

One in Six Americans Now Use E-Reader with One in Six Likely to Purchase in Next Six Months

e-Reader users likely to both read and purchase more books than non-users

NEW YORK, N.Y. – September 19, 2011 – The options keep changing and bookstores are starting to feel the pressure. One major chain closed its doors for good this month while some of the others have rolled out their own e-Reader devices and are upgrading them regularly. Even *The New York Times* has changed the way it looks at bestsellers. It used to be just fiction and non-fiction; now it's also print versus e-Reader. And this is for a good reason as one in six Americans (15%) uses an e-Reader device up from less than one in ten (8%) a year ago. Also, among those who do not have an e-Reader, one in five (15%) say they are likely to get an e-Reader device in the next six months.

These are some of the results of ***The Harris Poll*** of 2,183 adults surveyed online between July 11 and 18, 2011 by [Harris Interactive](#).

While some may lament the introduction of the e-Reader as a death knell for books, the opposite is probably true. First, those who have e-Readers do, in fact, read more. Overall, 16% of Americans read between 11 and 20 books a year with one in five reading 21 or more books in a year (20%). But, among those who have an eReader, one-third read 11-20 books a year (32%) and over one-quarter read 21 or more books in an average year (27%).

E-Reader users are also more likely to buy books. One-third of Americans (32%) say they have not purchased *any* books in the past year compared to only 6% of e-Reader users who say the same. One in ten Americans purchased between 11 and 20 books (10%) or 21 or more books (9%) in the past year. Again, e-Reader users are more likely to have bought, or downloaded books, as 17% purchased between 11 and 20 and 17% purchased 21 or more books in the past year.

Change in reading habits

One of the criticisms of e-Readers is that people who have them may download more books than they would traditionally purchase, but read at the same levels. So far this criticism is not holding true at all. Half of both e-Reader users (50%) and non-users (51%) say they read the same amount as they did six months ago. However, while one-quarter of non e-Reader users (24%) say they are reading less than they did before (compared to just 8% of e-Reader users), over one-third of e-Reader users (36%) say they are reading more compared to just 16% of non-users.

Favorite Genre

Regardless of how they are reading it, there are types of books people like to read. Among those who say they read at least one book in an average year, three-quarters say they read both fiction (76%) and non-fiction (76%) but certain types of books rise to the top in both categories. Among fiction categories, almost half of readers say they read mystery, thriller and crime books (47%), while one-quarter read science fiction (25%), literature (23%) and romance (23%). One in ten read graphic novels (10%) while 8% read "chick-lit" and 5% read Westerns. Among non-fiction categories, almost three in ten readers say they read biographies (29%) while one-quarter

read history (27%) and religious and spirituality books (24%). Just under one in five readers (18%) read self-help books, while 13% read true crime, 12% read current affairs, 11% read political books and 10% read business books.

So what?

E-Readers are definitely here to stay and this means the publishing world needs to learn to change with the times. The printing press is considered one of the world's greatest inventions and one of the first printed books, the *Gutenberg Bible* is still considered one of the rarest among bibliophiles. There will always be a place for books in hard cover or paperback. But, there must also be a place for reading devices as well. Readers are quickly catching on to this wave as have the booksellers. This is a huge transition time for publishing companies and how they adapt will determine who is still standing ten years from now.

TABLE 1
USE E-READER

"Do you use an electronic reader device, such as a Kindle, an iPad or a Nook, to read books?"

Base: All adults

	Total	Total	Region			
	2010	2011	East	Midwest	South	West
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	8	15	19	9	14	20
No	92	85	81	91	86	80

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 2
LIKELY TO GET AN E-READER

"How likely do you think you will be to get an e-reader device within the next six months?"

Base: Adults who do not use an e-reader

	Total	Total	Region			
	2010	2011	East	Midwest	South	West
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Likely (NET)	12	15	15	15	15	15
Very likely	3	4	5	4	4	2
Somewhat likely	9	11	10	11	11	13
Not likely (NET)	80	76	79	75	73	78
Not very likely	21	25	31	20	21	32
Not at all likely	59	50	48	55	52	46
Not at all sure	8	10	7	10	12	8

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 3
BOOKS READ IN A YEAR

"How many books do you typically read in an average year? If you are not sure, please use your best estimate."

Base: All adults

	Total 2010	Total 2011	e-Reader		Generation			
			Uses	Does not use	Echo Boomers (18-34)	Gen. X (35-65)	Baby Boomers (47-65)	Matures (66+)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
0	9	15	8	18	13	19	17	12
1-2	14	14	7	15	9	15	18	11
3-5	20	20	14	21	23	17	20	17
6-10	16	15	18	15	17	14	14	16
11-20	21	16	32	13	20	14	14	15
21+	19	20	27	19	19	20	17	29

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 4
BOOKS PURCHASED IN PAST YEAR

"How many books have you purchased in the past year? If you are not sure, please use your best estimate."

Base: All adults

	Total 2010	Total 2011	e-Reader	
			Uses	Does not use
	%	%	%	%
0	21	32	6	36
1-2	17	17	12	18
3-5	22	17	20	17
6-10	17	15	28	13
11-20	11	10	17	9
21+	12	9	17	8

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 5
CHANGE IN READING HABITS

"Over the past 6 months, how have your reading habits changed? Please choose the statement that best describes you."

Base: All adults

	Total 2010	Total 2011	e-Reader	
			Uses	Does not use
	%	%	%	%
I read the same amount as I did before	49	51	50	51
I read less than I did before.	23	21	8	24
I read more than I did before.	21	19	36	16
I purchase more books now, but do not read them as readily as I did before.	4	3	4	3
Not at all sure	4	6	2	6

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding; * indicates less than .05%

TABLE 6
TYPES OF BOOKS READ

"What types of books have you read in the past year? Please select all that apply."

Base: Adults who read at least one book in average year

	Total	Generation				Gender	
		Echo Boomers (18-34)	Gen. X (35-46)	Baby Boomers (47-65)	Matures (66+)	Male	Female
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
FICTION (NET)	76	79	73	73	77	67	83
Mystery, Thriller and Crime	47	41	46	49	57	36	57
Science Fiction	25	26	29	26	16	32	19
Literature	23	36	22	16	14	23	23
Romance	23	21	24	20	28	4	38
Graphic Novels	10	14	11	8	8	11	9
Chick-Lit	8	12	10	4	4	3	12
Westerns	5	4	6	6	7	5	6
Other Fiction	33	37	33	27	36	27	37
NON-FICTION (NET)	76	68	82	81	73	78	74
Biographies	29	24	30	29	37	31	27
History	27	24	24	27	36	37	19
Religious and Spirituality	24	19	28	27	22	19	28
Self-help	18	13	25	21	13	15	20
True Crime	13	13	19	14	5	8	17
Current Affairs	12	12	10	15	11	15	10
Political	11	11	12	10	13	17	7
Business	10	10	12	11	7	15	6
Other non-fiction	26	32	30	21	22	27	26

Note: Multiple responses accepted

Methodology

This **Harris Poll** was conducted online within the United States between July 11 to 18, 2011 among 2,183 adults (aged 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

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