

**From:** Kent, David [<mailto:David.Kent@HARPERCOLLINS.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 20, 2013 5:00 PM  
**To:** Jane Pyper  
**Cc:** MacDonald, Leo; Steele, Rosalyn  
**Subject:** Letter Toronto Public Library

Dear Jane,

I am writing in reply to a letter from Councillor Paul Ainslie, Chair, Toronto Public Library Board, and Michael Foderick, Chair of the board's E-Book Working Group. I am sending this to you as there was no email address on their letter of August 8th which I received when I returned to the office yesterday, and I have shared with our corporate office in New York.

While I do completely respect and understand your position and concerns regarding ebook availability for your patrons, we believe that HarperCollins' ebook policy, while not completely satisfying all parties concerned, has basically been vindicated as the best cost-per-circ business model among our peers for eBook library lending. HarperCollins executives and staff were recently at Digipalooza—OverDrive's user meeting -- and the (unsolicited) complaints we heard from librarians were more about 3X pricing, and restrictions about consortiums from buying that they are getting from our competitors.

Our 26 circulation policy, as we have stated publically, is a work-in-progress which we review regularly. That said, we have not seen yet any alternative yet that speaks to our concern regarding the frictionless aspect of library eBook borrowing and its potential effect on the book eco-system that includes eBook and print retailers, our authors and our ability to bring their books to the reading public. As far as collaboration on the CULC/eBound project, if we were a Canadian-only publisher and ACP member we would understand being part of this; but, as an international publisher, all of whose international titles are available to your patrons through OverDrive, we don't see the need for a redundant source. Even if we were to go this route, we would still be governed by our corporate policies which dictate the 26-copy borrow limit.

A lot has happened since the announcement of our policy two years ago. It is now generally accepted as the best working model at the best cost-for-circulation among major publishers. We also allow purchases by library consortiums and have frequent promotions which offer eBook at much lower prices to libraries

then even our low everyday prices. In addition, we have heard from libraries that relatively very few of their HarperCollins eBooks have reached the 26 cap which correlates with our general research that the average circulation of a library book is much less than 26. These findings are supported by the significant increase in library business we have seen over the last several months including many orders from the Toronto Public Library and other Canadian libraries. Below are two of the many endorsements HarperCollins has received from large urban library systems.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With best regards,  
DK

David Kent  
President and CEO  
HarperCollins Publishers Ltd

*I have always been a fan of the HarperCollins Library eBook lending method of 26 "lends" per title and then a system must repurchase the book. This is actually akin to what libraries do for print in many cases. If a book is popular, after so many circulations, the item becomes tattered and worn. Hence, libraries spend a fair amount of time replacing copies. I realize that many librarians felt that because eBooks are digital and don't wear out, this method seems arbitrary. On the contrary, because they don't wear out, I understand that a publisher needs to develop a method to insure that a system doesn't buy something once and then never has to buy it again.*

*As a system, CML buys at a 2:1 ratio, meaning that for every two customers waiting for a title, we try to have a copy for them. For example, if there are 400 people in the holds queue, we will buy 200 copies of a title. After the initial demand dies down, we don't need that many copies of an item. This is true both in print and ebook format. Another reason why I support the 26 lending method that HarperCollins utilizes.*

Robin Nesbitt, Manager  
Columbus Metropolitan Library

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***As the ebook buyer and collection development manager for Cuyahoga County Public Library, I often encourage other publishers to adopt the Harper Collins model of 26 circs. We've found that this is by far our preferred model. Twenty-six circs seems "just right" for what we need; we're not paying for/keeping titles that don't perform, only those that will get us bang for our buck. And more importantly, Harper Collins is budget-friendly. I feel comfortable taking a chance on a title that is priced competitively from Harper Collins, whereas I often simply delete expensive titles from other publishers from my selection carts unless they're sure fire. This more competitive pricing allows me to offer a better browsing collection across the board for my customers. So yes! We're raving fans!***

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