Abstract

Purpose
The purpose of this paper is to describe one university library's use of the Espresso Book Machine® (EBM), an innovative publishing technology that provides new options for matching content delivery to user needs. The paper aims to provide insight into the University of Michigan Library's experience with version 1.5 of this patented, integrated machine that automates the printing, binding, and trimming of softcover books from digital files.

Design/methodology/approach
The paper describes the machine's technology, the Library's impetus for purchase, services currently offered and plans for future uses, as well as advantages and challenges of owning a machine.

Findings
Although relatively new and still undergoing refinement, the Espresso Book Machine® technology can add value to library services by providing high quality, cost-effective print options not otherwise available to the campus community and beyond. Specific advantages include speed, flexibility, access to networked content, and low-cost output. Improvements by On Demand Books to the search and display capabilities of the EspressNet catalog will be needed in order to maximize the catalog's usefulness.

Research limitations/implications
Apart from a brief discussion of a paper published about the University of Utah's Marriott Library experience, this paper does not include a survey or report of other EBM-owning institutions and ways in which the machines are being used at those locations. Experiences may vary among EBM owners based on a number of factors.

Originality/value
Other academic institutions considering the purchase of an EBM may benefit from an in-depth report of the University of Michigan's experience.

Keywords
Information services, Academic libraries, Publishing

Citation

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