



**THE EVOLUTION OF
THE E-READING CUSTOMER**
KOBO FALL 2013

The evolution of the e-reading customer

The year 2012 will go down in publishing history as marking the time when eBook sales surpassed hardcover print in the US. The breakthrough was monumental – once viewed with fear and suspicion, eBooks are now a reality and a significant format for even the most reluctant publisher.

But is that sales spike a phenomenon or will it become the norm?

In the US market, where eBooks gained their first foothold, the early adopters appear to be becoming more hardcore in their desire to e-read. There is a consistent upward swing in preference for eBooks over print according to the annual **Consumer Attitudes Toward E-Book Reading** study, which since 2009 has been tracking the habits and preferences of print book consumers who say they have acquired an eBook or a dedicated eReading device within the past year.

The study, conducted by Bowker and the Book Industry Study Group (BISG), indicates 82% of “power buyers” (those who acquire eBooks on a weekly basis) say they prefer eBooks over print, and nearly 70% on non-power buyers say they now prefer e- over p-.

Meanwhile, the PEW Research Center which does research into the internet and American life, found that population of eBook readers is growing. In a report issued in December 2012, the Center said the number of those who read eBooks increased from 16% of all Americans ages 16 and older to 23% over the previous year. At the same time, the number of those who read printed books in the previous 12 months fell from 72% of the population ages 16 and older to 67%.¹



A recent survey of the publishing industry revealed that in the United States, eBooks account for 20 percent of publishers' revenue, more than \$3 billion, up from 15 percent the year before. eBooks have had a slower rate of adoption in Europe and the rest of the world, but analysts expect that major growth will develop in the next several years. A report by the global research and advisory firm Forrester Research predicted that by 2017, Europe will be the largest eBook market in the world, generating revenue of \$19 billion.²

However, after years of triple-digit growth, these otherwise healthy numbers have led some commentators to speak of a “slowdown” in adoption.

The markets where eBooks are most widely accepted are showing evidence of a slowing of pace. In the UK, Nielsen and the Kantar World Panel predicted that eBooks would overtake sales of print books in 2014 with total sales expected to rise to 47 million units, and that eBooks would account for 48% of the overall fiction market – extremely healthy numbers. However, a look at month-to-month sales showed a slight decline in eBook sales in the first quarter of this year, a market first.³

1 E-book Reading Jumps; Print Book Reading Declines: <http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2012/12/27/e-book-reading-jumps-print-book-reading-declines/>

2 NYT http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/11/technology/judge-rules-against-apple-in-e-books-trial.html?_r=0

3 Understanding the E-Book Consumer, July 2013

While a slowing pace – double digit growth versus triple - is an inevitable outcome of e-reading becoming a mass-market activity, some feel a point of “natural resistance” has been reached and that the convenience and cost benefits of using a digital device will not convert further customers.

But are we there yet? Are consumers now settled into their book formats of choice? Is the eBook customer different from someone who buys print books, and what makes a customer chose one format over the other? And is there any potential at all to see continued eBook sales growth from the consumer segment most wed to physical books?

To further investigate attitudes toward and adoption of eBooks versus print, Kobo conducted a global survey of more than 10,000 consumers . We found that the number of eBooks sold grew by 43% globally, making it the fastest growing part of the market. As the market matures, eBook lovers are no longer the nerdy outsiders and early adopters, and are starting to look a lot like your friends and neighbours.

The Kobo global survey revealed some of the answers to those questions.

Who in the world is the eBook customer?

Kobo identified the following as characterizing the different types of booklovers:

19%	Book-Loving Borrowers	<i>Love two things: books and talking about books, but would prefer to borrow than pay</i>
15%	Book-Loving Mavens	<i>Embrace both books and technology, with reading playing an active role in connecting with others</i>
14%	eSavvy Pros	<i>On the move younger men and women who love technology, reading and all forms of entertainment</i>
14%	Print Traditionalist	<i>Mature professionals who would rather surround themselves with books than people</i>
12%	Entertainment Hounds	<i>Digital multi-tasking younger men who seek 24/7 access & entertainment (other than reading)</i>
10%	Disengaged Followers	<i>A passive group, mostly men, whose interest in technology is limited to known status brands</i>

How do these segments behave, and what is their attitude to print and eBooks?

The largest customer group – Book-Loving Borrowers

At 19%, the non-buyer is the largest single segment of the market of readers and as described, is characterized by a preference to borrow rather than pay for books. This customer is typically an older woman and reading is central to her life – she reads approximately 31 books a year, making her the second most avid reader of all segments; she is not so much an e-reader though, and doesn't use much technology in her life. Of those who are using eReaders, 70% have read only the free offerings.

While this booklover is a borrower by nature, she still buys an average of 17 books per year. She is likely to be reading and buying backlist – only 23% of this group values being “up to date with what everyone else is reading”.

Because these booklovers are so social and get so much pleasure from talking about books, they are likely to be good trusted advisors and the person others go to for recommendations. Plus, 94% say they feel it is important to encourage children to read more – so they may act as a conduit to encourage a new generation of readers.

The most avid booklover – The Book-Loving Maven

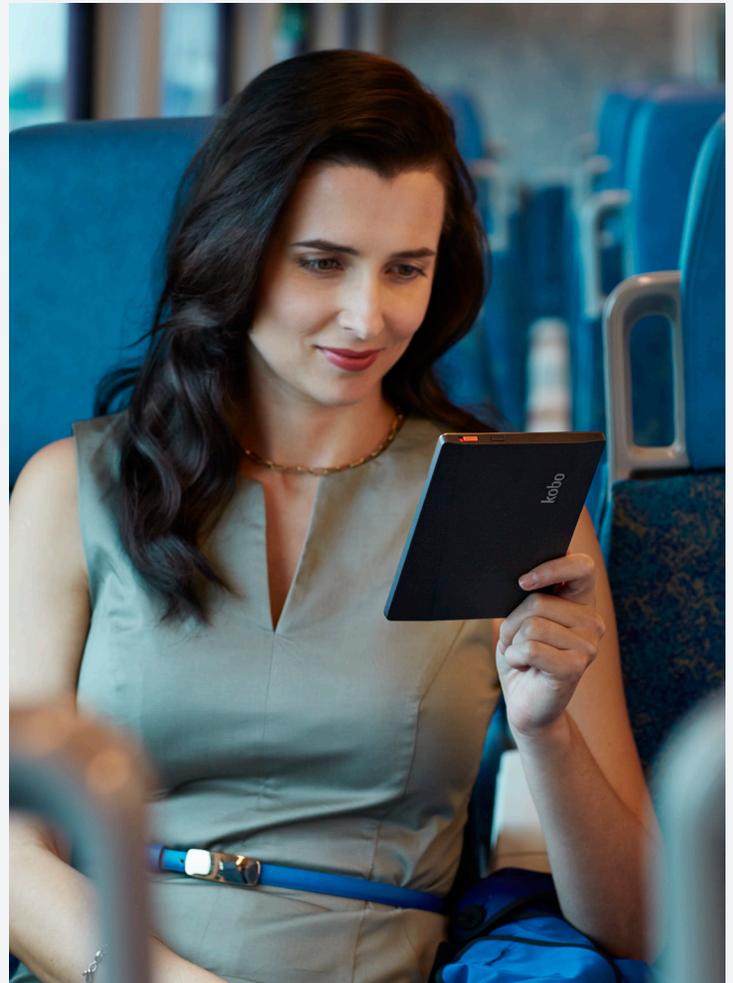
By far the most avid reader is what Kobo has come to call the “Book-Loving Maven” – typically a younger (18-34) and well educated single woman -- 89% are at least college educated in the US, Canada and Australia, and earn an average of \$93,000 a year. Globally, Mavens represent about 15% of the market.

The Book-Loving Maven is socially and culturally engaged and an intellectual explorer, and while she likes and uses technology, it is something that facilitates her social and intellectual life rather than being the focus of it – having the latest and greatest gadget isn't important to her. Whether she actually participates in or attends cultural events or not, 86% of this category believe the arts and culture enrich her world.

Her major appeal to publishers? She is a reader first and foremost – 94% of this group said they love to read and do so whenever they have the chance.

Not only does a Maven love to read, she reads a lot. While in general people reported they read two books a month or 24 books a year, Mavens say they read 33. Of those, they purchase about 22 print books and eight eBooks.

If they aren't e-reading yet they are very likely to try it – 49% of the population in general said they'd be keen to give it a try whereas 62% of the Mavens would, and 58% of those say there are very likely to purchase a device to read on in the future.



Why does she read?

Reading is an escape from daily life for 80% of Mavens; discussing books is a big part of connecting with people for 68%. Interestingly, despite the fact books and reading are core to her life, only 16% of this group regularly attends a book club or book events.

There is another aspect to “books as escape” – they are personal indulgences or personal choices, and only 44% of this group values being among the first to discover new books, and 41% value being up to date on what “everyone” is reading.

Books are also beloved and tactile objects in her life – 80% of the group love the feel of an “actual” book in her hands; 82% love to collect them and keep them on a bookshelf, and 79% say “I hate getting rid of books I have read.” When it comes to preference, 68% say they somewhat to strongly prefer a physical book. The barrier to keeping more books? Space, or the lack of it.

The Maven is willing to pay for what she values – 70% are willing to pay full price, and only 31% would opt to borrow from a library – possibly because she doesn’t like to give up what she’s read and enjoyed.

While she may love the look and feel of a “real” book, the Maven is also a keen e-reader – 83% say they’re enthusiastic about e-reading, 62% of those saying they are “extremely” or “very likely” to read an eBook.

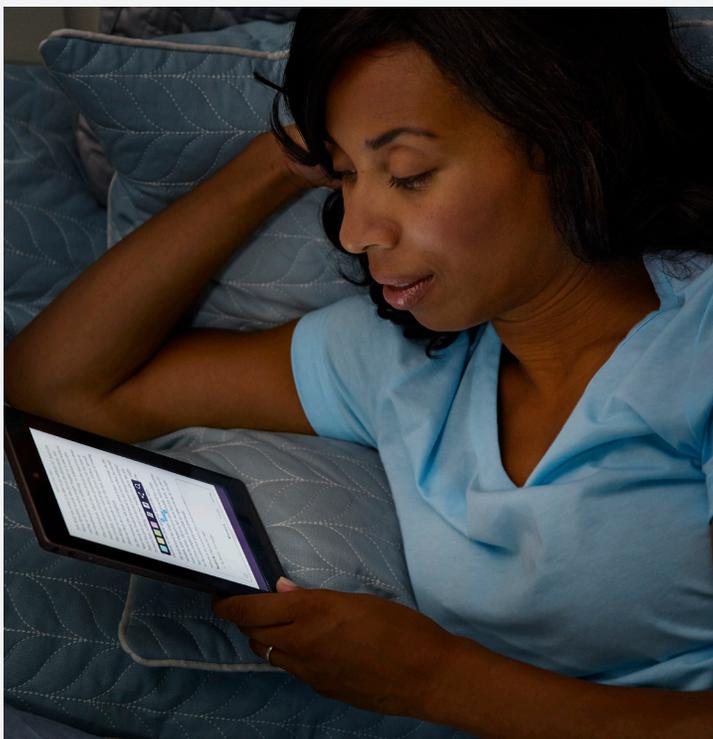
Mavens by the numbers

How much does this booklover actually read in a year? She reports the following:

Books read: 33

Books purchased: 23

eBooks purchased: 8



If those are the numbers, what is the content?

The Maven loves stories. Novels account for 90% of what she reads, and within that category 56% are bestsellers; the next largest category is classics, at 48%.

She also likes non-fiction, with 79% adding that to their booklists. Within non-fiction, preferred categories include health, medical, science or nature books (34%) and biographies (32%). Business and home-related books such as gardening or cookbooks are nearly equal, making up 28% and 27% of purchases respectively. Textbooks represent 26% of her non-fiction purchases.

She also likes magazines – 67% say they read them in their spare time. Her favourite kind of magazine is entertainment (32%) followed by health (31%) and then hobbies, travel or sports as a single category (30%). Fashion and lifestyle accounts for 28% of purchases as does home & garden, cooking, childcare or education as a single category.

Where does she get her books?

<i>Purchase from a physical store</i>	83%
<i>Purchase a printed book online</i>	66%
<i>Purchase a digital or eBook</i>	35%
<i>Borrow a printed book from the library</i>	41%
<i>Borrow an eBook from the library</i>	10%
<i>Borrow from another person</i>	45%
<i>Download for free/read content online</i>	1%
<i>Buy used books/garage sales/library sales/flea markets/second-hand stores</i>	1%

The book-loving eSavvy Pro

The eSavvy Pro is almost as big a category as the Maven, being 14% of the population globally. The group is fairly evenly split between men and women, and tends to be younger; they are often married, a professional with a higher income (\$112,000/year in US, Canada, Australia) and many have post graduate degrees.

As you might expect, the eSavvy Pro is an early adopter, someone who likes the “wow” of having the latest technology or device. They are adept technology navigators and digital multi-taskers. Mobile technology is essential for staying up to date in business for 77%, and 71% say they feel lost if they’re not connected and able to check email and messages.

They are the earliest adopters and so were most likely the first purchasers of a device and an eBook, and therefore our longest standing customers. They are the most predisposed to e-reading, with 72% saying they are extremely or very likely to read a book on an electronic device.

While technology is a love, these are also booklovers – 91% of the group read on a regular basis, and 73% of those say they are reading books, followed by news (85%) and magazines (73%); 95% of this group admit to “spending disproportionately” on books.

Whereas the Mavens read for escape, reading is especially important to this group for staying on top of things, to stay current.

Reading helps this group relax, but they’re not attached to physical books: 82% of this group say they love to read and do so whenever they can (versus 94% of Mavens); 65% say they don’t mind paying full price for books, and naturally they are the most predisposed to e-reading – 49% already do, and 72% are extremely or very likely to read a book on a device.

The potential for a new e-customer – The Print Traditionalist

In its global survey, Kobo looked at the question of whether eReader adoption has peaked in any market, and whether people are now settled into their formats of choice.

The most resistant to eBooks is the Print Traditionalist – typically a mature professional with an old-school attachment to print; this consumer tends to be an older, slightly more upscale married man. As a group they are avid readers of newspapers and books, and tend not to be sociable. Of all groups, this is one where reading is a solitary pursuit. Only 33% value discussing books with others, only 18% would enjoy book events, clubs or literary discussions.

The Traditionalist is indeed an avid reader – 89% say they love to read and do so whenever they can (94% of Mavens say this) and 76% say they like the feel of a book in their hands. They're collectors, with 81% saying they like bookshelves filled with books and 73% saying they don't like to give books away.

What is interesting is that despite their marked preference for print, this group does in fact delve into the e-world. Half of the group say they're interested in e-reading. While it might be tempting to assume because this group loves reading so much, some well-meaning relative bought those eReaders as gifts but that isn't so – 66% purchased the eReader himself, and 17% chose it even if someone else bought it. Only 17% of the eReaders in the hands of a Traditionalist were unexpected (and possibly unwanted) gifts. In this Traditionalists are no different from any other group – these numbers are almost equal to the average of all eReader owners.

This group is the most passionate of all about physical books, but they are not averse to digital reading if it is the practical choice. The eReader is chosen for its light weight, because it can hold a large number of books, and because a book can be downloaded "wherever I am". Naturally travelling is a key reason to e-read.

Does it make sense to woo this reader over to the digital world? They read a lot, on average 26 books a year and purchase 17; currently they only slightly under-index on average eBook purchases. Given the relatively large number of interested device purchasers among Traditionalists, it is difficult to know if they are merely very late adopters or stoic in their preference for print.

The sweet spot for wooing them toward eBooks would seem to be capitalizing on convenience – pointing up the value of an eReader while travelling or commuting.

How do booklovers choose their books?

One of the enduring mysteries – or myths – of the book business is that regarding how a reader actually finds a book to read. Of the millions of books available, what influences the purchase of one over the other, and how can publishers and retailers effectively leverage that to generate more sales?

Kobo's global survey was conducted in part to understand purchase behavior and attitudes toward books and devices. We asked consumers about their methods of discovering new books and learned there are some distinct differences between how print books are unearthed, and how customers connect with and buy eBooks.

While word of mouth might seem the most likely way most people find their next read, book selection is in fact a retail decision. Those surveyed told us browsing a bookstore was the primary way they to find their next book. Book purchasers stay true to their format when they're browsing – browsing the bricks and mortar bookstore is the primary way a book buyer finds a print book; browsing online sellers is how eBook buyers find their next choices.

Word of mouth, that is, speaking with friends and family, is the second most important method of discovering new books for both eBook and p-book buyers. After that, booklovers look for decision support from trusted sources -- print buyers tending to rely on reviews in newspapers and magazines whereas eBook buyers trust online book lists or online reviews and recommendations.

For eBook purchasers, online recommendations have leverage when it comes to making the purchase decision – the Kobo survey found that 51% said they'd find reviews and recommendations from experts, critics or authors at least "fairly appealing" – 17% of those said they'd find it "extremely appealing"; and 47% said reviews and recommendations from other users would be at least fairly appealing.

Meanwhile, Bowker research in the United Kingdom found some other tools of persuasion in the eBook world – its findings indicate that previous readership of the author or series; reviews and recommendations; and charts and ads or book trailers were all relatively more likely to have been used to find eBooks than print books. The book summary and the ability to read an extract also ranked higher in terms of purchase influences for self-published books than for conventionally-published books.⁴

Top five ways people discover new eBooks:

1. *Browsing online eBook sellers*
2. *Speaking to friends, family*
3. *Online book lists (eg. Goodreads)*
4. *Online seller recommendations (lists by e-retailers, eg Kobo)*
5. *Online user reviews*

Top five ways people discover p-books

1. *Browsing in a bookstore*
2. *Speaking to friends, family*
3. *Reviews in newspapers, magazines*
4. *Browsing online eBook sellers*
5. *Browsing in a public library*

Source: Kobo global tracking study

Where are publishers and retailers least likely to be able to influence a purchase decision? For both eBooks and print, the least effective ways to reach a booklover are:

 Posters or billboard advertising

 Online discussions or forums

 Print advertising

 Social networks, eg. friends' posts

Source: Kobo global tracking study

⁴ <http://blog.saltpublishing.com/2013/05/21/bowkers-2013-books-and-the-consumer-conference/>

The importance of the bookstore for discovery was also a key finding in UK-focused research done by Bowker which suggests physical shops remain the leading source of discovery, with nearly twice as many book purchases found by browsing in shops in 2012.

Bowker found an interesting anomaly when people start buying eBooks – once the switch has been made to shopping online, they stay there. Bowker's UK research showed that while bookshops were still ahead of internet-only retailers for print book purchases overall in 2012, the reverse was true for those who also bought eBooks, suggesting that once consumers start to switch from print to digital formats, they also switch from bookshops to e-tailers even for their remaining print book purchases.

The Bowker research also indicated that just as readers are buying more of their books online than offline, book buyers are also increasingly making use of online media, with over 25% more using social media for news on a weekly basis in 2012 than reading printed newspapers, and engaging slightly more with online blogs or forums than with printed magazines.⁵

What devices can tell you

The Consumer Attitudes Toward eBook Reading study found there is a correlation between device choice and genre preference. Fiction genres dominate on dedicated eReaders -- those who prefer an eReader were more likely to select general fiction, mystery, literary fiction, or romance as key eBook genres than users of other types of devices.

Some specialized nonfiction genres perform better on other devices: How-to guides and manuals were more popular with those who prefer reading eBooks on personal computers.

Consumers who prefer e-reading via smartphones were more likely to read travel books than either tablet or dedicated eReader users.

When does the digital customer shop?

Kobo also analyzed purchase behavior of customers around the world and discovered that in general, shopping for books online seems to be an evening pastime. The bulk of sales of eBooks happen between 6pm and 9pm, with 9pm being a peak for Canada, the US, Australia and New Zealand. Those in the United Kingdom get busy a bit earlier, starting their shopping activity at about 5pm.

Japan is the land of the late night shopper – buying doesn't begin until about 8pm and then carries on until at least 1am. Customers in the UK also like to shop during their afternoon break, showing a peak in shopping at the 3pm tea-time.

What this tells us

If browsing the store – be that store a bricks-and-mortar one or online – is so significant a factor in driving purchases, things like cover design and merchandising placement are perhaps even more significant than expected. The poor play of traditional advertising is also significant – buying a book seems to be a very personal decision and one that requires a more “show, don't tell” approach. Investing in decision support – including recommendations and reviews from authors themselves – would be helpful in wooing new readers. And, if looking to woo an eBook customer, a recommendation sent just before bedtime could be very effective for driving sales.

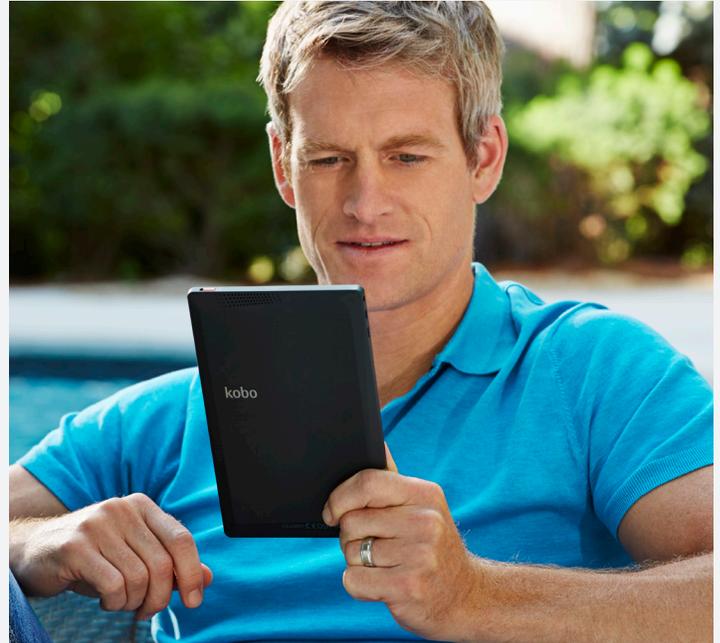
⁵ Source: <http://blog.saltpublishing.com/2013/05/21/bowkers-2013-books-and-the-consumer-conference/>

Price and the new e-reader

Kobo has done considerable research and has conducted a number of seminars on the power and dynamics of book pricing but in this instance we wanted to take a close look at one particular thing – the buying behavior of the booklover new to e-reading.

While it might seem intuitive that first-time eBook purchasers would be looking for heavily discounted or very inexpensive books to test the experience with, that's not the case. Kobo found that first-time eBook purchases tend to be slightly above the average sales price, and this may be because they are accustomed to the prices of print books which have tended to be higher than front list digital versions. Most first purchases are general fiction (19.5%), with genres following at a distant second: Romance, thrillers and literary fiction each represent 4% of purchases and mysteries, 3%. Erotica is in fifth place despite the Fifty Shades phenomenon and its ilk.

So, a first-time buyer is a valuable one, willing to pay for the experience.



Kobo country:

How do readers buy and read in Canada?

We surveyed readers in each of our territories where we have dedicated bookstores to understand book buying and reading trends, and most specifically attitudes toward e-reading.

Canadians do love to read – the average number of books read yearly is 22 or almost two books a month; the average number of eBooks read is 12. Reading a book is not the same as buying one – the number of books bought per year is 12, and eBooks is eight. Globally, the average number of books read per year is 24, and eBooks purchased is slightly lower than the Canadian average, at six.

The survey indicated that in Canada, people who own Kobos are particularly avid readers and they aren't exclusive in their format preferences. The average number of books a Kobo owner reads a year is 26, and the average number of eBooks is 30. When it comes to book purchases, Kobo owners skew slightly higher than the average, buying 13 books a year versus the national average of 12, and buy far more eBooks – 23 per year, almost three times the national average of eight.

When it comes to what they like to read their eBooks on, 53% prefer an eReader, and 34% like a tablet; 32% of eReader owners read on their device every day, whereas only 13% of tablet owners do.

Canadians like to read in the evening or at night – 57% of Canadians do their reading at home in the evening, and 53% read in bed at night. Reading is a way to take a break in the day, too – 39% of Canadians do their reading “in breaks throughout the day”, 39% read while waiting for something, and 52% read while on holiday.

The factors that may be leading to decisions as to whether to read a print book or an eBook tend to fall into predictable buckets – the appeal of an eReader is largely pragmatic and intellectual, for example the ability to carry a large number of books and the fact eBooks take up less space are key triggers to purchase. The factors leading to a decision NOT to buy an eReader, or to stick with paper books, tend to be emotional and tactile and include such qualities as the preference for the “feel” of paper (sometimes even the smell of paper is mentioned); the desire to browse “real” books in a store, and liking the look of books on a shelf.

How do readers buy and read in the USA?

Our survey indicates Americans are big booklovers, too, reading an average of 24 books annually, and reading 15 eBooks. Kobo owners, however, read far more eBooks than the average – 24 a year.

They are also more accustomed to reading on devices – 65% read eBooks on an eReader, and 41% on a tablet; 35% of eReader owners read on their device every day and 21% of tablet owners do.

Like Canadians, Americans do most of their reading in the evening or before bed (65% and 53%) as well as while on holiday (45%).

Americans differ slightly from Canadians when it comes to their motivations for buying an eReader. Whereas Canadians said they like an eReader because it allows for a great number of books in one convenient and lightweight location, Americans reported that their primary reason for choosing an eReader is access to a large library of free eBooks. Their reasons for preferring print are the emotional and sensual ones: a preference for the feel of paper, browsing in a book store, seeing their books on a shelf.

How do readers buy and read in the UK?

Booklovers in the United Kingdom are in line with the US in terms of their desire for digital books -- 16% of the market is likely to read an eBook in the next 12 months. The global average is 15%, and the US average is 17%.

Motivations for purchasing an eReader versus sticking with paper books vary slightly from North America – the fact the device is small and lightweight and the ability to carry a lot of books are primary. Being small and lightweight is the fourth most compelling reason in Canada; the number of available free books is the biggest bonus of an eReader for Americans.

The British are avid readers, reading 22 books and 14 eBooks a year, and once again Kobo customers are proving to be the most devoted booklovers. In the UK, Kobo owners read 29 books and 26 eBooks annually. Of those, Kobo customers buy 21 books a year and 23 eBooks.

When it comes to what they like to read their eBooks on, eReaders are the overwhelming favourite: 40% of eReader owners read on their device every day, whereas only 13% of tablet owners do. Those with an eReader, 40% use it to read daily; reading on a tablet is a daily occurrence for just 13% of tablet owners.

Reading patterns follow North America, with reading at home in the evening or before bed being the most popular time to spend with a book.

How do readers buy and read in France?

Digital reading has not penetrated France the way it has in some of the other countries we surveyed. The French read an average of 23 books and just 10 eBooks a year; meanwhile, Kobo owners read 22 books a year and 26 eBooks, more than twice the national average.

When it comes to digital reading, the eReader is the preferred platform, with 58% reading digitally on eReaders versus 44% who read on tablets. Of those with an eReader, 32% read on it every day while just 10% of tablet owners use their device for daily reading.

Like the rest of the world, the French read in the evenings and before bed, on vacation and in breaks during the day, they just do it more – 57% of Canadians do their reading at home in the evening, whereas 61% of the French do; 53% read in breaks during the day whereas 39% of Canadians do ; and 59% read on holiday while 52% of Canadians do.

Space considerations are the biggest factor motivating an eReader purchase, and the fact an eReader is small and lightweight is the second motivator. The factors leading to a decision NOT to buy an eReader, or to stick with paper books, are the same around the world -- coming down to the preference for the “feel” of paper. The French say liking the look of books on a shelf is their second biggest reason.

How do readers buy and read in the Netherlands?

We discovered some interesting anomalies in the Netherlands – among those who are not currently avid e-readers – those, that is, who read fewer than two eBooks a year -- the country skews slightly below the global average in terms of intent to pick up an eBook in the next 12 months; just 11% say they’ll likely read an eBook this year versus 15% globally. And, when asked if they have any intention of buying an eReader this year, just 6% said yes versus the global average of 17%.

When it comes to what they like to read their eBooks on, 75% prefer an eReader, and 26% like a tablet.

Those in the Netherlands are avid readers, reading an average of 21 books and 12 eBooks a year. Kobo owners are booklovers, and read 27 books a year – though they purchase just 16 – and read 16 eBooks a year though they buy 12.

Like elsewhere in the world, evening and at night before bed are the key times to read; however the Netherlands skews higher than average in terms of reading in the evening – 72% of the population surveyed reads then. As a comparison, just 57% of Canadians say the same.

How do readers buy and read in Australia?

Australia is an interesting mix of digital avoiders and digital lovers. Just 11% of the population currently e-reading has any intention of taking it up, versus the global average of 15%. Meanwhile, 39% of Australians own a tablet and fully 50% own an eReader – the global average being 29%.

Australians read 22 books a year and 16 eBooks, and again, those who own a Kobo are that much more avid – they read 19 books a year and 36 eBooks.

Device preference is skewed toward eReaders to a greater extent than any other country surveyed – 72% do their digital reading on an eReader and 34% read daily versus 34% who read on a tablet, and 21% of tablet owners use it for daily reading.

Australians are more likely to read before bed – 68% like to do their reading then, and 50% read in the evening; 51% read on holiday.

That eBooks take up less space and an eReader allows for the carrying of a large number of books are the primary motivators for purchasing an eReader; the love of paper and the look of books on a shelf are the biggest reasons not to buy one.

How do readers buy and read in Brazil?

Brazil has taken up technology and digital life to a greater extent than the average in some respects and 26% say they will read eBooks in the next 12 months versus the global average of 15%.

Nonetheless, Brazilians are avid readers in both formats – the average number of books read a year is 22 and the average number of eBooks is 14. Once again Kobo owners are extremely avid readers, reading 24 books a year and a whopping 40 eBooks.

Unlike the rest of the world, most of that e-reading is done on a desktop or laptop (47% and 46%) with eReaders representing just 13% and tablets 34%.

People in Brazil tend to read most in the evening (65%) or before bed (55%) with breaks throughout the day representing the third most popular reading occasion, with 48% of the population taking advantage of that.

As in France, space considerations are the biggest factor motivating an eReader purchase, with the screen being the second most important motivator. Third is the fact eReaders allow booklovers to download new books from anywhere.

The barriers for purchasing an eReader are different in Brazil than almost anywhere else in the world – the romance of paper, the top reason elsewhere in the world, is third or fourth among considerations. The top reasons for not owning or buying an eReader is the preference for a multi-functional device like a tablet, and a lack of familiarity with how an eReader works.

That print books are not the barrier may mean that Brazil is a prime market for growth in eBooks and digital reading.

What story do all these stats tell?

From Kobo's perspective, the question about who is e-reading is not "if" but "when" – even the most devoted print lover will be an e-reader at least sometimes.

When we began four years ago, we believed going digital would be a 25-year transformation that would see paper go digital, bookstores close or transform, publishers evolve to adopt digital publishing, physical devices would replace books, and the printing press would be located on top of a desk.

In fact, despite how bullish we were about eBooks in the beginning, we are currently seeing that digital is another format, and that print books will continue to be a choice for at least some people, at least some of the time.

We decided to go after the digital side in a big way – focusing on serving the needs and desires of the booklover, the passionate reader. This is our core customer and the one who inspires our design, innovation and merchandising decisions. We will continue to work hard to understand the reader's behavior and desires to deliver the best reading experience possible, and we will continue to share our findings with our partners in publishing.

The transformation will be global, and will change how people read around the world and will affect readers everywhere. Because this is a global revolution, Kobo is committed to global growth to best serve the reader wherever he or she lives.

The market is out of its early "shock of the new" phase and into the norm. These findings are merely the beginning, the first signs of the 25-year revolution.

