multiplicity: with the passage of time, technologies become obsolete, but people remain, and that is where the greatest effort should be concentrated. We are not referring here to geography or climate, but rather to the different ways of interacting with technology that exist in each region; ways formed by history, language, culture, religion and politics.

Digital publishing in Bangladesh would not be a complex undertaking, although a fascinating and inevitable one. The unpredictable research itself leads us to demolish print version and build conceptual bridges between seemingly unconnected e-publishers and traditional publishers. This may give some idea of the task that lies ahead: with highly malleable technologies that never quite crystallize and an immensely varied world, digital publishing in the SAARC is an area where everything remains to be done.



eBookazine Society

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Some Suggestions for National Action Plan

1. Which technologies the publishers are familiar with, how widely they are used at the local level, how they build their web pages, how they work on the layout of their books, what opportunities and dangers they foresee, etc.
2. Easier Business models, means of payment and collection;
3. Copyright contracts and digital distribution agreements one stop services;
4. Layout software – both proprietary and free and open source, fonts, DRM.
5. Accompanying publishers from the group in the search for international platforms that allow them to distribute their publications in electronic and POD format;
6. Implementing simple mechanisms for collecting the royalties earned;
7. Exploring ways to optimize local infrastructure, whatever they may be;
8. Putting together a “digital survival pack”, specially prepared for publishers from the regions concerned, which should include: templates for creating web sites; instructions on how to activate them; free and open source fonts; tutorials on how to export to EPUB, PDF, MOBI, LIT, KINDLE, IPAD, OFFICE from Quark, Illustrator, InDesign, Scribus, PageMaker and any other program that traditional publishers using; recommendations on how to distribute publications on eBooks and mobile phones – according to the devices available; basic concepts on how to use social networks to promote **Bengali ebooks** and the events **Ekushey Boi Mela**.
9. OCR (Optical Character Recognition) and OMR (Optical Mark Reading), used to convert scanned text documents to editable text files. Need for robotic scanner machines and related OCR software for converting paper books to eBooks.
10. Encouraging networking between publishers and representatives of the IT & digital sector – programmers, web designers, video game developers, etc. At this point, blogs and other Social Networks resources must be fully online.
11. Electronic card payment system should be safer and easier (Paypal, VISA, Master etc.). We should offers numerous means of payment including credit card, debit card, bank transfer and cheque, and the site recently added the possibility of paying cash on delivery, something highly sought after by local consumers.

Writer: **Rukunuddin Ahmed** (CEO, Editor & Publisher of **KINGSHUK** since 1974 and Foreign Publisher's Represents McGraw-Hill and more 46 publishers of USA, India and UK)