

**A Resolution to Ensure Equitable Access to All Formats
of Electronic Content Through Libraries**

Whereas, American Library Association (ALA) Policy 50.15.1 "Principles for the Networked World" states:

"Libraries are crucial to assuring that society benefits from the promises of technology but are increasingly challenged by a number of critical policy debates. There are seven policy areas intrinsic to libraries, technology, and the role that libraries play in connecting people to an increasingly networked world. These specific areas are:

- intellectual freedom, the right to access and express ideas;
- privacy, the freedom to choose the degree to which personal information is made available;
- equitable access to information;
- intellectual property;
- infrastructure, physical and social architectures within the context of the networked world;
- content, including public and government information; and
- information literacy, the ability to access and effectively participate in the networked world;" and

Whereas, The rapid evolution of technology is accelerating the transition of information from print to digital; and

Whereas, Restrictions to access and usage of digital content and devices are being imposed due to implementations of digital rights management (DRM) through technologies used by hardware manufacturers, publishers, and copyright holders; and

Whereas, Equity of access is threatened by inadequate library funding and inadequate access to electronic content and distribution infrastructures; and

Whereas, Libraries fulfill a unique and essential role through the stewardship of content and information, regardless of format; and

Whereas, Archives of digital electronic content via libraries is the best way to ensure future access to said content; and

Whereas, Without libraries as intermediaries to commercial electronic content, said content is controlled solely by for-profit organizations with no obligation to provide for and protect access should the commercial electronic content be either prohibitively expensive, difficult to access or cease to exist; now, therefore, be it

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Resolved, That the American Library Association (ALA):

- (1) Calls for the formation of a Presidential Task Force, integrating the OITP Working Group, charged with studying:
 - challenges and potential solutions in libraries for improved electronic content access, distribution and preservation systems, and infrastructure in response to the creation and migration of materials from print to electronic access;
 - collaborations that provide electronic content and distribution infrastructure for libraries, including the development of a list of potentially practical, effective collaborations and courses of action that ALA and libraries around the country could engage in;
 - current and emerging assistive technology that provides people with sensory and physical disabilities the opportunity to access electronic information hitherto inaccessible through libraries;
 - methods of encouraging solutions through libraries for electronic content access that use formats and standards that work across DRM-free device platforms;
 - options for compromise agreements between the library and publishing communities regarding access to digital content; and
 - the need for any ALA policies required to further the creation of an effective electronic content and distribution infrastructure for libraries; and
- (2) Directs the Presidential Task Force to submit a report to Council at ALA Annual Conference in 2011 containing recommendations for the Association.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association
Monday, June 28, 2010
In Washington, DC