

NLA Discussion of Invitation to participate in CLA/TPL Fair ebook Prices Campaign

From: Yvonne Earle

Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2015 2:11 PM

Subject: FW: Notice of and invitation to participate in CLA/TPL Fair ebook Prices Campaign

Is this something you wish NLA to participate in? The issue affects us even if none of are putting e-books in our collections yet – or maybe some of you are?

Yvonne
President, NLA

From: Jenny Thornhill

Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2015 2:54 PM

Subject: RE: Notice of and invitation to participate in CLA/TPL Fair ebook Prices Campaign

Hi Yvonne

This is a great discussion – I've tried using them in the academic setting and a few legal e-books up here and they frustrate me to no end. The problems are, as I see it:

- 1) The fact that the vendors are charging the same or more for each edition despite no physical product overhead. I had an e-loose-leaf that cost \$249 per update, which is the same as the print copy which they had to print out and mail to me so they had the physical costs of production, paper, mailing supplies and people to deliver it. The only expenditure of the e-version was pushing it out to the website using the content they would use to print the print version. This really bothers me.
- 2) Technical infrastructure of the North makes e-books less than user friendly or stable
- 3) In the legal community, if you are checking a reference you are often dealing with endnotes, which is a major strike against e-books, since in order to check your endnote you have to click on the endnote and then when you go back you are lucky to get to the same chapter as you left. You rarely get back to right where you left off, which disrupts the flow of reading and understanding key legal issues.
- 4) Most e-books do not allow copy/paste so you cannot print out a chapter the way you can make a photocopy for submission to court
- 5) Many of the vendors sell e-books only in bundles (very similar to the complaints against cable) so you are stuck purchasing a large amount of useless outdated content in order to get the one or two titles you actually need – this is beyond ridiculous for most libraries in an age of fiscal restraint.
- 6) Platform reliability has always been an issue – this content is not always upgraded as platforms change and grow and so that expensive title you purchased a few years ago which costs you so much money quickly becomes inaccessible.
- 7) Most e-book vendors, especially in academic and professional publishing, set it up so that only one person at a time can access them, which is very odd when the whole point of e-editions is that multiple people can access them. The costs for multi-user access is astronomical compared to the overly inflated

