E-books: Technology for Enterprise Content Applications?

Publishing technology has influenced computing in general, and information technology in particular, since the first word processor. While progress was excruciatingly slow for years, today's business applications owe a large debt to markup languages and formatting technology. Our expectations about what content we can view, how it is presented, and what we can do with it have been irrevocably changed by publishing technology. Business models associated with publishing, such as syndication, are also reshaping IT strategies.

E-books have been getting a lot of attention from the publishing community lately. The number of e-book conferences in the past 2 months, the attention our friends at Seybold have devoted to e-books, and Microsoft's e-book activity, all suggest the technology and market interest are converging. Since we are always on the lookout for technology that can be applied to corporate content applications, we thought it was time to see whether e-book technology had something to offer corporate IT strategists. An important part of the answer depends on whether there is in fact a market for e-books at all, and if so, when the market will be large enough to support continued investment in development. This month Bill and David take a provocative look at these issues. Let us know what you think!

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