

Discover the ebooks analytics opportunity

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As the book industry becomes increasingly digital, the technologies and the way of thinking will converge with traditional web strategies. Nowadays most successful publishers in the digital era are web publishers mainly because they understand and focus more on their client needs and expectations. Analytics is one of the biggest promises of our digital world as it would allow publishers to get access on the way readers interact with their content.

Guess how publishing would look like if we knew the answers to the following questions:

- When do the reader read the book
- Where and in which context?
- Who is the reader?
- How and for how long?
- In how many times?
- etc.

With digital, publishers that will be able to analyze, A/B test, monitor and segment their content based on a better understanding of the readers expectations will get a massive comparative advantage compared to others.

Just imagine a world in which publishers would get access to a tool similar to Google Analytics for websites, an analytical tool developed by Google for webmasters. Publishers could gather data and try to understand why some books do not work at all and how many users are finishing their books, etc. The amazing part of this is that some players seem to have started monitoring ebook readers behaviors. Think about Amazon feature to check most popular highlights in a book. It would be surprising if they were not collecting data on the way people interact with their ebooks. The problem with the current situation is that the main beneficiary of that information is not the reader but Amazon that is building a huge advantage on other publishers. Just think about self-publishing or promotions. On the other part, publishers could wonder who is the real owner of such data? Is it the reader, Amazon or the Publisher? With ePub3, some publishers are trying to get access to similar set of data, adding scripts in their ebooks, without warning the reader his usage is monitored, so let's standardize the way data is collected.

In our opinion, Publishers should get access to all the data collected by devices manufacturers and ebook sellers with no exception. In the same time, we are concerned about privacy and consider that the ebook readers should have the choice to enable or disable the analytics features of their devices. Offering access to such an amount of data would greatly affect the way publisher conceive their books by improving the dialogue between the reader, the device manufacturer, the ebook seller and the book publisher. Meanwhile, for all ebook publishers –new and old players-, that would be a new opportunity to develop ebook in a more iterative way.