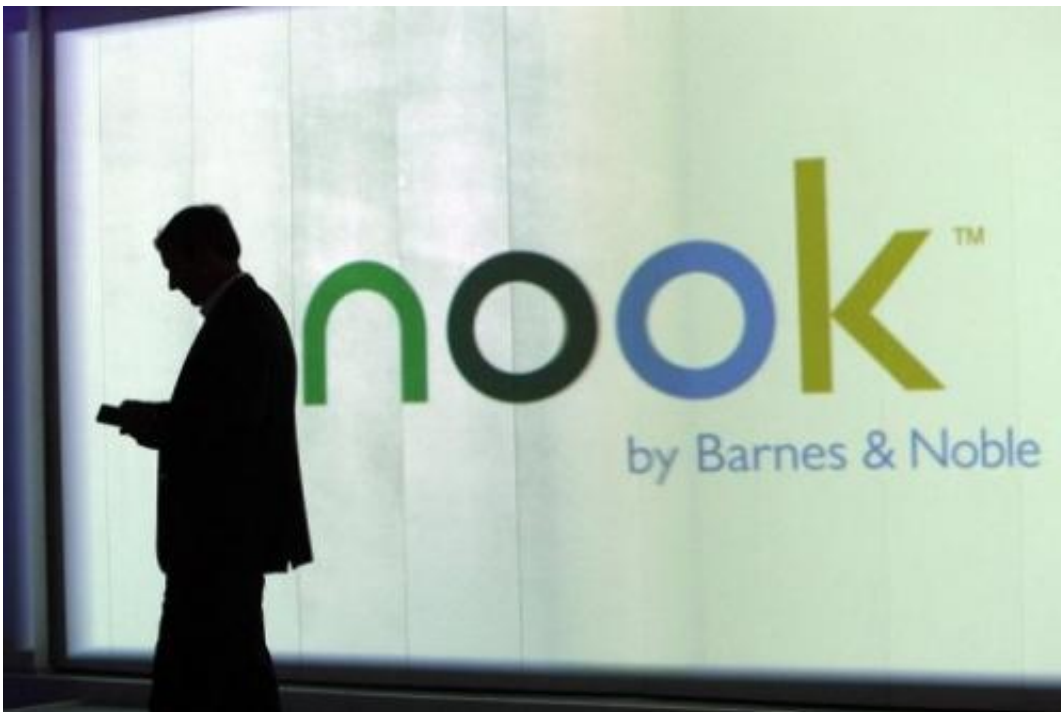


Amazon and Barnes & Noble woo e-book lovers

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Within hours of Barnes & Noble announcing the new Nook e-book reader, Amazon released a version of its discounted Kindle 3G e-reader. Barnes & Noble claimed to have captured 25 percent of the digital book market since launching the first Nook model about 18 months ago.

Online retail titan Amazon.com and bookselling giant Barnes & Noble dueled Tuesday for the devotion of digital book lovers with bargain-priced versions of their popular electronic readers.

Barnes & Noble [unveiled a lean new Simple Touch Reader](#) boasting a touch screen, months-long battery life and a price of \$139.

The Simple Touch Reader featuring a six-inch, black-and-white touch screen was available for order online at nook.com and was to begin shipping on June 10.

Within hours of the Nook announcement, Amazon released a version of its Kindle 3G [e-reader](#) discounted to \$164 with the price subsidized by on-screen ads.

Kindle 3G with Special Offers was intended to build on the success of a Wi-Fi only model that has become the hottest-selling Amazon e-reader in the five weeks since it was made available with a \$114 price tag.

"In response to customer requests, we're now making these money-saving special offers available for Kindle 3G," said Amazon Kindle director Jay Marine. "Kindle is the bestselling e-reader in the world."

Electronic readers with 3G capabilities can download digital content from anywhere a signal is available, the same way smartphones connect to online data, instead of relying on Internet connections at Wi-Fi hot spots.

The new Nook and the original Kindle with Special Offers feature Wi-Fi connections to get digital material.



File photo shows a "nook" digital reader at a launch event in New York. A new version of the e-reader offers Wi-Fi connections to access digital material.

"Touch makes it simple to use, and the beautifully compact design makes it the most portable eReader in its class," Barnes & Noble chief executive William Lynch said in a release.

"Add to that an unmatched battery life, the most advanced paper-like touch display on the market and wireless access to the world's largest digital bookstore."

The Nook and Kindle were tailored for readers and not touted as challenges to tablet computers such as iPads, which are platforms for Web browsing, games, videos and more as well as electronic books.

Barnes & Noble claimed to have captured 25 percent of the digital book market since launching the first [Nook](#) model about 18 months ago.

Simple Touch Reader weighed in at 7.48 ounces (212 grams), lighter than a typical paperback novel, and was described as easy to fit in a jacket pocket or handbag while being able to hold as many as 1,000 digital books.

The new Nook's debut came five days after the struggling US bookseller said Liberty Media had presented a cash offer to buy the company for \$17 a share, valuing the retailer at around \$1 billion.



German employees of Amazon sort books into boxes at the firm's distribution central in the western town of Bad Hersfeld. Amazon began selling print books in July 1995 and introduced the Kindle in November 2007.

The bid would give the media conglomerate controlled by tycoon John Malone a new business to go with its Starz film channel, QVC shopping network and stakes in the Expedia travel website and other media assets.

Barnes & Noble calls itself the world's largest bookseller, with 705 bookstores in 50 states.

But the book business has been hammered by a shift to electronic books as well as Internet sales.

Borders, the second-largest US bookstore chain, filed for bankruptcy in February, and is still undergoing restructuring.

The Seattle, Washington-based Amazon said it was selling 105 Kindle e-books for every 100 print books, hardcover and paperback combined since April 1.

The company said it had sold more than three times as many Kindle books so far in 2011 as it did during the same period last year.

Amazon began selling print books in July 1995 and introduced the Kindle in November 2007.

The US Kindle store offers more than 950,000 [books](#), including 109 of the 111 New York Times best sellers.

Amazon does not release sales figures for the [Kindle](#) e-reader.

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