

NJ EContent Survey #1

Executive Summary

This is a summary of the results of the NJ Libraries EContent Survey distributed to New Jersey public libraries in March 2023, with the goal of collecting information on the selection, purchasing and provision of digital content in public libraries, library systems and library consortia.

- Total statewide investment on EContent: \$6.5M+
- Percentage of NJ library respondents providing EContent: 97%
- Platforms most widely adopted: OverDrive & hoopla

Given the widespread investment on EContent in New Jersey, this group recommends exploring opportunities to maximize statewide collective purchasing power. Some libraries and consortia have already successfully collectively negotiated terms with EContent providers/aggregators. We seek to collect similar success stories as a guide to best practice moving forward.

Acknowledgements

Members of the EContent Project Survey Workgroup would like to thank participating NJ libraries for devoting their time and effort to filling in this survey, as well as the staff at LibraryLinkNJ, the New Jersey Library Cooperative, for hosting virtual meetings, providing survey software and compiling results.

Description of EContent Project Survey Workgroup

The New Jersey EContent Project Survey workgroup is made up of 16 library workers from municipal and county libraries across New Jersey. The workgroup was formed in response to a Statewide eBook Summit, held on October 4, 2022 at the Montgomery Branch of the Somerset County Library System, at which discussions about the state of digital content in New Jersey libraries were held. Open questions at the end of the summit included the total expenditure on eBooks, diversity of platforms and marketplaces, and difficulty of parsing usage statistics.

Purpose of Survey

The NJ Libraries - EContent Survey was drafted by EContent Project members to address some of the open questions regarding eBooks and digital audiobooks in New Jersey, including expenditure, platforms utilized, purchasing agreements and participation in optional service models (such as Hoopla Flex and Overdrive Advantage). Two surveys were sent out: one to LibraryLinkNJ voting representatives and library directors at 268 municipal, county, joint and association public libraries, and the other to executive directors of four library consortia (MAIN, BCCLS, PALS Plus and LMxAC).

Survey Timeframe

Survey responses were collected between March 1 and May 29, 2023, with several extensions granted to increase participation. Whenever possible, EContent Project Survey workgroup members updated outdated

contact information, sent follow up emails, and contacted staff at libraries to increase the number of responses received.

Responses

Out of 268 libraries that received surveys, 197 (or 73.5%) submitted responses within the timeframe listed above. Taking into account responses from those 197 responses, 192 libraries (or 97.5% of respondents) reported the provision of EContent to their patrons, through at least one platform. The most widely-adopted platform was Overdrive, with 180 out of 197 (or 91.4%) of respondents providing ebooks and/or digital audiobooks through the Overdrive platform.

Taking into account expenditures from public library budgets (but not accounting for expenditures made through consortia or similar purchasing agreements, New Jersey libraries reported an annual expenditure of \$6,518,373 on digital content.

Platforms Provided by Responding Public Libraries	Number of respondents	Total expenditure	Purchased as part of a larger entity (%)	Other
Overdrive	180	\$4,493,459	93%	
Hoopla	145	\$1,824,633	20%	Flex (% using)
Axis 360/Boundless	22	\$10,000	66%	
CloudLibrary	12	\$190,281	82%	Pay per Use (% using): 64
Palace Project	9	\$0	100% ^{*1}	
Total		\$6,518,373		

***1:** Collections provided by New Jersey State Library and Digital Public Library of America

Direct involvement in purchasing vs external agency purchasing (%)

Libraries were prompted to select all that apply:	Axis 360/Boundless	Cloud Library	Hoopla	Overdrive
EContent selected by local library staff	11 - 52%	11 - 100%	76 - 57%	116 - 70%
EContent selected by external agency with member input	2 - 10%	5 - 45%	22 - 17%	48 - 29%

EContent selected by external agency without member input	12 - 57%	1 - 9%	75 - 56%	83 - 50%
Number of respondents	21	11	133	167

	# of Respondents
Public Libraries participating the survey	197
Libraries that provide EContent service	192
Libraries provide EContent service through more than 1 platform	155 (About 81% of libraries that provide EContent service) ^{*1}
<p>*1: 127 Libraries use Hoopla & OverDrive/Libby</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoopla & OverDrive/Libby only: 84 Libraries • Hoopla, OverDrive/Libby & other platform(s): 43 Libraries 	

EContent Service from Library Consortia

Four library consortia, the Main Library Alliance (MAIN), the Bergen County Cooperative Library System (BCCLS), PALS Plus, and the Libraries of Middlesex Automation Consortium (LMxAC) provided responses to a distinct survey created to seek information from larger entities. These four consortia participate in purchasing agreements that serve 194 libraries throughout North and Central New Jersey. Most purchases in all four consortia are made on the Overdrive platform. The total expenditure on digital collections by these consortia is \$636,666.15 (Hoopla: \$246,837.70 & OverDrive: \$389,828.45).

Platforms	Platforms Provided by Responding Consortia	Total expenditure
Overdrive	4	\$389,828.45
Hoopla	2	\$246,837.70
Total		\$636,666.15

Notes:

- *LMxAC is part of eLibraryNJ.* 38 library entities (including one consortium, LMxAC) participate in this EContent sharing group. Members of this group reported their EContent expenditures as individual entities.
- **SJRLC Purchasing:** 43 libraries across South New Jersey participate in the South Jersey Regional Library Cooperative (SJRLC) purchasing agreement. While the Survey workgroup did not obtain a consortium survey from the SJRLC libraries, an accurate report on expenditures was obtained during the drafting of this executive summary from a party responsible for purchasing on behalf of participating libraries.

SJRLC libraries spent \$117,600 in 2022 on eBooks and digital audiobooks on the Overdrive platform, including fees for platform hosting and MARC records.

- **DigitalLibraryNJ Purchasing:** 12 Libraries serving Northern to Central Jersey forming an agreement on EContent services for the participating libraries, utilizing Cloud Library and shared private clouds. All monies spent within this group were reported individually.

- [Survey Interim Report in PDF](#)
 - The survey was conducted from March 1 through May 29, 2023
 - Based on 197 submissions out of 268 targeted public libraries up to May 29, 2023
 - There are just a couple of survey submissions listed as incomplete, but their data is included in this report
 - Submissions for the Consortia Survey are not part of this report

NJ EContent Survey Group

Name	Organization
Aimee Harris	Hoboken Public Library
Bob Keith	New Jersey State Library
Dave Costa, <i>Group Leader</i>	Sparta Public Library
Ellen Callanan	Sussex County Library System
JiHae Ju	Princeton Public Library
Karen Jason	Union Public Library
Karen Vaias	Bernards Township Library
Mary Martin	Wanaque Public Library
Maryann Ralph	Woodbridge Public Library
Megan Kociolek, <i>Group Leader</i>	Clark Public Library
Michael Maziekien, <i>NJSL Liaison</i>	New Jersey State Library
Mi-Sun Lyu, <i>LLNJ Liaison</i>	LibraryLinkNJ
Samantha McCoy	West Caldwell Public Library
Tierney Miller	Cherry Hill Public Library
Ralph Bingham	LibraryLinkNJ
Jen Nelson	New Jersey State Library