

Further Submission By ReadHowYouWant Pty Ltd

Having read the initial report, it is clear that the Publishing Industry does not support the initial report.

What is of particular concern to our company is that the initial report may have a devastating effect on the provision of accessible format materials in Australia.

With the aging population, large number of migrants who are not used to non phonetic words (English is full of non phonetic words), and people with vision impairment and language based reading difficulties, possibly over 20% of the population cannot conveniently read standard editions of books. This is a very sizable percentage of the population.

The report does not seem to contemplate that individual editions of books can be produced at around the same cost as a standard edition.

The report does not contemplate that literacy can be improved if readers can choose individual formats to suit their vision, linguistic background or their way of processing information.

Personalizing books to suit readers will positively impact Australian literacy rates.

Currently, if an Australian publisher has rights to publish a book, under the Disability Discrimination Act, the publishers are required to provide those materials to people in accessible formats. If a standard format edition of a book is published in the US and an Australian importer /bookseller imports and sells the book, how is the Australian consumer who cannot read, or does not want to read, the standard edition of a book, going to get the book in a format they can read?

The US publisher will not be bound by the Australian legislation.

It is not possible to say that people should use American accessible formats. The same rules do not apply for American publishers – they do not have to produce accessible formats like publishers here in Australia are required to do. Americans use another Braille standard. They will use American voices for audio. And so on.

Will the importer be required to produce accessible editions?

ReadHowYouWant believes that you need to address this problem of accessible formats.

Changing the current rules will have a number of effects in the areas of print on demand books, books personalized for individual readers and on the dissemination of books in multiple electronic formats. As this is likely to be where the growth in publishing is likely to occur, and as Australian publishers have a more equal access in an electronic world, ReadHowYouWant thinks it would be a good idea to consider what changing the rules are going to do to our publishing exports and their growth over time.

Chris Stephen

Founder

ReadHowYouWant