

## **Look for longer waits on the most popular new digital books and audiobooks**

Our patrons at the Clermont County Public Library love digital books in ever increasing numbers. Since 2013, the number of digital items checked out has soared by 168 percent. The Library is pleased to offer these selections.

However, the publishers of popular authors are changing how libraries across the country can buy these titles for their patrons.

Macmillan Publishers will sell a library one copy of a new book at a discount when it is released. After eight weeks, the library can buy expiring eBook copies that must be repurchased after two years or 52 lends. Hachette Book Group, and its subsidiary Hachette Audio, is replacing its perpetual ownership models with a two-year access model. Blackstone Audio has introduced a 90-day embargo on its new releases to libraries, as reported by CNN.

These publishers are part of the Big Five: Hachette Book Group, HarperCollins, Macmillan Publishers, Penguin Random House, and Simon & Schuster. Some publishers are reducing upfront costs but increasing costs, up to three to five times retail consumer pricing, to renew licenses to access the materials. Amazon is pursuing exclusive contracts to have material available only through Audible, leaving libraries totally out of the picture.

Patrons already have long wait times. These changes will not only cost the library more to offer new selections, but it will increase the time patrons have to wait to read or listen to a new book. Most of our digital circulation comes from the Ohio Digital Library consortium made available through the State Library, which uses OverDrive. In an email, Anne Kennedy of the State Library, confirmed that under MacMillan's new model, the consortium will only be able to purchase one copy for the entire consortium.

This is more than just a financial issue for the Library. It's also an equity concern. Patrons who choose to borrow new digital materials, will not have the same access.

Many libraries across the country, as well as state and national associations, are talking with publishers to decrease the impact this will have on patrons. The Clermont County Public Library supports these efforts and will provide updates as they happen.