Rob Warren

Topic Report: Publishing Innovations in Audiobooks

With the invention of the internet, audiobooks emerged as a significant innovation in the publishing industry. In 2008, Amazon, one of the most innovative and forward-thinking companies in history, bought then audiobook company Audible for $300 million. As a leading innovator in their industry, Amazon knew audiobooks would be a part of the future for publishing. Audiobooks have helped improve education, made books more accessible, and transformed the future of the publishing industry to a digital platform.

Audiobooks make books and stories more accessible to anyone with a smart device or computer. People now listen to books on a long drive, or with headphones on the beach. In fact, according to a Statista study, audiobook sales revenue has increased from less than $1 billion in 2009 to $2.5 billion in 2017, and growing. With technology becoming more dominant in our everyday lives, audiobooks are able to reach more and more people.

Audiobooks have not only made books more accessible to everyone, but have also helped education. According to an eSchool News article last month, there are an estimated 26 million students with learning and reading disabilities, and learning from audiobooks can allow them to improve their education. There are also many reading programs, such as Project Read and Wilson Reading System, that use audiobooks as tools to aid disabled learners.

The future for audiobooks is bright, according to a Forbes article titled: “Audiobooks Are Officially the Publishing Industry’s 2018 Trend.” The article points out that in the first quarter of 2018, digital audio was up 32.1% while e-book sales actually fell 3.2% in the same quarter. Audiobooks are a strong presence in the publishing industry, and with the consistently growing revenues, could potentially drive the entire publishing industry to digital audio.

Works Cited:

<https://www.eschoolnews.com/2019/04/04/audiobooks-great-equalizer-learning-differences/>

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/249854/audiobook-industry-size-in-the-us/>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/adamrowe1/2018/08/31/audiobooks-are-officially-the-publishing-industrys-2018-trend/#66a07ab5e8f1>