

## Book, Newspaper, and Periodical Prices, 2004-2010

ED3/110.10/No. 268

February 19, 2009

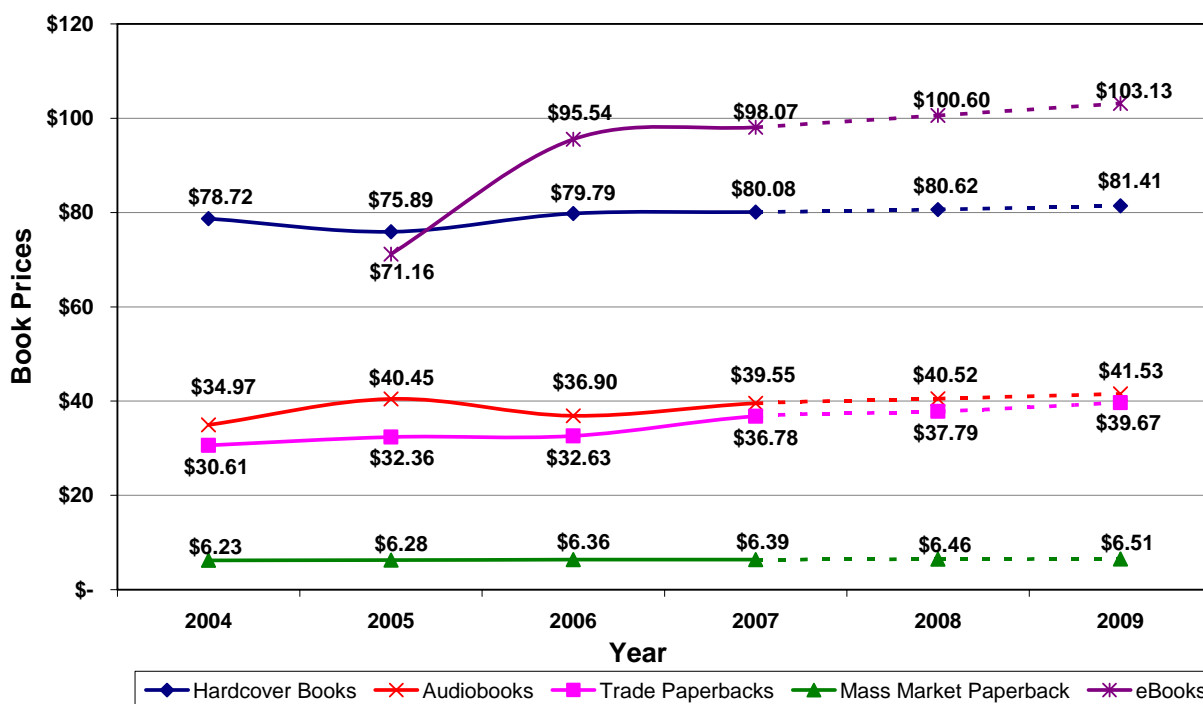
### Books

During times of a slowing economy and the tightening of city, state, and national budgets, it is important to prepare for how to best meet the needs of library patrons. Studying trends in library material price changes helps to anticipate the challenges of collection development. Libraries face ever-increasing prices for materials and on a yearly basis the prices go up and down, but the overall trend is a steady increase in prices.

Trade paperbacks are leading price increases with a 20.2 percent change between 2004 and 2007. Continuing this trend, prices would increase approximately 4 percent per year. (See Chart 1.)

The 2008 Book Prices Fast Facts includes data from 2004 to present and is compiled from the book wholesaler Baker & Taylor and its subsidiary, YBP Library Services. Past data has been compiled from Bowker's Books in Print.

**Chart 1**  
**Average US Book Prices 2004 to 2009**



Source: [http://www.ybp.com/title\\_reports\\_2007.html](http://www.ybp.com/title_reports_2007.html); Bogart, D. (2008)2.  
Note: 2008-09 based on trend analysis

During this same period, audio book prices experienced the second highest increase with a change of 13.1 percent. Although audio book prices tend to fluctuate up and down along with audio book sales, overall prices are trending up 2.5 percent per year. (See Chart 1.)



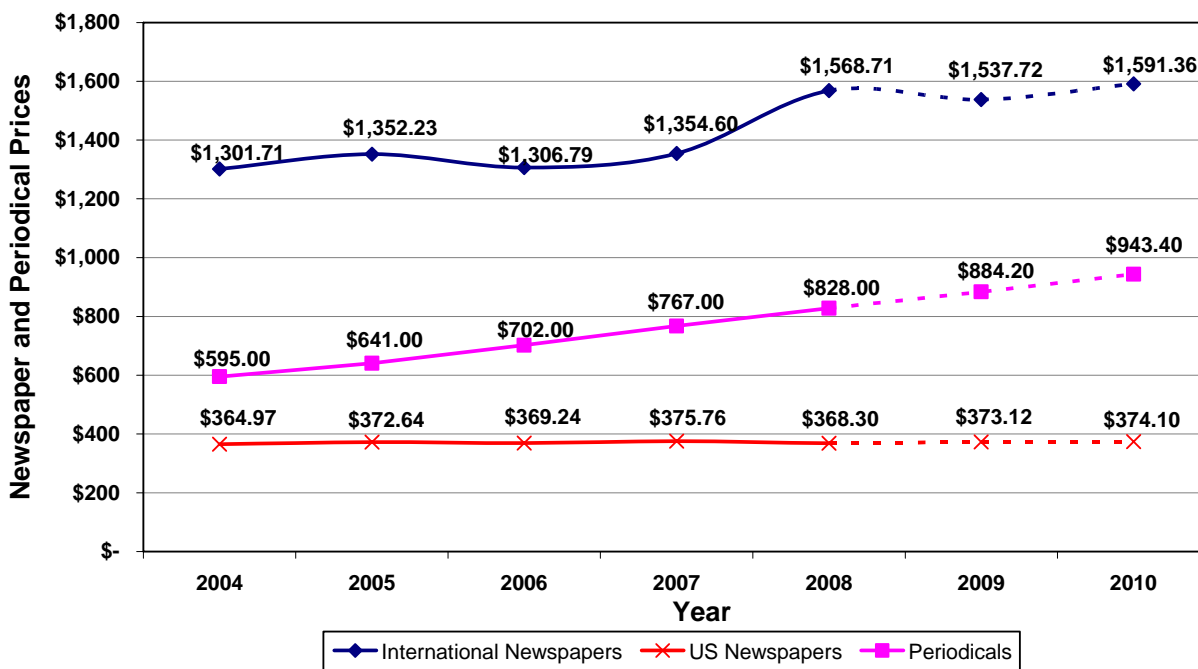
The desire to provide library patrons with materials on multiple platforms is increasing the sales of electronic books (e-books). Prices rose drastically with an increase of 37.8 percent between 2005 and 2006 following an average sales increase of 34.5 percent between 2004 and 2006. YBP Library Services believes that e-book prices have stabilized with market demand. Future price increases are expected to be less volatile, likely following print book pricing trends.<sup>1</sup>

## Newspapers and Periodicals

While the material price of international newspapers has remained steady, the cost of shipping has brought about a recent sharp increase in the absolute price. (See Chart 2.) The number of U.S. newspapers is slowly decreasing and the price change has been relatively small. Increasing popularity of the online news format is forcing some newspapers to keep prices low, or move to online only formats, in order to stay competitive.<sup>3</sup>

Periodical prices rose 39.2 percent between 2004 and 2008. However, prices may increase around 6.7 percent in both 2009 and 2010. (See Chart 2.) According to *The Bowker Annual Library and Book Trade Almanac, 53<sup>rd</sup> Edition*, periodical publishers are looking for better ways to price periodicals because libraries are having difficulty affording print and online versions of journals.<sup>3</sup>

**Chart 2**  
**Average US Newspaper and Periodical**  
**Prices from 2004 to 2010**



Source: Van Orsdel, L., & Born, K. (2008)4; Bogart, D. (2008)5  
Note: 2009-10 based on trend analysis



## Sources

- <sup>1</sup> Bruning, N. (October, 2008). Annual Book Price Update. *YBP Library Services*. Retrieved on November 15, 2008 from [http://www.ybp.com/book\\_price\\_update.html](http://www.ybp.com/book_price_update.html).
- <sup>2</sup> Bogart, D. (ed.). (2008). *The Bowker Annual Library and Book Trade Almanac, 53<sup>rd</sup> Edition*. 2008. New Providence, NJ: R. R. Bowker.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>4</sup> Van Orsdel, L., & Born, K. (2008). Embracing Openness. *Library Journal* (1976), 133(7), 53-8. Retrieved October 28, 2008, from Library Lit & Inf Full Text database.
- <sup>5</sup> Bogart, D. (2008).

### ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Author: Sean Lamborne, DU-LRS Research Fellow  
Library Research Service • 201 East Colfax Avenue, Suite 309 • Denver, Colorado 80203-1799  
Phone 303.866.6900 • E-mail: LRS@LRS.org • Web site: www.LRS.org

Fast Facts – Recent Statistics from the Library Research Service

Colorado State Library • Colorado Department of Education

Library & Information Science Program • Morgridge College of Education • University of Denver

© 2009 • Permission granted to reproduce for nonprofit purposes

