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■ By Cheryl LaGuardia

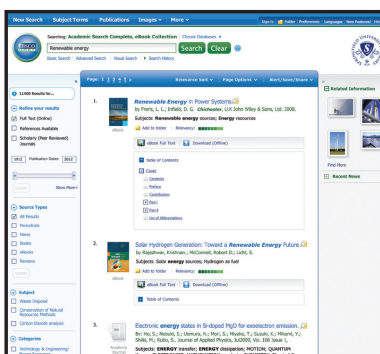
CONTENT eBooks on EBSCOhost (EBoE) is EBSCO's collection of more than 265,000 ebooks across a spectrum of disciplines and subjects, integrated into the powerful and familiar EBSCOhost interface. I've gone on record saying that I very much like this interface, so the story here is really about the acquisition options, discoverability, delivery, and content of the collections available.

The following acquisition methods

may be used alone or in combination. Custom collections can be created by EBSCO's collection development team, who will hand-select titles to complement a library's current holdings. EBSCO also offers a patron-driven acquisition (PDA) program through which librarians pre-select titles by publisher, subject, or other criteria and then expose them through the library's OPAC; a purchase is triggered only when a book is used.

Users may browse high-interest titles in various topic areas and employ the EBSCOhost "Collection Manager" (see ow.ly/84fyd for details) to select them. Prepackaged "Subject Sets" offer frontlist books. Lastly, selectors can browse "New and Notable" titles from 24 popular,

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frequently updated ebook topics each month.

The volumes chosen using these methods can be owned, subscribed to, or leased. There are three options for ownership: unlimited users, three simultaneous users, or one user at a time. Subscriptions are available annually to high-interest subject anthologies of ebook titles, while short-term leases—available for one, seven, 14, or 28 days—give patrons more immediate access. The PDA option (see ow.ly/8rl9R) offers title-by-title user-triggered license upgrades: library selectors can stipulate when a license upgrade takes place for each title, if more than one user wants access at a time. Discounts are available for members of consortia.

USABILITY It's a breeze to use this product on both a Dell laptop and an iPad 2. On the laptop, viewing the whole EBSCO user interface is easy, with a search box at top screen left; a "Browse by Category" column down screen right (the 20 options include Children's & Young Adult Fiction, Biographies & Memoirs, Computer Science, Fiction, Health & Medicine, History, Political Science, Psychology, Reference, and Religion); and highlights and featured ebooks at screen right.

After creating an account, I scanned the "Highlights" and "Featured Ebooks" sections. Highlighted titles span a spectrum of subjects such as astrophysics, biology, business, economics, dentistry, film studies, political science, women's studies, gaming, and history. "Featured Ebooks" was showcasing Religion, where I found a number of works of interest to researchers in Near Eastern languages and civilizations—David Cook's *Understanding Jihad* (Univ. of California, 2005), Andrew Rippins's *Muslims: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (Taylor & Francis/Routledge, 2005), and *Islam and the Blackamerican: Looking Toward the Third Resurrection* (Oxford Univ., 2005), for example.

In the fiction category, the second

book listed was Georgette Heyer's *Friday's Child*. Clicking on full text reveals the colorful book cover, along with a quote from Margaret Drabble about Heyer. Two views of the material are available: readers can see the text accompanied by a linked table of contents running down the left side of the screen or use full-screen view and advance through the pages one by one.

On the iPad 2, I logged into Harvard's library portal and searched the catalog for *fridays child*, clicked the online link within the record, and was taken into EBoE in a second or so. At this point, I started adding items to my folder, which allows for later reconnection with the material. Using EBSCOhost's search form to look up "Greenblatt" returned *The Blackwell Guide to Literary Theory*. EBSCO provides a list of pages from the ebook that mention Stephen Greenblatt and an Associated Press News link that leads to an AP News article from 2011 announcing Professor Greenblatt's *The Swerve* as the National Book Award nonfiction winner. All in all, this was a seamless and useful search and find operation.

My search for "interviewing skills" turned up no results, but the system's "SmartText Searching" found *201 Knock-out Answers to Tough Interview Questions: The Ultimate Guide to Handling the New Competency-Based Interview Style*. As I reviewed the table of contents, I saw the subhead in Chapter 2: "Keep SOAR in Mind." In less time than it would take to page through the print, readers can click through to the relevant chapter to find that SOAR means "Situation or Obstacle, Actions, Result." The export manager allows users to save citations formatted for BibTeX, CITAVI, EasyBib, EndNote, MARC21, ProCite, Reference Manager, Refworks, Zotero, and generic bibliographic software.

PRICING The cost of the books is the individual publisher's list price; there are no fees or other costs.

BOTTOM LINE With this excellent, flexible product, I can finally see the light at the end of the tunnel for functional, scholarly, ebook-based research. By integrating access within the library catalog and making the EBSCOhost interface the basis for search and discovery, EBSCO has performed a major service to readers and researchers alike.

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