

E-Book Terms & Conditions

E-Book Pricing

Customers value the wide range of services high street booksellers provide: they can only continue to do so if bookshops have the ability to compete fairly, both in physical bookshops and online and in all formats, be it print, audio or e-book.

Competition legislation prevents any trade association, such as the BA, from becoming involved in negotiating terms of trade. However, the BA wants to see a trading environment for e-books that is fair to all the sellers and which does not lock out any bookseller from buying and selling any digital content, should they wish to do so.

The BA has noted the introduction of agency agreements for e-books which members were asked to sign. Following the European Commission ruling that the original agency publishers had to terminate their current agency agreements, the BA believes that in order for the industry to remain viable, there is a need to maintain sufficient margin for all those involved in the supply of e-books, including booksellers.

Interoperability & DRM

The BA would also like to see full interoperability on e-books, but has no view on publishers' use of digital rights management (DRM), other than that it should be seamless to the consumer where it is applied.

Consumers must have the ability to buy e-books in any format they wish and then be able to read that e-book on any device they wish.

Interoperability is essential to ensure not only freedom of choice to consumers now but also when they upgrade to new electronic products in the future.

The BA has held meetings with the UK's Office of Fair Trading and with the European Commission to urge that only systems and hardware promoting full interoperability should be supported.

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