

Comparison of advantages of using electronic and paper textbooks in the educational process of a university

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With the development of various portable devices, traditional paper textbooks gradually give way to electronic textbooks in the modern educational system. In this regard, it is necessary to understand what an e-textbook is and what its advantages are. An electronic textbook is a digitized version of course material that can be read on a computer, an e-book reader, or a similar device, such as a smartphone. Students can access them from a number of sources, including university bookstores and websites, some of which can provide e-textbooks as a public service for free.

E-books remain a small but rapidly growing part of the book market. Publishers are starting to offer more e-textbooks, but they claim to remain format-neutral. Publishers can charge lower prices because there is no need to deliver. More copies can be sold out, since e-books usually cannot be resold. Students can benefit from lower overall book expenses.

According to previous researches of Michael Levine-Clark, Matthew K. McGowan and others, e-textbooks do have disadvantages that need to be overcome [1].

e-textbooks

lower prices or free
more available
inconvenience of reading
format-neutral, easy to find auxiliary material

paper textbooks

more expensive
less available
ease of reading, taking notes
format-strict

E-texts require students to have a computer, preferably a laptop. But, even with the portability of a laptop, some students claim that reading e-texts on a laptop is inconvenient and awkward; if the computer fails, then the textbook is unavailable. It is easier to experience eye strain when reading on a computer than with a traditional paper book. Research indicates that students overwhelmingly choose the traditional paper textbook over e-texts. The data also show that freshmen more often prefer an e-textbook.