

A TERM PAPER  
ON  
**ONLINE AND DOWNLOADABLE  
ARCHITECTURAL BOOKS**

BY  
OGANUFA, JASON C.

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## **Abstract.**

Architectural books remain one of the most important means of information dispensation in the world of Architecture today. Since architecture is fast becoming a global phenomenon, the rate at which such information contained in these books is dispensed is highly pertinent to this globalization. Cost and availability thus, becomes significant factors, which might either hinder or enhance the dissemination of such architectural information.

Traditionally, architectural books are obtained from bookstores or libraries. However, a traditional bookstore or a library can carry only so much inventory on its shelves, which thereby limits its collection to *books* with broad appeal. An online bookstore can “display” nearly everything ever published. Although traditional bookstores often have a special-order department, consumers have taken to searching and ordering from online stores from the convenience of their homes, schools and offices.

Some of these online books have now been made into purely digital artifacts, referred to as “e-books” which could also be purchased and downloaded instantly from these online books stores. This paper explores such architectural electronic books. It investigates their availability, cost and problems associated with downloading such electronic books.

## **1.0 Introduction**

The Industrial revolution has in no small way reshaped the world today. New and more versatile technologies exist today, which were but mere thoughts before. These new technologies have reached into every nook and cranny of civilization most particular of which is Architecture.

The Internet is one of such numerous technologies that have transformed the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It simply refers to a system architecture that has revolutionized communications and methods of commerce by allowing various computer networks around the world to interconnect. Sometimes referred to as a “network of networks,” the Internet emerged in the United States in the 1970s but did not become visible to the public until the early 1990s.

The Internet provides a capability so powerful and general that it can be used for almost any purpose that depends on information, and it is accessible by every individual who connects to one of its constituent networks. It supports human communication and allows people to work collaboratively at many different locations. It supports access to digital information by many applications, including the World Wide Web. The Internet has proved to be a spawning ground for a large and growing number of “e-businesses” (including subsidiaries of traditional “brick-and-mortar” companies) that carry out most of their sales and services over the Internet. Many experts believe that the Internet will dramatically transform business as well as society.

Of the many sectors, which has benefited from this vast web of resources is the educational sector. Learning, teaching, researching, etc has never before been made duly easy and much more fun with the internet. Not only is registration being done online, but also lectures are being taught and received online, texts and recordings of these lectures can be downloaded at any time from this same internet. In fact, the whole world of information is just a click away! Of most importance to us as architects is the acquisition of architectural materials from the web. Are they there, and are they available?

## **2.0 Online Architectural Books**

Simply put, there is simply nothing unavailable in the internet. Unavailability does not just exist with the World Wide Web. All it might take is seconds, minutes, hours or days, but you definitely will get what you seek for on the web. Thus, Architectural books, since the inception of “e-commerce” on the web, have definitely been available in the Internet. E-commerce (short for electronic commerce) refers to a broad economic activity which involves the trading of goods and services over the internet.

### **2.1 Modes of Availability**

Architectural books online exists mainly in two forms

- The Paperback format

- The Electronic format

### **a. The Paperback format**

This is the traditional format in which books online exists. With the introduction of the first graphical “browser” software for accessing the World Wide Web in 1993, and the ensuing scramble for companies and individuals to get “online,” and shift e-commerce, new Internet retailers such as the bookseller Amazon.com grew up, seemingly overnight, to challenge the dominance of traditional retailers.

The price and other book information like the content, abstract, etc are also displayed. It is now left for the interested customer to purchase the book(s) of his choice by paying for it using the stated means, which may either be MasterCard, Visa card, Electronic cheques and the likes. Since most of these stores where the books are available are abroad, shipping information is also required. This is where the bulk of the expenses is incurred especially when shipping to other continents.

### **b. The Electronic format**

These are electronic versions of books, magazines, newspapers, and other documents that can be viewed on a computer screen or PDA. Publishers, libraries, and retailers can now produce, manage, and distribute eBooks to anyone on a computer running Microsoft® Windows® or Mac OS X. (<http://www.adobe.com/epaper/ebooks/ebookmall/index.html>).

An e-book (for electronic book: also ebook: also ecobook) is the digital media equivalent of a conventional printed book. Such documents are usually read on personal computers, or on dedicated hardware devices known as e-book readers or e-book devices.

An e-book is a specialised type of e-text.

With a high-speed server, this is usually the most suitable format to obtain books online. They are easily shared and could be stored on a hard drive or storage disk.



A user viewing an electronic page on an eBook reading device

## 2.2 Available electronic Formats

A writer or publisher has countless options when it comes to choosing a format for production. Although the average end-user might arguably simply want to read books, every format has its exponents and champions, and debates over "which format is best" can become intense. The myriad of e-book formats is sometimes referred to as the "*Tower of eBabel*". For the average end user to read a book, every format has its advantages and disadvantages. Formats available include, but are by no means limited to the following:

- Plain text files
- Hypertext Markup Language
- Open Electronic Book Package Format
- FictionBook
- Plucker
- Portable Document Format
- Microsoft LIT
- eReader (formerly Palm Digital Media/Peanut Press)
- iPod Notes
- Mobipocket

## **Plain text files**

E-books in plain text are available and are usually in very small sizes.

## **Portable Document Format** (Published as a pdf)

PDF is a postscript file format created by Adobe Systems, initially to provide a standard form for storing and editing printed publishable documents. It is a very common format on the World Wide Web due to its universality on a variety of computer and platform types. It constitutes a compact and complete electronic image of a document and is thus an effective standard for the secure and reliable distribution and exchange of electronic documents (Ogunsote et.al., 2007).

PDF files can embed fonts, images, and other documents and they usually contain one or more page images, each of which you can zoom in on or out from. The PDF format can include interactive elements such as buttons for forms entry and for triggering sound and QuickTime or AVI movies. Acrobat PDF files are optimized for the Web by rendering text before graphic images and hypertext links. Adobe's PDF-like e-book format is incorporated into their reader.

PDF files are supported on the following e-book readers: Sony Reader, Bookeen Cybook and also Amazon Kindle.

## **Mobipocket** (Published as a .prc or .mobi.)

The Mobipocket e-book format based on the Open eBook standard using XHTML can include JavaScript and frames. It also supports native SQL queries to be used with embedded databases. There is a corresponding e-book reader. Its DRM relies on the PDA hardware serial number.

In Mobipocket Reader, Readers can add blank pages in any part of a book and add free-hand drawings. Annotations — highlights, bookmarks, corrections, notes, and drawings — can be applied, organized, and recalled from a single location. Mobipocket Reader has electronic bookmarks, and a built-in dictionary. The reader has a full screen mode for reading and

support for many PDAs, Communicators, and Smartphones. The Amazon Kindle's AZW format is basically just the Mobipocket format with a slightly different serial number scheme (it uses an asterisk instead of a Dollar sign).

### **Microsoft Reader**

Microsoft Reader is a Microsoft program for reading of e-books. It is readily available for download from Microsoft as a free program. It was originally released in August 2000. It is more useful on a Pocket PC, where it has been built into the ROM since Windows CE 3.0. Although some of the latest Windows Mobile Devices have not been bundled with it, it is still available to download for the Pocket PC. It uses *ClearType* Technology for easy reading on small PDA screens. It displays books in the .LIT file format (The ".LIT" stands for "literature"). This format is based on Microsoft Compressed HTML Help format. These books can be purchased and downloaded from online stores, including *Fictionwise* but notably not *Amazon.com*.

Highlighting and doodling/scribbling designed for quick note-taking, text notes and a search function are common features documents rendered in this format. Other features include finding the last page one was on, your most recent page and a library of all e-books. Depending on the book, there can be a cover image and images throughout the book. The PC version also has an optional plug-in for text-to-speech (TTS), enabling books to be read out loud.

## **3.0 EBook Devices**

An e-book device, sometimes also called an e-book reader, is a device used to read e-books. It may be a device specifically designed for that purpose, or one intended for other purposes as well. The term is restricted to hardware devices, not software programs.

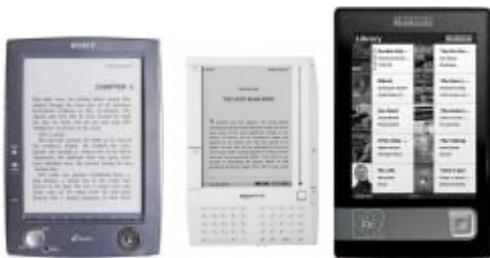
Specialized devices have the advantage of doing one thing well. Specifically, they tend to have the right screen size, battery lifespan, lighting and weight. A disadvantage of such

devices is that they are often expensive when compared to generic devices such as laptops and PDAs.

They could either be ebook paper based or screen technology based

### **E-paper based**

- RADIUS by Polymer Vision (2008)
- EB-100, EB-200 and EB-300 by Netronix (2008)
- GeR2 by Ganaxa (2007)
- Kindle by Amazon.com (2007)
- Cybook Gen3 by Bookeen (2007)
- Hanlin eReader by Jinke (2007)
- Sony Reader by Sony (2006)
- iRex iLiad ER-100 by iRex (2006)
- Librié by Sony (2004)



Picture showing the Sony Reader, the Amazon kindle and the Cybook Gen3

### **LCD and other screen technologies**

- Cybook Gen1 (2004), 10 inch color LCD tablet from Bookeen.
- Ebookwise 1150 (2004), 5.5 inch LCD, a rebranded Gemstar GEB 1150.
- Hiebook (2001?), 5.6 inch LCD, 250 gram.

## 4.0 E Bookstores

Like conventional bookstores, these are sites online where digital books are offered for sale. The books here are also catalogued into various sections and price tags usually indicated the cost of the books with the exception of books, which are offered freely. Indicated below is a list of online bookstores where architectural books are offered for sale.

<b>Bookstores</b>	<b>Address</b>
Ebooks.com	<a href="http://www.ebooks.com">www.ebooks.com</a>
Simon & Schuster Inc.	<a href="http://www.simonsays.com">www.simonsays.com</a>
Diesel-ebooks	<a href="http://www.diesel-ebooks.com">www.diesel-ebooks.com</a>
Micronet Construction Information Services	<a href="http://www.misronet.com/architecture_ebooks.htm">www.misronet.com/architecture_ebooks.htm</a>
Free ebooks downloads	<a href="http://www.free-e-books-downloads.com">www.free-e-books-downloads.com</a>
Bytesizesystems	<a href="http://www.bytesizesystems.com">www.bytesizesystems.com</a>
Project Gutenberg	<a href="http://www.gutenberg.com">www.gutenberg.com</a>
The New York Public Library	<a href="http://ebooks.nypl.org">http://ebooks.nypl.org</a>
Amazon.com	<a href="http://www.amazon.com">www.amazon.com</a>

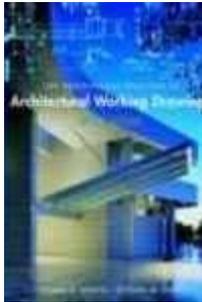
Table showing a list of online bookstores visited

### **Ebooks.com**

This is a digital bookstore that offers over 102,000 popular, professional and academic eBooks from the world's leading publishers. These books are shelved according to subject categories ranging from archaeology to true fiction, and most importantly architecture.

A total of 561 Architectural books exists within its catalogue and this number could be further arranged into sub categories of : Design and drafting, Domestic, Historic preservation, History, Interior Design, Landscape, Public, Commercial or Industrial buildings and Urban

Land Use Planning. Shown below is an example of a book, which can be obtained from this store.



**The Professional Practice of Architectural Working Drawings**

By: Wakita, Osamu A.; Linde, Richard M.

Published By: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Edition: 3

Price: \$99.99

A lengthy and thorough review is usually given with each listing to enable the intended buyer to appraise the book. These books are however available in a range of formats depending on the suitability of the user. It is pertinent to note however, that with the differing formats, come differing prices for the same item. The adobe format is most widely used in any case.

In addition to the price, the ISBN, published date, file size, and security features are also indicated. Security features may include restricted printing and copying, presence of expiring, lending ability, etc. Reading Aloud, a feature which comes with adobe format may either be available or non-available as the case may be. Suitable devices for accessing the document are also indicated.

**Diesel Books**

Over 35,000 titles available in 50 categories are obtainable in this bookstore ([www.diesel-ebooks.com](http://www.diesel-ebooks.com)). As at the time of this research, about 30 listings were offered for the Architecture category. Sub categories of Architecture includes Interior design, planning, professional practice, study and teaching. These books are available in a variety of formats ranging from Adobe to mobi. As usual, a brief preamble is given with each listing.

**Amazon.com**

This is the one of the largest and the oldest bookstore available on the web containing ebooks and electronic documents of all kinds on its catalogue. 1,079 listings are available for

downloads in the Architecture category, the largest observed from all the online bookstores visited during the research. A variety of formats is also available especially the common adobe format. A notable difference about this bookstore is that a rating is included with each listing to assist consumers in the choice of books.

## **5.0 Problems Associated With Downloading**

Downloading architectural books on line is a lot advantageous over ordering for paperbacks (i.e. hard copy). One of the main reasons for this is the tediousness associated with shipping these books after they have been purchased to Nigeria especially since most online books stores seldom have branches located in this part of the Continent and the consumer often has to pay for such expensive shipping. Alternatively, downloading architectural books online is relatively easier and cheaper (since no additional charge for shipping is included).

However, little problems are associated with downloading architectural books from the internet. The only “half-problem”, is that downloading of eBooks is server-dependent and thus could take much or less time depending on the speed of your connection. There is also the risk that your connection to the server could be terminated at any point due to fluctuations in the system or power outage. Nevertheless, it could be argued on its favour that this is a user-related problem and hence is not a problem in downloading eBooks per se. Moreover, purchasing an eBook gives you the right to download it as many times as agreed in the terms of contract.

The use of a download accelerators like Internet Download Accelerator (Ida) which helps in managing downloads. It quickens the downloading process and allows for fragmented downloading in the event that the connection with the server is lost, so that it can be continued when it is re-established.

## **5.1 Advantages of the Architectural electronic books over the Paperback format**

In most online architectural books, text can be searched automatically, and cross-referenced using hyperlinks. This makes these e-books an excellent choice of format for works that depends on such searching and cross-reference capabilities, such as seminar papers, researches, etc.

The bulkiness of traditional paperback makes only a few available to one at a particular time, architectural eBooks on the other hand requires less physical space is to store. Thus, hundreds (or thousands) may be carried together on one device. Approximately 500 average e-books can be stored on one CD (equivalent to several shelves of print books). Because they take up little space, these books are offered indefinitely, with no 'out of print' date, allowing authors to continue to earn royalties indefinitely (copyright law permitting) and allowing readers to find older works.

Readers who have difficulty reading print books can benefit from the adjustment of text size and font face. Text-to-speech software can be used to automatically convert the books to audio books. In addition, some e-books devices allow reading in low light or even total darkness, with a backlit device.

Devices for reading these architectural eBooks may be more comfortable for some to hold because it does not need to be held open like a paperback. It can also be set down and read hands-free.

With Internet access becoming ubiquitous in industrial nations, the ease of distributing the books is a considerable advantage. E-books cost little to transfer, and such an operation occurs quickly. Readers can begin reading as soon as the download completes, or sooner, depending on the e-book formats' capabilities, without the need to visit a bookstore.

Architectural books in electronic form are usually cheaper than same books on paper, and some are free. This is because the cost of shipping and delivery has been eliminated from the process, but it rather entails easy downloading of the books. This downloading could take only seconds or minutes, while sending a paper book takes days or weeks.

Finally, in this jet-age, some architectural books exist only in electronic form. The era of paperbacks is gradually being eliminated.

## **5.2 Disadvantages over the Paperback format**

A large fraction of the disadvantages of Architectural eBooks lies in the device required to display it. Many e-book formats require special software to display them, which may not be freely available or compatible with a reader's existing computing device. As an e-book is dependent on equipment to be read, it can be affected by faults in external hardware or software, such as hard disk drive failure. More still, these e-book devices requires power for its operation, they are significantly more expensive than most traditional paper books and they are thus more likely to be stolen than these paper books.

There is a growing concern that in the distant future, these book format will not be readable by future e-book reading devices.

Paper books are less fragile than book readers. You can sit on a book, jump on it, drop it from a height, yet it will remain readable. However, the pages of paper books are subject to ripping. Both varieties of books suffer from potential liquid damage (eg. spills, submersion etc.). More still, if an e-book device is stolen, lost, or broken beyond repair, the replacement cost is often substantially more than that of a traditional book. In addition, all books stored on the device are lost along with it.

Anti-circumvention techniques may be used to restrict what the user may do with an e-book. For instance, it may not be possible to transfer ownership of an e-book to another person, though such a transaction is common with physical books. Some can phone home to track readers and reading habits, restrict printing, or arbitrarily modify reading material. This includes restricting the copying and distribution of works in the public domain through the use of "click-wrap" licensing, effectively limiting the rights of the public to freely distribute, sell or use texts in the public domain.

Screen resolution is lower than paper, for instance the screen resolution of Amazon Kindle is 167 ppi versus 600-2400 ppi for a typical laser printer. In addition, some older e-book

devices cannot be viewed in bright sunlight, but this problem does not exist for modern e-book devices, because they use e-ink technology.

From a publisher's point of view, architectural e-books can in some cases be hacked, or disseminated without approval from the author or publisher. The ease with which an electronic document may be copied means that a single unprotected document may be used to replicate an unlimited number of perfect copies.

## **6.0 Conclusion**

In a previous era, this research would probably have entailed longer hours of endless poring over misty and dusty paperbacks in libraries, painstakingly searching for relevant materials to be used and more still, trying to cross-reference one material with another. With the advent of electronic books on the web, however, these processes have been thoroughly simplified into a series of clicks done at one's convenience and most especially without stress.

This is one of the many benefits of online architectural books; effectively reducing the amount of labour and indeed capital needed in research work.

The web, as the name implies has brought about connections, which formerly would have been deemed impossible. Through online architectural books, the last shroud of "knowledge invisibility" is ripped apart and like the biblical story, everyone can now access the holies of holies without the need for an intermediary. Knowledge and information is thus available rather than restricted to a certain sect, or race. Since the world is thus become a global market for architectural goods and services, competition is thus enhanced because a free and fair market is obtainable to all.

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The architecture of light: architectural lighting design concepts and techniques. A textbook of procedures and practices for the architect, interior designer and lighting designer. 337 Pages·2012·10.49 MB·18,029 Downloads·New! Architectural Patterns: Uncover essential patterns in the most indispensable realm of enterprise architecture. 458 Pages·2017·8.36 MB·9,925 Downloads·New! Learn the importance of architectural and design patterns in producing and sustaining next Computer System Architecture-Morris Mano third edition. 524 Pages·2014·10.89 MB·98,764 Downloads. M. Morris Mano .11 Computer architecture is concerned with the structure and behavior. is explained