

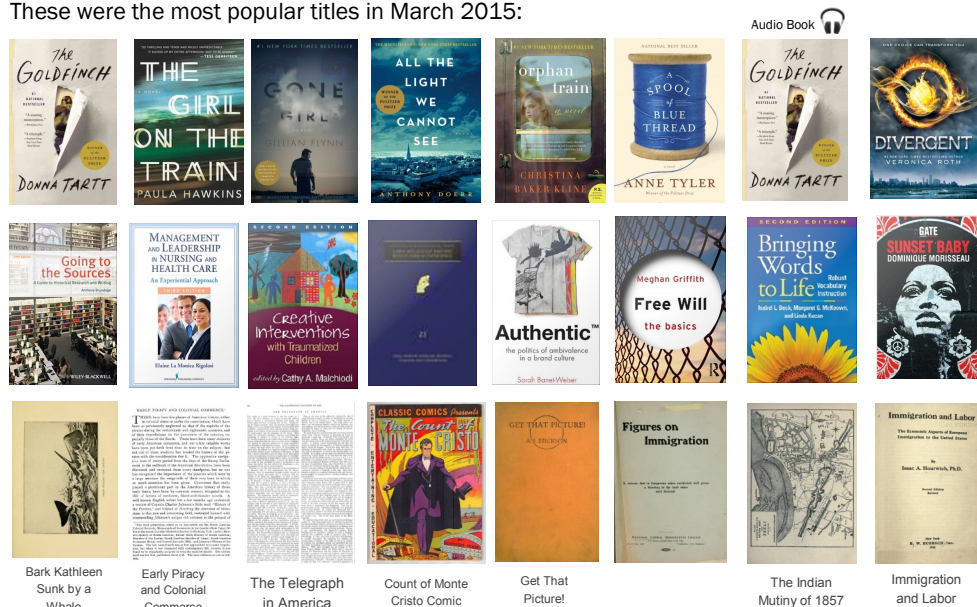
THE eBook CONNECTION

JUNE 2015

A Taste of eBooks

There are currently 7,130 Axis 360, 34,998 BiblioBoard and 134,881 EBL titles in the program.

These were the most popular titles in March 2015:



News from MLS

FY 2016 Program Goals

The steering committee began discussing FY 2016 goals at its April 2015 Steering Committee Meeting and Local Content Retreat. These goals continue the important work began during FY 2015 and add critical elements to engage library staff members more fully in the program. Draft goals are available for your review now! They should become final at the July 7 meeting of the steering committee.

guides.masslibsystem.org/ebooks ⇨ Steering Committee

Questions and feedback are always welcome. Library staff members are encouraged to contact a member of the steering committee to share their questions, ideas or concerns.

eBook Discovery

eBook discovery is a frontier that is receiving considerable attention from MLS and the Steering Committee. We realize that having multiple eBook platforms complicates the experience for both users and front-line library staff members. Here are a few of the focus areas at present:

Library Simplified and LEAP

New York Public Library is leading a national effort to develop (1) a single, seamless eBook app and (2) a national marketplace for libraries to buy directly from publishers. MLS has signed on as a supporter and is actively engaged with NYPL on this initiative.

Discovery Solution Working Group

MLS is an active participant in the Discovery Solution Working Group of the Statewide Resource Sharing Committee. At present, this group and MBLC are planning to issue an RFP. MLS is actively engaged with potential vendors from both traditional and nontraditional solutions to ensure that the chosen solution works seamlessly with eBooks.

Vendor APIs

MLS is very interested in potential API solutions that enable library users to discover and borrow eBooks directly from library catalogs. Presently, MLS is working with Old Colony Library Network on its API connection to Axis 360.

I Found It!

One of our regular patrons asked me if *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End* by Atul Gawande was available as an eBook. I went to our CLAMS OverDrive website looking for it but unfortunately there were 40 patrons on the waiting list for the eBook. In addition all of the physical copies of the book were either checked out or on hold as well. So then I thought to myself, I should check and see if Axis 360 (part of the Commonwealth eBook Collection) has it. Lo and behold, one eBook copy of *Being Mortal* was available. I went through the Axis 360 sign up process with her. I explained how to browse and search for eBooks and Audiobooks using this system. Once I checked out and downloaded the book for her, she was delighted that she could start reading it right away and left happy.

Brian Meneses
Information Systems Librarian
Jonathan Bourne Public Library

Product Enhancements – What’s Ahead?

All three vendors are actively engaged in development. MLS meets with each of our vendor partners monthly along with members of the steering committee to ensure that development priorities are aligned with the needs of Massachusetts libraries.

Axis 360

We are focused on much needed enhancements to the Axis 360 platform. A single and more seamless app and eBook experience from Axis 360 is coming soon with a tentative release date of July 13. Once released, MLS will offer webinars to help libraries explore the new interface and app.

BiblioBoard Library

BiblioLabs is greatly strengthening its content offerings, attracting more and better small and medium presses to its platform and its customers. We will continue to work with BiblioLabs on publisher/content priorities and on their efforts to create direct connections between publishers and Massachusetts Libraries.

BiblioLabs is also responding to feedback on its platform with a new release planned for early summer including a mobile-responsive site and streamlined readers. Once available, MLS will offer webinars to help libraries to explore the new interface.

EBL

We are working closely with Proquest on the integration of EBL with Ebrary. This will take some TLC for existing Ebrary customers who are participating in the Commonwealth eBook Collections program. MLS and Proquest are on the case!

Making a Difference in the Marketplace

Commonwealth eBook Collections exists because Massachusetts libraries demand and deserve more. Appropriately, a major component of the program is advocacy in the marketplace – working with our vendor partners, publishers and authors to find the “win-win.” In this article, I will outline some of the progress we have made together and our priorities as we move ahead.

1. The Big Five Publishers

These major publishers – Hachette, Harper-Collins, Penguin Random House, Scholastic and Simon & Schuster – were an early victory. None would sell to library consortia. During the pilot MA eBook Project, there was considerable advocacy in the marketplace including from our vendor partner Baker & Taylor. The result: we now have access to all content from these publishers via Axis 360.

2. Simon & Schuster Bookstore

Simon & Schuster initially required libraries to provide access to a bookstore where our patrons could purchase Simon & Schuster titles. This requirement is gone, and we have no commercial advertisements on our eBook platforms.

3. BiblioLabs – Growing Publisher Relationships

Through our vendor partner BiblioLabs, we are now expanding our connections to publishers. BiblioLabs is attracting serious attention from publishers today including some exciting new content coming soon to the BiblioBoard Library platform. However, the relationship goes well beyond a financial transaction. Through BiblioLabs, we are now engaging with publishers directly who want to work with libraries and to support library programs. Stay tuned for exciting news from a growing partnership with Dark Horse and Valiant comic book presses.

5. Consortial Connections

We are not alone! We are connected to other library consortia that are doing similar eBook programs with their member libraries. We share information, strategies and advocacy efforts regularly.

In particular, MLS cooperates with [Amigos](#), [Califa](#) and [RAILS](#) to exhibit at Book Expo to education and connect with authors and publishers. We had great meetings with publishers and authors at BEA this year. Stay tuned for some exciting opportunities to come.

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