

# The Use of Digital Publishing in 2019

Overview. Trends. Future



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The invention of print machine was revolutionary for human society, but today, in the digital era, we don't think a lot about the way we share information that has evolved significantly during the last 3 decades. The introduction of the Internet has provided great opportunities for people who wanted to transform traditional sources of information into a digitized form allowing to save them for future generations or share with others on a larger scale. These accomplishments in tandem with the modern means of communication and devices have spawned entire industries and digital publishing stands among them.

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### What is Digital Publishing?

Living in the revolutionary era of digitalization we underestimate how digital publishing has changed our lives in recent years. But what is digital publishing meaning for us? 'Publishing' is the activity of making information available to the general public, including the distribution of literature, music, or information. Traditionally, the term refers to the distribution of printed materials, such as books and newspapers. 'Digital' refers to something using digits, particularly binary digits, and applies to everything related to computers or other electronic devices. Consequently, digital publishing is the way to introduce information to the wide public via the Internet and computerized electronic devices.

Today digital publishing industry includes the following examples of fast emerging materials both converting and creating: newsletters, journals and blogs, music, videos, games, advertisements, company reports, catalogs, massive libraries, resource materials, and databases; and, of course, books, magazines, newspapers and other periodicals. Also, it is more common to differ such branch of digital publishing as online or web publishing that includes e.g. micropublishing, websites, blogs. Social media and blog platforms (like Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Medium, etc.) allow everyone to become digital publisher just by sending tweets, posting pictures or just sharing some thoughts and ideas.

### What is e-publishing?

The original term 'electronic publishing' has slowly been replaced by the term e-publishing (or ePublishing) and is transformed into a more generic term - digital publishing. Mainly all of these terms describe the same processes, however, there are some differences depending on a particular industry. For example, 'digital publishing' is more frequently used by companies offering e-services, and e-publishing is mostly related to an editorial aspect, the electronic versions of books, newspapers, magazines and other periodicals that are mostly designed to be read on a screen of a computer, e-reader, tablet or smartphone.

## How Digital Publishing changes our lives?

Why digital publishing is so popular? There is no single answer to the question, but we can mention some important factors. The steadily rising popularity of different electronic devices designed for digital media, such as electronic books (e-books), streaming services, electronic periodicals, gave a new impetus to the digitalization of all sources of the information. Digital publishing allows using metadata, computerized navigation of published products, and similar features, e.g. digitizing medical record systems and educational materials in a digital format. Eco-friendliness is an argument in favor of digital publishing too. But probably the biggest benefit of the pervasive digitization is significant cost savings over printed materials and other traditional sources.

Much like the whole industry itself, publishing changes over time as new technologies continue to spur innovation. The initial purpose of some e-publishing branches was in emulation of book and magazine formats, for example some e-books were simulating turning page sound instead of designing features that may surpass traditional media. Fortunately, industry leaders have realized quickly their advances and have integrated features that allow a computerized voice to speak the words on a page, which can be helpful for those who may have reading difficulties or some visual impairments. Thus, audiobooks received new life helping millions of people to see the meaning of a book from the other side. So digital publishing is not 'all about money' it also significantly changes our lives to a better side.

## Digital Publishing Industry Trends in 2019

Digital publishing has become an integral part of many industries, so it's important for authors and publishers to be up-to-date with current trends, especially since this market becomes more competitive than ever. Some market researchers have already noticed the decline of reading. While it becomes easier to publish books, people are choosing to spend less time on reading. Reading is no longer a process that brings pleasure, but at the same time readers still recognize book as the main source of knowledge. They prefer to buy a single book related to the necessary topic rather than spending hours surfing on the Internet to find a few useful articles.

The time-saving needs also lead to another trend: audiobooks are still on the way up. In 2018 the number of audiobooks 'readers' has reached 20% of all e-books. While creating a quality audiobook takes a bit more effort and investment than even a printed book, this is a great way to join a growing segment of the book market: audiobooks revenue grew up 40% last year. Despite the fact that there are less and less people spending time on reading, in case of audiobooks everything goes backwards. While people are commuting or using audiobooks to pass time during other activities, we can argue that audiobooks have become an exception to general leisure reading decline. But don't forget, that despite everything, printed books are still on the top and there is a necessity of taking into account competitors from traditional industries.

## Future of Digital Publishing

As in any cutting-edge industry, electronic publishing contains wide perspectives for further development, some of them might significantly change the sphere. Major analysts have provided a list of 3 future technologies to revolutionize digital publishing industry that include perfectly-known virtual reality, machine learning and further development of live streaming services. With the rise of live streaming across all social media platforms, it's no longer just a way for small channels to develop niche followings. Rather, it's becoming a new trend for engaging viewers and an avenue for news outlets to reach out to hundreds of thousands of people at a time. A bit in other way goes big data, which daily becomes bigger and more complex.

Fortunately, machine learning allows solving this issue and transform it into useful and effective feature against competitors. As the digital algorithms know everything about us, the ability to personalize content arises, providing a more direct communication with the user and delivering content based on its preferences, which leads to the creation of a completely new experience for the reader. As for the third technology, it seriously depends on further innovation and cost reduction. There are already many opportunities to receive new experience without standing up from the sofa, but if our aim is in the same coverage as the TV set has today, the virtual reality tools have to become affordable for a wider range of people. Following this, VR will make a step forward by combining both the concept of live streaming and immersive experiences into one, that will completely change the existing media.

## The Bottom Line

The digital publishing industry has significantly changed the way we receive and share information and its influence keeps growing. This opens great opportunities for businesses. Having almost 20 years of experience in developing e-publishing solutions, SCAND is here to help you take all the advantages the industry has to offer. Contact us to get more details!

## About SCAND

SCAND Ltd. is an Eastern European company, located in Minsk, Belarus. The company is focused on custom software development outsourcing across multiple technologies including .NET, Java, PHP, JavaScript, and C++. With more than 19+ years in IT and 600 successful projects for dozens of customers globally, and over 250 highly experienced engineers on board, we are rated as one of the top software outsourcing companies in Eastern Europe.

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**Have questions? Feel free to contact us: [info@scand.com](mailto:info@scand.com)**

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