

### **SITUATION**

- Public libraries across Canada successfully provide e-books and e-magazines from willing publishers
- Demand continues to grow. Torontonians borrowed more than 2 million e-titles in 2013, a 100 percent increase over 2012.
- Public libraries in Canada, including Toronto Public Library, experienced an explosion of interest in e-books in recent years and responded by reallocating budgets and opening conversations with publishers to resolve issues with supply and discoverability.
- We are pleased publishers and public libraries in Canada have been working together to find mutually beneficial solutions, and that progress has been made with so many more publishers making their content available to public libraries.
- However, some restrictions to content remain and some publishers continue to impose special conditions such as unreasonably high prices, creating a barrier for libraries to offer universal access to digital content.

### **GOAL**

- Universal access to digital content, on fair and reasonable terms, for Toronto Public Library customers, in keeping with core public library values.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Continue conversation with publishers to establish fair prices and obtain more content
- Collaborate with other large Canadian public libraries on this issue
- Raise awareness of challenges facing public libraries among identified stakeholders in an effort to develop a national strategy
- Inform Toronto residents about the availability of e-content, encouraging more borrowing and at the same time contributing to a vibrant book industry and reading culture.

### **CONSIDERATIONS**

There has been significant progress in the past year with much improved access to e-books for public library customers. Many Canadian independent publishers make their content available as do five of the six major publishers (we are in discussions about conducting a pilot with the sixth publisher, Simon & Schuster). Some multinational publishers continue to impose terms such as unreasonably high prices.

Both Simon & Schuster and the Rogers Publishing Group have indicated that there will be progress in access to e-titles this fall of 2014, with a pilot program and new platform for e-magazines respectively. It is recommended that we continue conversations with both parties and determine what progress has been made this fall. As things stand in June 2014, the timing is not right for a stronger advocacy campaign and could be counter-productive as conversations with Simon & Schuster and Rogers Publishing Group have been very positive.

## **AUDIENCES**

- Publishers
- Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport
- Department of Canadian Heritage
- Competition Bureau
- Canadian Library Association
- Toronto Public Library customers
- Toronto residents
- The media, as a means to reach the above audiences

## RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

Stakeholder	Strategy	Activity	Desired Outcome	Timing
<b>Publishers</b>	Build awareness of the business value of public libraries	<p>Continue ongoing conversations with publishers to establish fair prices and obtain more content</p> <p>Send year-end letter from Toronto Public Library Board that covers points including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- E-content circulation stats and trends</li> <li>- Outline of any challenges with pricing and access</li> <li>- Libraries' role in creating and promoting a culture of reading and readers (including mention of changing landscape of bookselling industry)</li> </ul>	Fewer restrictions on e-content	Q4 2014 and Q4 2015
<b>Library Sector</b>				
<b>Canadian Library Association</b> and <b>Canadian Urban Libraries Council</b>	Partner as appropriate to raise awareness of e-content issue	<p>Send letter to Canadian Library Association outlining issues of public library access to e-content</p> <p>Participate on CLA task group to develop a presentation that outlines e-content issues facing Canadian public libraries</p> <p>Make presentation available to Canadian Urban Libraries Council as well</p>	Consistent information to stakeholders about challenges that public libraries face	Complete  Q3 and Q4 2014  Q3 and Q4 2014

<b>Boards of other large Canadian public libraries</b>		<p>Connect with other library boards to collaborate and share resources, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presentation about public library access to e-books in Canada</li> <li>- Letters to stakeholders that can be customized and shared</li> </ul>	Consistent information to stakeholders about challenges that public libraries face	Q3 2014 and Ongoing 2015
<b>Government</b>				
<b>Ontario Ministry of Tourism Culture and Sport</b>		Send letter outlining issues of public library access to e-content and requesting a meeting.	Heightened awareness and advocacy for fair access to e-content	Complete TBD
<b>Department of Canadian Heritage</b>		If meeting request is granted, make presentation that outlines e-content issues facing Toronto Public Library.		
<b>Other Stakeholders</b>				
<b>Competition Bureau</b>		Send letter outlining the issue of public library access to e-content and requesting a meeting.	Consistent messages to publishing industry, resulting in fewer restrictions to e-content	Complete
<b>Library Customers and Toronto Residents</b>				
<b>Toronto Public Library customers and Toronto residents</b>		<p>Conduct a campaign to raise awareness of e-content at the library, and to encourage its use.</p> <p>Maintain information on library's website that explains why customers may not find the e-content they want.</p> <p>Include messages about e-content access and pricing in media interviews and statements, as appropriate.</p>	<p>Encourage more people to discover and use e-content at the library</p> <p>Inform about issues public library faces with respect to e-content</p>	Q4 2014  Q4 2014  Ongoing 2015