Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?

Posted by tsheehan - 2010/07/07 14:17

A recent PC World report on a study showing that reading from a printed book versus an e-book on any of the three tested devices, an iPad, Kindle 2, and PC was a faster experience to a significant degree.

The IPad readers measured on the reported reading speeds,
on average, of 6.2 percent slower than their print-reading counterparts, while readers on the Kindle 2 clocked in at 10.7 percent slower.

The users satisfaction levels after operating each device was also measured. For user satisfaction, the iPad, Kindle, and book all scored relatively equally at 5.8, 5.7, and 5.6 on a one-to-seven ranking scale (seven representing the best experience). The PC received a usability score of 3.6.

The PC score does not surprise me. I was surprised by the time difference in paper vs electronic.

The convenience factor with electronic versions in my opinion outweighs the slower rate of reading.

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?

Posted by ciony - 2010/07/22 16:16

I agree there is a convenience advantage with the e-versions, as well as cost; some of the prices on Kindle books are quite attractive compared to their physical counterparts. Depending on your commuting circumstances - which for me entails driving - I still find audiobooks the most convenient format, although extremely expensive.

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?

Posted by sediga - 2010/07/22 19:39

Foe technology/reference books, I still prefer paper. The kindle dodoes a good job at displaying the PDF version, and that's a big plus. The only thing missing is the ability to take notes. I don't see that in the near future with anything that's out there.

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?

Posted by charlesb2k - 2010/07/22 20:56

Even though it is slower reading on my Motorola Droid, simply because the pages need turned more often, I find that I read books faster. I believe this is due to the "convenience factor" mentioned above.

My Father used to carry a paperback in his back pocket and read while waiting anywhere. The size of paperbacks these days makes that almost impossible! However, I can carry several 800+ page books on my hip in my Droid and they are available any time I have the time.

Yep, for me, convenience wins out, even if it is physically slower to read my books.

-- Charles

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?

Posted by mhenricks - 2010/07/26 16:57

I wonder if the PC World report attempted to account for the fact that most of us are far more used to reading books on paper than on screen. It seems possible or even likely to me that one could learn to read as fast on screen with some practice.

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?

Posted by srw134 - 2010/07/29 02:36

I don't find this all that surprising, when it comes down to reading the books that I read (technical), I always prefer paper books. I only use electronic copies of these books as a reference and really don't read anything else.

-sean

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?

Posted by sediga - 2010/08/09 13:59

I find it to be very difficult to pay attention and focus on these ereaders when I am reading a technical book. Dont know why really... I don't read much of anything else either, so I am not seeing the hype with ereaders to get to me that this point. I wish it did; it would have made my bad much much lighter.

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?

Posted by Mel Duvall - 2010/08/11 23:13

After having used a an e-reader for a week (the Kobo device), I have come to the conclusion that they are, in fact, slower.
There are two reasons. The first is you can't fit the same number of words on a page - if you want to be able to read comfortably. The second is that there is a lag between when you click to turn a page and when the page uploads. I'm sure the lag is very small, but after a while, it becomes annoying.

Having said that, I still think e-readers are the way to go.

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?

Posted by meggebrecht - 2010/08/12 09:46

Most of the popular e-readers manage to refresh the page in about a second. Some are obviously a little quicker than others, with Amazon's Kindle performing particularly well in that regard.

The "page turn" on a Kindle gets a little quicker with every new device and software update. But since we're so accustomed to printed books, I think it's going to take some time before a refreshing screen seems as natural as a manual page turn, no matter how quick it gets.

Of course, a generation that grows up with e-readers and tablets isn't likely to feel that way ...

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?

Posted by srw134 - 2010/08/15 15:54

I tend to think these readers will probably be the right product for those that read allot of different types of material. I tend to think for most technical readers, most prefer paper but if reading a book by King or Koontz then maybe these readers would work well.

-sean

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?
Posted by sediga - 2010/08/16 11:19

I am not sure the â€œslownessâ€• of page turns is reason that many do not like the ereaders. The feel of a book in your hand is something that we all have gotten used to since we started readingâ€¦ The â€œnewâ€• generation will feel differently though; something that I will always envy.

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?
Posted by meggebrecht - 2010/08/16 12:24

I certainly wouldn't argue that the feel of a physical book isn't a big reason that many don't like e-readers. But for me -- and I don't think I'm alone -- the e-reader page refresh takes me out of a book. That's fine for something that's less than immersive, like a newspaper or magazine article. But for fiction? It bugs me.

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?
Posted by ciony - 2010/08/22 23:04

I logged some substantial time on a Kindle DX last week and have to say I enjoyed the experience. I still think multi-functional tablets will supplant the current dedicated e-readers, but the Kindle is a nice waypoint on that evolutionary path.

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?
Posted by newscctv - 2010/08/27 03:28

I don't find this all that surprising, when it comes down to reading the books that I read (technical), I always prefer paper books. I only use electronic copies of these books as a reference and really don't read anything else.

euro wedding dresses
plus size wedding dresses
prom dress
color wedding dresses
tea length bridesmaid dresses

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?
Posted by sediga - 2010/08/27 14:44

I am moving towards a DX as well --- I wish it was color, but it think that it would be too much to ask. I have one question to ask the designers though: why canâ€™t they provide at least one flash drive (SD, microSD, etc)? I donâ€™t get that.

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?
Posted by charlesb2k - 2010/08/30 21:57

I think the new generation might not have very long with paper books. I know Amazon is now selling more ebooks than paper books.

However, something even more telling is that I have a friend who has enrolled his boy in a private school. That school requires him to purchase a tablet pc, and subscribe to an online textbook library. All his homework is done on the tablet. All his books are online. He isn't using paper at all, that I know of.

It's in the private schools now, but I bet by the time my 1 yr old is in Middle School, most schools will be paperless in this fashion.

-- CharlesB

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?
Posted by Mel Duvall - 2010/08/31 14:13

I see Borders has reduced the price of two of its e-readers below $100. Clearly the bookstore chain is worried about losing market share to the likes of Amazon and, in the future, Apple.

I think e-Readers are going to be a huge hit this Christmas as prices continue to get slashed.

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?
Posted by ciony - 2010/09/04 10:17

Something I hadn't appreciated until very recently is the growing catalog of e-books available for download from the public library, at least in the NY Public Library. This is not an asset for Kindle owners however as it seems that only the Nook/Sony/Kobo readers support the DRM EPUB/PDF format provided.

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?
Posted by caragarretson - 2010/09/13 11:18

I haven't tried reading an eBook yet, but I have a hard time imagining the experience would be better than a printed book. There's something about turning the pages in a book or sifting through the pages of a book you've read in the past that I don't imagine translate well in the electronic world. Plus if you're toting around, say, War and Peace, everyone knows that you've embarked on a serious literary expedition - no one knows what eBook you're reading!

However I do realize the convenience and good economics of eReaders, so I'm sure my arcane views on the topic will fade eventually...

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Re:Are E-books a Slower Read than Printed Ones?
Posted by sediga - 2010/09/13 11:26

I agree, but mainly due to the fact that I like to take notes on my books. Highlight or make comments on what the author wrote, etcâ€¦ I imagine that for non-fiction books, many have similar views. I am willing to try an interactive and more touch-friendly ebook reader.

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