

Kindle begins e-book revolution in India

In a unique revolution in the publishing world, two Indian books have made their debut in the virtual world. Converted into the e-book format, both these books can now be downloaded on the e-book reader, Kindle.

Published by Indian publishing house Wisdom Tree, 'Mantras: The Sacred Chants' by Swami Veda Bharati and 'Yogini: Unfolding the Goddess Within' by Shambhavi Chopra can now be downloaded within minutes on the e-book reader.

The e-book versions, which have been uploaded on online retailer Amazon's website, can only be downloaded on Kindle.

Talking about the response to the e-books since last week, Shobit Arya, publisher at Wisdom Tree, said: 'The results in the first week itself are absolutely amazing. We sold the first Kindle version of Mantras within hours of it being available and sold eight copies within the first three days itself.'

Wisdom Tree has sent 15 of its books to be e-formatted on Kindle of which two have been done successfully while the rest are still in the pipeline, Arya added.

The only hitch in this is that Kindle is still not very popular in India unlike in the US. But according to Arya, it's just a matter of time before the rage catches up here and these e-book reader gadgets are readily available here.

'Online retailer Amazon whose initiative Kindle is, started shipping these e-book readers to almost a hundred countries, including India, recently. According to statistics shared by the company, they sell 48 Kindle copies for every 100 physical copies of books that they offer in both formats,' Arya said.

'Five months ago they were selling 35 Kindle copies per 100 physical versions. Amazon thinks that ultimately they will sell more books in Kindle editions than they do in physical editions because it's easier and faster to acquire, don't need physical space to store like normal books and more eco-friendly,' he added.

Taking the e-book step further, Wisdom Tree has also tied up with US book retail chain, Barnes and Noble, which has announced its own e-book reader called Nook. Therefore, books published by Wisdom Tree will soon be available through Nook as well.

'We all agree that content is the king but distribution of content is the real king-maker. In book trade especially the biggest challenge across the globe has been distribution. Technology has the potential to be a great leveller,' Arya said.

'The world seems to be getting condensed in our palms - from communication to banking, from music to stock-broking and now reading - the new gadgets are like genies. The sooner we accept it and adapt ourselves to the changing scenario, the better it is,' he added.

(© IANS / India eNews)