

Innovative Models for Digital Reading Promotion in University Libraries: A Case Study of the Partnership between Chongqing University Library and JD Reading (Postprint)

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[Method/Process] Using literature research and case analysis methods, this study explores the dilemmas faced by libraries in digital reading promotion and the advantages possessed by e-commerce platforms. Taking the cooperation between Chongqing University Library and JD Reading as an example, it studies the cooperation model, analyzes the cooperation effectiveness, proposes cooperation recommendations, and reveals the significance of such cooperation.

[Results/Conclusion] The cooperation between university libraries and e-commerce platforms not only enriches collection resources but also significantly enhances readers' reading experience, providing a new model and important reference basis for libraries' digital reading promotion work.

Full Text

Innovative Models for Digital Reading Promotion in University Libraries: A Case Study of Chongqing University Library's Partnership with JD Reading

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Abstract

[Purpose/Significance] Through research on the current development status of digital reading promotion and readers' reading needs, this paper proposes establishing cooperative relationships between libraries and e-commerce platforms to promote digital reading by leveraging their respective industry advantages. **[Method/Process]** Using literature research and case analysis methods, this study explores the dilemmas faced by libraries in digital reading promotion and the advantages of e-commerce platforms. Taking the cooperation between Chongqing University Library and JD Reading as an example, it examines the cooperation model, analyzes its effectiveness, proposes suggestions, and reveals its significance. **[Result/Conclusion]** The cooperation between university libraries and e-commerce platforms not only enriches collection resources but also significantly enhances readers' reading experience, providing a new model and important reference for libraries' digital reading promotion efforts.

Keywords: reading promotion; innovation model; effectiveness; evaluation; university library

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China's government work report first proposed "advocating nationwide reading" in 2014, and Premier Li Keqiang reiterated "advocating nationwide reading and building a scholarly society" in 2015 [1-2]. Within just a few years, against the backdrop of government advocacy and nationwide action, reading promotion activities have flourished across the country, with libraries rightfully becoming the organizers of such initiatives. The 2016 national reading survey revealed that digital reading contact rates had reached 68.2%, representing a major highlight [3]. In the same year, the "13th Five-Year Plan for Nationwide Reading Development" explicitly stated the need to "improve the quality and level of digital reading" [4]. As internet, mobile terminal, and new media technologies continue to develop, digital reading will undoubtedly become the primary form of reading for citizens. Libraries should fully tap their potential, innovate service models, and do well in promotion and guidance work to capitalize on the benefits brought by digital reading [5].

University libraries allocate over 50% of their budgets annually to digital resource procurement, and faculty and students have long been accustomed to using PCs, tablets, mobile phones, and other electronic terminals for literature searches and book reading [6]. The normalization of digital reading on campus provides more possibilities for libraries to carry out reading promotion. Taking the University Library Reading Promotion Case Competition as an example, analyzing 68 finalist cases from aspects such as activity themes, formats, and promotional methods to reading selection reveals that the vast majority of excellent cases involve digital reading [7,8]. University libraries clearly recognize that digital reading, as a convenient reading method, is the preferred strategy

for attracting young readers. However, digital reading promotion in university libraries remains in its infancy, with problems such as overly formalized activities, limited influence, poor sustainability, lack of quality evaluation, and absence of reader behavior analysis. Meanwhile, traditional digital reading resource providers such as Superstar, Shusheng, and Founder lack innovation, with services seriously disconnected from reader needs, weak industry competition awareness, and lagging industry development.

University libraries need to break industry traditions, introduce new mechanisms, and innovate digital reading promotion models. By leveraging “Internet Plus” and big data development, they should normalize and sustain digital reading promotion, creating convenient and rich reading experiences for faculty and students while achieving precise proactive push services to make digital reading promotion more intelligent [9]. E-commerce platforms with large-scale business backgrounds, such as Amazon, JD.com, and Dangdang, not only possess strong brand appeal but also have excellent service quality, advanced management models, and solid data analysis capabilities, making them the preferred partners for university libraries [10-12]. By leveraging the powerful resource management systems, excellent application interfaces, rich reading content, and user behavior analysis capabilities of well-known e-commerce platforms, university libraries can greatly solve pain points and difficulties in digital reading promotion.

2 Cooperation Model

E-commerce experience and technological advantages have become the bargaining chips for e-commerce platforms entering the digital reading field. In recent years, JD has invested heavily in self-publishing and book crowdfunding, emphasizing market and reader demand-driven book production. By using big data to analyze book sales data and user consumption behavior, it has innovated by having publishers handle all editing, design, and promotion work except for ISBN and printing, a practice that has brought tremendous impact to the e-book industry [13]. Chongqing University Library values JD’s advantages in resource content, software and hardware technology, user experience, data maintenance, and economic costs, breaking with tradition to actively seek cooperation. By leveraging JD’s social platform, the library addresses shortcomings in digital reading promotion and opens a completely new landscape for digital reading promotion work.

2.1 Cooperation Mechanism China’s e-book market has entered a period of rapid development. The previous simple scanning model that ignored copyright is gradually shrinking and exiting the market. Self-published e-book databases like the “Blue Book Database” from the Social Sciences Academic Press have begun to appear, but their numbers are limited and have not formed scale. The participation of library suppliers such as Beijing Rentian, Zhejiang Xinhua, and Wuhan Sanxin has established new transaction platforms and service systems, but these remain immature due to incomplete resources and channels.

Libraries lack initiative and voice in the e-book industry chain and need to actively innovate, broaden channels, optimize structure, and fulfill their important social functions of knowledge preservation and reading promotion during industry transformation [13].

Against this backdrop, Chongqing University Library and JD Reading actively built an open strategic cooperation mechanism, leveraging their respective dominant positions in the e-book market and university library technology. They established a “digital reading platform” to actively explore and innovate e-book service models, helping the JD Reading platform transform toward the industry market. Utilizing JD’s brand and resource advantages, they thoroughly resolved issues of new book copyrights, quantity, and mobile reading promotion to jointly promote the healthy development of digital reading.

In this cooperation, the library is responsible for digital reading promotion and reader feedback collection, while JD handles user experience improvement, copyright issues, and new book quantity problems. Through JD’s cooperation with authors and publishers, the partnership meets readers’ needs for new book digital and mobile reading, thereby connecting the upstream and downstream industrial chain of digital reading. The simplification of book publishing cycles under the new service model will greatly promote the growth of new book quantities. JD Reading leverages its resource advantages in the book field, combined with Chongqing University Library’s influence in the library industry, to actively explore cooperation and service models in the print book domain. By transforming JD’s technical architecture to directly connect with Chongqing University Library’s business management system, the partnership enables direct book purchasing from JD’s portal without third-party intermediate platforms, automatically identifying Chongqing University users and comparing with library holdings. This ultimately realizes patron-driven acquisitions (PDA), maximizing the efficiency of library procurement funds and ensuring purchases meet actual needs.

2.2 Resource Attributes Currently, it is not uncommon for libraries to have over ten thousand e-book titles, but problems such as incomplete categories, outdated publication dates, and poor browsing functions seriously affect the effectiveness of digital reading promotion. Relying on JD Group’s platform advantages, JD Reading cooperates with publishers nationwide and has certain advantages in e-book copyrights. The JD Reading Campus Edition launched through cooperation with Chongqing University Library currently provides over 200,000 e-books, all legitimate books authorized by publishers. Seventy percent of these books were published after 2010, covering more than 20 categories including economics and finance, social sciences, literature, management, science and technology, history, medicine, and teaching materials, with new books updated weekly.

2.3 Usage Methods The JD Reading Campus Edition developed by Chongqing University Library and JD Reading focuses on mobile reading, supporting mainstream formats such as ePub and PDF as well as multimedia e-books, allowing readers to enjoy refined reading experiences anytime and anywhere. Data is installed on JD's cloud servers, and readers can remotely access all e-book resources on the server through account login from any location. Reader account authorization is designed in two ways: (1) Readers apply for a JD Reading account by filling in their mobile phone number and campus card number on the webpage, with the program backend automatically verifying identity information against the library's reader database and activating the university's JD Reading account; (2) Administrators import reader phone numbers to batch-activate accounts for readers.

2.4 Later Maintenance What Chongqing University Library values is not only JD Reading's existing collection of over 200,000 e-books but also its annual growth scale of 30,000-50,000 e-books. The fastest e-books are updated within 20 days after print publication, while ensuring book quality—all listed books are legitimate books authorized by publishers. The platform will continue to increase the number of foreign language e-books in the future.

The JD Reading Campus Edition references JD's e-commerce APP, setting up functional modules such as reading rooms, bookshelves, and circles in the application interface. It retains readers' collections and reading records, displays readers' reading evaluations and experiences, and strives to provide university readers with legitimate, high-quality e-books and reading exchange platforms. JD Reading APP can provide statistics on reading content categories, reading duration, reading time periods, and other data, with intuitive graphical analysis interfaces for readers to view. Powerful data collection and management provide foundational support for better reading promotion services.

The bookshelf module automatically adds collected books and provides search and multiple sorting displays, such as cover mode, title sorting, and time sorting, along with editing and organization functions. The book reading interface provides not only basic functions such as table of contents and note editing but also adds full-text keyword search and sharing functions. For selected words, it also supports third-party dictionary lookup, providing convenient assistance for obscure words and foreign language translation.

Readers can learn about their reading situation in detail through the reading experience function, such as books read, reading duration, number of book reviews, and book type distribution. All data information is visualized and displayed, with support for link functions to view detailed information. Visualized data display is a major advantage of digital reading over print reading and should become a powerful tool for attracting and facilitating readers. Library managers can understand the registration and usage situation of all faculty and students based on visualized team displays, such as daily registration numbers, total reading duration, book catalog trends, percentages of browsed book categories,

and detailed information on peak usage times each day.

3 Cooperation Results

3.1 Resource Upgrade The publication year distribution of JD Reading's collection of over 200,000 legitimate e-books is shown in Figure 1 [Figure 1: see original paper]. Further statistics on JD e-book types show that 12 major categories—including social sciences, computer and internet, economics/finance, management, fiction, industrial technology, textbooks/exams, foreign language learning, foreign language originals, science, motivation and success, and literature—each exceed 10,000 volumes (see Figure 2 [Figure 2: see original paper]). Good resources are key to attracting readers. To improve digital reading promotion effectiveness, libraries must continuously enrich their collection resources to meet readers' changing needs. These 200,000+ digital readings have considerably enriched Chongqing University Library's digital collection resources, giving it greater confidence in carrying out digital reading promotion.

3.2 Service Upgrade The JD Reading Campus Edition adopts a flat application design, emphasizing book category retrieval and recommendation functions, and supports one-click search and offline reading. Weekly updated book catalogs are directly displayed in the new arrivals section, and the system also recommends some popular titles. The browsing frequency and book review system constitute a dual evaluation system, providing readers with authentic and rich reading suggestions. The circle module of JD Reading Campus Edition supports readers in freely publishing book reviews. The circle function also incorporates social features—following, sharing, commenting, and liking increase communication among readers and provide opportunities for readers to spontaneously participate in reading promotion.

3.3 User Behavior Analysis Upgrade As reader reading behavior data continuously accumulates, readers' habits, preferences, and needs gradually become clear. JD's powerful user behavior data analysis provides strong support for proactively carrying out precise e-book recommendation services. For example, during readers' habitual reading time periods, the system pushes other books in the resource database that are closely related to readers' recent selections, such as books by the same author, new books of the same type, popular books, or recent readings by friends in the circle. The more reader usage data accumulates, the higher the precision of proactive recommendations becomes [15]. This form of promotion guided by reader behavior analysis is the service capability most lacking in print reading and traditional digital reading providers. Unlike previous blind reading promotion, this promotion form based on reader behavior analysis will greatly improve digital reading promotion effectiveness and reader application experience.

Figure 3 [Figure 3: see original paper] shows statistics on registered user num-

bers and reading catalogs since the launch of JD Reading Campus Edition. Through E-mail notifications, library homepages on campus PCs and mobile terminals, and reports from mainstream media such as People's Daily, Tencent, and Sina, first-day registrations reached 3,212 people, exceeding 20,000 within two weeks, with daily average reading catalogs exceeding 4,000 volumes. These data have extremely important reference value for libraries and serve as important sample data for future digital reading promotion work.

4 Cooperation Suggestions

4.1 Usage Rights The cooperation between university libraries and e-commerce reading platforms brings free reading feasts to current faculty and students, but graduating alumni cannot benefit. How to quickly include Chongqing University's 400,000 alumni to enjoy the convenience of digital reading will be the focus of deepening cooperation in the next step and a solid step forward for library digital reading promotion work. In addition to simply increasing budget, the key issues libraries should consider are APP interface adjustments, function enrichment, and resource type screening brought about by large user increases. Libraries should remain true to their original aspiration, always prioritize reader experience, take digital reading promotion as their mission, and continuously innovate service models. On this basis, further expanding the user scope will enable the sustainable and healthy development of digital campus reading promotion.

4.2 Resource Timeliness Although the 200,000+ e-books involved in this cooperation have enriched Chongqing University Library's digital collection, this is only a superficial increase in collection resources and cannot fundamentally change the current situation of digital book scarcity. Libraries only have usage rights to these 200,000+ e-books. If cooperation stops, the prosperity will end abruptly, and libraries will be returned to their original state. Therefore, libraries should selectively incorporate some digital books into their permanent collection. Through faculty and student reading and evaluation of these 200,000+ digital books, libraries can identify books for procurement. Using patron-driven acquisition and leveraging JD Reading's discourse power and advantages in copyright, these popular high-quality e-books can be permanently incorporated into the collection to continuously enrich library resources.

Although the current e-book resource update frequency is once per week, readers still feel satisfied. However, this satisfaction is based on the foundation of 200,000+ brand-new e-books. As time passes, readers will have fewer and fewer new resources to read. If resource updates are not timely and cannot meet readers' reading needs, readers will lose interest in JD Reading Campus Edition. Libraries will open dedicated sections to collect readers' specific needs for digital reading and timely transmit these needs to JD Reading, which will accelerate the update frequency and quantity of digital reading, normalize resource updates, and ensure readers discover something new every time they enter JD

Campus Reading.

4.3 Smart Services JD, which maintains deep cooperation with Tencent, has the best service channels. Leveraging the two major social software platforms QQ and WeChat to provide readers with intelligent reading reminders and recommendations will be the killer feature for JD Reading Campus Edition to strengthen proactive services and improve user experience. Customized and intelligent services such as new book arrivals, reading reminders, book review updates, and reading circle interactions will serve readers subtly, guiding them to participate in reading and develop reading habits, truly using technological means to promote digital reading.

5 Cooperation Significance

Cooperation between libraries and industry leaders such as Superstar, Founder Apabi, and Shusheng Zhijia has become extremely rigid, lacking competition and lagging in development. The performance of these major companies in recent years has been mediocre, and the digital reading market urgently needs fresh blood to catalyze industry innovation and stimulate new development momentum [16]. The more aggressive e-commerce platforms have distinctive advantages and clear strengths in key technical areas such as user resources, brand appeal, resource operations, data analysis, and reading terminals. Cooperation between libraries and e-commerce reading platforms undoubtedly introduces new competitors to the traditional digital reading ecosystem. This new competition will greatly stimulate the development of the digital reading industry, with faster resource updates and better service experiences bringing new momentum to digital reading promotion work.

The big data analysis technology and capabilities of e-commerce platforms provide effective solutions to the pain point of reader behavior analysis and accurate prediction in library digital reading promotion work. Moreover, the large amount of existing user behavior data from e-commerce platforms and interconnection with social media such as QQ and WeChat can become important foundations for libraries' precise reading promotion. The huge potential reader resources and application of new technologies are of great significance for library digital reading promotion work.

The cooperation with JD Reading opens new horizons for libraries in selecting digital reading service providers, and the entire cooperation model can serve as an important reference template for major libraries. Good cooperation results largely affirm this partnership, but the problems and shortcomings exposed in the cooperation deserve more consideration from other libraries. Each library can adjust the cooperation model according to its own situation based on this foundation to improve digital reading promotion effectiveness through e-commerce platforms.

In today's high-pressure and fast-paced lifestyle, it has become a luxury for

the public to quietly finish a print book. However, digital reading through mobile phones, tablets, and other electronic terminals during fragmented time can effectively compensate for people's reading needs. The cooperation between libraries and e-commerce platforms is a bold attempt and a brand-new digital reading promotion model. Although effective, it still has shortcomings. In digital reading promotion, libraries should always adapt to industry and market development, leverage "technology dividends," boldly innovate, and prioritize creating rich and convenient reading experiences.

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Keywords: reading promotion; innovation model; results; evaluation; university library

Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.

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