



HIGHLIGHTS

# TEN YEARS AFTER

READMAGINE 2018



**READMAGINE** is the conference about the digital innovation of reading, books and libraries, organized by the Germán Sánchez Ruipérez Foundation with the collaboration of IPDA. It was born back in 2006 under the hypothesis that the dissemination of digital technologies would imply a great impact on reading behaviours, public services related to reading and learning, as well as on the publishing business.

This conference -Ten Years After- was a common undertaking of the Germán Sánchez Ruipérez Foundation and IPDA and gathered leaders and experts with very different skills and industries. In this conference, we discussed the effects of the popularization of mobile devices -such as Kindle and iPhone- designed to access, store and interact with books and other content as well. This meeting had the participation of a group of 150 guests from 25 countries.

The Germán Sánchez Ruipérez Foundation team made a selection of the highlights and ideas that have achieved greater acceptance or emphasis.

# BOOK INDUSTRY

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**1. THE TECHNOLOGICAL COMPANIES HAVE BEEN THE INDUCERS OF INNOVATION INSTEAD OF BOOK INDUSTRY.**

The book industry has not been able to induce or lead most innovations, however, it has been the new digital companies that, by launching devices, have made many processes cheaper and more immediate. In other words, the appearance in the market of each new digital device entails greater capacity for transformation of the cultural leisure than the proposals from within the traditional industry.

**2. THE READERS/USERS/CONSUMERS LEAD THE TRANSFORMATIONS.**

It is the readers/ users / clients' behaviour that triggers the transformation within the models when referring to the book industry and libraries, because the internet causes people to quickly adopt any alternative that is user friendly, low-cost or appealing.

**3. A PROACTIVE PRO-COMPETITION POLICY IS NEEDED.**

The book industry might boost its strengths in order to offering new ways of storytelling and also, to integrate the reading experience along with the potentials of digital. Nevertheless, to do so it is necessary to guarantee some competitive dynamics with a better balance among different agents; for that, there is a need for regulatory updating. New approaches in the competition policy are required as the antitrust authorities are not sufficient in this scenario. There should be some change in paradigm, not limiting the competition policy to ex-post intervention case by case but implementing proactive pro-competition policy.

**4. THERE IS A NEED OF A POLICY THAT BREAKS THE WALLS OF PLATFORMS.**

Despite what was expected a few years ago, new sustainable business models have not materialized within the traditional industry. Because the most relevant model is the 'platform system' and is currently in the hands of tech companies. Furthermore, large companies (GAFA model) enjoy different rules of the game and compete with an advantage, thanks to the gaps that the legal system offers to them. Thus, the traditional public policies that defend small and medium sized publishers and independent bookshops, should be accompanied by a policy that breaks the walls of the web platforms, which might be more effective. For example, bundling the Internet bookshops to a particular device should be examined, as it has been prohibited years ago for Microsoft banning the bundles between the

browser and the operative system. There is no coherent reason to consider admissible the bundling between the mobile operative systems and the app-stores, despite everyone seems to be used to admit this situation.

**5. PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR OPEN INFRASTRUCTURES FOR ALL PLAYERS WITHIN THE MARKET.**

The public policies of financial support (for innovation) should go to investment in intangible infrastructures, open to all players within the market, that typically it is not able to produce by itself. There are several fields where this is evident: copyright management, and in particular the management of copyright data/information and the interoperability, and thus standards for formats, including DRMs, accessibility features, etc.

**6. SMARTPHONES ARE THE NEW FIELD OF ACTION FOR CONTENT INDUSTRY.**

The most powerful variable at this moment is that of smartphones, now those ubiquitous devices deliver content from all sources, including books. The centralization of leisure in these devices is greater in the younger generations. For this reason, the content industry should have a strong strategy to be present in these devices. There's never been a more literate generation and with the rise of mobile phones, social media and texting, young people today both write and consume more words a day than any previous generation.

**7. GENERATION CONSOLIDATES THE POWER OF CONTENT STREAMING.**

The surveys by several organizations participating at the conference (FGSR and GWI) show how younger users (generation Z) do not consider great value as far as the possession of content and consolidate streaming consumption as the norm for access to cultural leisure. They also point out that the members of this generation are creators and producers of storytelling, instead of mere consumers. Unlike the Millennial generation, they do not constraint themselves to commenting or sharing content, but rather see themselves as creators or producers and the industry may organize a more B2B-oriented offer than the traditional B2C model.

**8. THE USER GENERATED CONTENT IS ONE OF THE MAIN FORCES FOR THE NEW PUBLISHING BUSINESS.**

The traditional value chain - agents, publishers - only fully activates when the author has completed their manuscript. But there are new business models based on creating a public space for a process (that has formerly been private), where users share their stories and serialize, chapter by chapter. The User Generated Content seems to be one of the main forces for the new publishing business.

**9. ONE OF THE NEW TASKS FOR THE PUBLISHERS IS TO RESEARCH ON THE CONSUMER'S DEMANDS AND LOOK FOR CREATIVITY FROM THE INTERNET MEDIA.**

One of the most wrenching changes publishers are facing is that they no longer “set the agenda,” as they used to. They now are in a world in which the consumer tells them what should be published. Therefore, the publishers job is to imagine that there is a demand and fill it with the best possible information by books committed to experts of that area, but also scan the world daily looking for creative and original texts that can be masterwork.

**10. IP IS THE NEW RAW MATERIAL WITHIN THIS DIGITAL CONTEXT AND CAN BE CHANNELLED BY THE SAME COMPANY TO A DIVERSITY OF CONTENT.**

Looking at last year’s box office top 10, all of the films were either sequels or based on some IP originally created for some other medium. Intellectual property (IP) is the new raw material within this digital context and can be channelled by the same company to a diversity of content, such as, for example, text, comics, television, videogames or merchandising, because there is a lot of book-film/tv synergy.

**11. THE RIGHTS OF THE AUTHOR IS THE GUARANTEE THE FREEDOM OF THE READERS.**

In this sense, the respect for the rights of the author and the publisher is necessary for the creative industries to be viable and to guarantee the freedom of the readers.

**12. THE COMPANIES COULD LET OTHERS TO TRANSFORM THEIR IP BUT THE CHALLENGE IS TO KEEP INTACT A CORE FOR A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS MODEL.**

The companies as IP owners could let others, whether they are fans, publishing partners or other creators of derivative content, take the stories or content to occasionally unexpected directions. But the big challenge is learning to keep intact a firm core for the IP as a mean for a sustainable business model.

**13. THE PUBLISHER IS FOR THE READER NOT TO WASTE TIME WITH BAD BOOKS.**

In the big offer mess of digital the name of the publisher should be a guarantee not to waste the reader’s time with a bad book.

## PUBLIC SERVICES

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**14. THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE LIBRARIES OFFER WOULD PREVENT FROM SOCIAL IRRELEVANCE.**

Libraries can't be simply a warehouse for books, because that path could lead them to some kind of social irrelevance. The most successful and active libraries are transforming their offer into a set integrated by the co-creation of patrons' ideas and the design of community experiences or learning with free, immediate and delocalised access to the contents.

**15. LIBRARIES COULD BECOME A PARTNER WITH INDUSTRY FOR THE JUST-IN-TIME LEARNING ON READERS' NEEDS.**

This context of shifts in readers' behaviours generates a great deal of uncertainty for both libraries and companies. Libraries could become an ideal strategic partner for *the just-in-time learning* on readers preferences, based on real behaviour patterns instead of opinion surveys.

**16. THE AMBIVALENCE OF DIGITAL DISRUPTIONS: COULD PROMOTE SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS OR JUST BE AN EXCUSE FOR BUDGET CUTS.**

There is certain ambivalence about the role of digital. In some countries, digital services have been developed to re-launch public libraries and imaginative services are being provided in all types of libraries, from 24 hours enquiry services in academic libraries to helping farmers obtain EU subsidies. In other countries, politicians have used the illusion of ready access to e-knowledge as an excuse to slash school and public library budgets.

**17. EBOOKS COULD BECOME A DRIVER FOR INNOVATION.**

For librarians the e-book could be the driver for innovation, such as the integration of E&P in their library catalogues, outreach to new readers in the communities served, growing circulation of digital e-and-audiobooks, correlating user data and responding to demand.

**18. A BOTTOM-UP APPROACH WOULD HELP LIBRARIES TO LEARN FROM READERS BEHAVIOUR.**

The traditional means that librarians use, is to follow a top-down approach, because they are the experts who classify, shelve and recommend books. But the other option is bottom-up: Try to decipher/compute the various (reading) networks embedded into patron's data.

- 19. A MORE EQUAL PARTNERSHIP AMONG LIBRARIES AND INDUSTRY IS NEEDED.**  
There is a need within the content industry and libraries relationship to create a new standard for working as equal industry partners is needed.
- 20. LIBRARIES PLAY AN EVEN MORE IMPORTANT ROLE IN EDUCATION WITHIN THE DIGITAL SOCIETY.**  
Libraries play key roles in formal and informal education and are often engaged in promoting and supporting information literacy with a potentially important role in helping people to assess information sources and evaluate information, as well as to distinguish between 'reliable' information, misinformation and disinformation.
- 21. IMPACT EVALUATION IS A KEY RESOURCE FOR LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT.**  
Public services and professionals need to know more about how people use the libraries offering and how different services can be adapted to enhance their use. Evaluating their impact on users is a key element when understanding library use and is a core element in library development.
- 22. DESIGN THINKING IS A CRUCIAL TOOL FOR THE LIBRARIES SOCIAL RELEVANCE.**  
A crucial piece to strengthen public reading services and companies in the book sector is the systematic use of tools such as Design Thinking for Libraries or UX design, to enhance the quality of the experiences of users / readers in a digital context.
- 23. LIBRARIES SHOULD LEARN AND COLLABORATE WITH PATRONS.**  
Libraries are public services dedicated to satisfy the needs of citizens and should understand, in its own interest, the great value of not only, knowing readers or patrons very well but, also learning and collaborating with them.

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