US book lovers embracing digital editions: Pew study

April 5 2012

An Android-powered e-reader is displayed during a consumer electronics show in Las Vegas, Nevada, in 2010. Slightly more than a fifth of US adults have reported having used an "e-book" during the past year, their ranks swollen by the popularity of Kindles, Nooks, iPads and other gadgets during the year-end holiday gifting season.

A Pew study released late Wednesday showed that US book lovers are increasingly turning inkless pages.

Slightly more than a fifth of US adults reported having used an "e-book" during the past year, their ranks swollen by the popularity of Kindles, Nooks, iPads and other gadgets during the year-end holiday gifting season.

The percentage of adults reading digital books jumped from 17 percent in mid-December to 21 percent by February, according to Pew research

funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

"Every institution connected to the creation of knowledge and storytelling is experiencing a revolution in the way information is packaged and disseminated," said Lee Rainie, an author of the study.

"It's now clear that readers are embracing a new format for books and a significant number are reading more because books can be plucked out of the air."

When digital magazine articles are factored into the equation, the share of US residents age 16 or older who read digital content climbed to 43 percent, with people reading more overall, according to the study.

Book consumption is spreading across an array of gadgets from dedicated e-readers to smartphones and desktop computers, according to the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project.

E-reader users are far from letting go of ink-and-paper works, with 88 percent of them saying they have read traditional printed books in the past year.

Approximately 72 percent all US adults have read printed books in the past year, the study indicated.

People preferred e-books when they wanted fast access and portability, say for commutes, but opted for print editions when reading to children or sharing works with others.

"E-book readers and tablet computers are finding their place in the rhythms of readers' lives," said report co-author Kathryn Zickuhr.

"But printed books still serve as the physical currency when people want

to share the stories they love."

Reasons given by people for not buying e-readers included being unable to afford them or not wanting more gadgets in their lives.

(c) 2012 AFP

Citation: US book lovers embracing digital editions: Pew study (2012, April 5) retrieved 17 April 2024 from https://phys.org/news/2012-04-lovers-embracing-digital-pew.html

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.