

**Sophie 2.0: From Projects to Publishing
Initiative Two, Part Two
Platform Survey Results**

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A report of results in fulfillment of a grant to the University of Southern California
from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

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1. Introduction

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation funded two initiatives regarding the Sophie e-book authoring and publishing system. Further, the second initiative was divided into two parts.

This document reports results for the second initiative two, part two, called the Platform Survey, was designed to assess publisher attitudes concerning iPad and Android devices as eReading platforms. It was subsequently proposed and accepted by the Mellon Foundation to determine the market benefits, if any, of adding to Sophie the capability of reading e-books on iPad and Android devices. Part one of the initiative is reported in a separate document (see Reference 1).

The second initiative, part two was a two-month project that began July 15, 2010. Information from this survey informed the result of the market analysis perform in part one.

This survey was constructed pursuant to a USC research study funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Scholarly Communications Program titled “Reading Sophie Books on iPad and Android, Initiative Two, Publishing With Sophie - Market Research and Promotion”. Initiative Two was undertaken in parallel with Initiative One, the Exemplary Book Project.

Results of this survey show that publishers believe the both iPad and Android are important to their planning.

Subsequent events in the mobile device market proved that the projections for the market acceptance of these two particular platforms were correct. iPad and Android devices make up over half of the market for mobile devices, and the Sophie Market Analysis further bolstered this result.

2. iPad / Android Survey Structure

This survey was designed to gauge the impact on publishers of adding a feature to Sophie for exporting books in a format suitable for reading on an Apple iPad. The Morey Evans Agency of Denver, CO developed, managed, and collated results, and provided a report of the iPad / Android Survey (see Reference 1). The company specializes in middle-market and emerging clients seeking an integration of traditional and digital media, promotion and media relations, experiential and grassroots marketing.

The survey was very narrowly focused. It had the single purpose of providing data for making an informed decision whether or not to extend Sophie functionality to the iPad and Android platforms based on the importance of the iPad and Android to decision makers in the electronic publishing Industry. Android was added to test the validity of claims that Android was rising rapidly as an iPad competitor, since it appeared that both

iPad and Android readers could be served by the same technology choices. Near term results for the survey were sought so that, if the results were positive, export extension could be added to Sophie to keep it in contention with other solutions in a rapidly evolving market environment. It is thought that having iPad and Android compatibility actually in work will give potential publishing adopters some assurance that these platforms will be supported and will make the effort to attract new users far more productive. The need for an early determination drove many of the design decisions for the survey.

The survey was stated in general terms, without direct reference to Sophie, in order to obtain an unbiased opinion. The survey questions assess how important the iPad and Android platforms are to the electronic publishing strategies of each respondent's company. The survey target population was composed of publishing professionals from trade, university, and academic publishing, providing an overview of the importance of each platform (iPad and Android) within these segments of publishing. A link to the survey was sent out to a select list of publishers and decision-makers at publishing companies via email between October 27 and November 19, 2010.

3. Survey I Results Summary

Question 1: Is iPad compatibility of your electronic books an important part of your publishing strategy?

With a 90% confidence, between 70% and 95% of a population of 5,000 individuals with the same electronic publishing familiarity would respond yes concerning the importance of the iPad in their organizations.

Question 2: Is Android compatibility of your electronic books an important part of your publishing strategy?

With a 90% confidence, between 58% and 88% of a population of 5,000 individuals with the same electronic publishing familiarity would respond yes concerning the importance of Android in their organizations.

Subsequent actual market e-book sales results for these two platforms provide additional confirmation.

The results provided some of the validation needed for a following-on Mellon Foundation grant to USC for development to add iPad and Android capabilities to Sophie.

4. The Design of the Survey

The survey design was based on examining the importance of the iPad and Android as electronic book reading platforms to decision makers in publishing organizations.

Targeting a specific population minimized coverage bias stemming from samples not representative of the population. Sources of coverage bias are typically a less carefully targeted respondent population, unreliable contact information, or lack of incentive or motivation to respond. It became clear that determining the correct non-biased discriminator for isolating decision makers was the overriding issue in crafting a meaningful survey. Thomas Minkus agreed to triage the collected job titles at publishing houses in order to give the best access to decision makers based on his twenty years of experience. Mr. Minkus is the Vice President for Emerging Media of the Frankfurt Book Fair, the largest book fair in the world, comprising the major concentration of publishing executives each year. Using this guidance, it was determined that direct email addresses for specific people with these titles were difficult to obtain and that general email for a survey is typically discarded or not answered by the intended level of person. This suggested strategy that would limit the initial sample in number, which in turn prompted a survey design aimed at improving response rate. Although the sample size was small, the sample represented the thought leaders in electronic publishing, and their opinions have greater weight than a larger, more general survey. The point was to target people who will actually make decisions about which books and tools to use in order to make a go / no-go decision for implementation of new export features for Sophie.

The practices guiding survey design were:

- Find contacts that are likely to have an interest
- Keep the survey short and to the point
- Make answering simple
- Clearly state the purpose
- Avoid coverage bias
- Provide a respondent-friendly survey questionnaire. The question asked must be clear, non offensive and easy to respond to for the subjects under study.

These guidelines were employed with the counsel of USC professor and marketing expert David Weitzner.

The two questions were chosen to get a snapshot of the value of iPad and Android to this group in order to proceed with iPad additions to Sophie as quickly as possible, if warranted by results. The use of a simple, straightforward two-question survey without additional complication was employed to elicit the most reliable near-term measure. A simple one-page Website was used to gather results. (The second survey under the current grant is intended to gauge the need for a longer list of publishing capabilities and will be sent to a much larger group).

5. Survey Raw Results

With a response of 48% from the sample of 55 selected publishing professionals, the results of the survey are:

Question 1: Is iPad compatibility of your electronic books an important part of your publishing strategy?

Responses allowed were: Yes, No, I don't have an opinion.

Result was Yes 80.8%, No 19.2%; No opinion 0%

Question 2: Is Android compatibility of your electronic books an important part of your publishing strategy?

Responses allowed were: Yes, No, I don't have an opinion.

Result was Yes 73.1%, No 26.9%; No opinion 0%

Responders were all qualified professionals at all sizes of publishing organizations, with titles such as: Vice President International Sales, Publisher, Editor in Chief, Vice President Sales, and Publishing Director. Publishing organizations included: QA International, Hachette, Simon & Schuster, Bloomsbury, Penguin Group, Open Letter Books, Yale University Press, Equinox Publishing, Wiley, and Galileo Books.

This survey would have been followed up by a second survey if needed. However, the results provided a statistical basis for proposing the additional export functions for Sophie (see below).

6. Factors Affecting the Outcome

Several factors are significant in evaluating these results:

- First is the meaning of the response rate of 48%. Response rates vary widely depending on the type of relationship the survey provider has with potential respondents. The type of relationship of the survey provider to the respondents is an indicator of the level of response to be expected in relation to other surveys of the same type, and provides a measure of response quality. This survey was of type 'no relationship'. This is the most difficult situation - obtaining responses from those with whom the survey provider has no relationship. No relationship surveys typically have a response of 0% to 20%. The population in the iPad – Android survey was of the 'no relationship' type since the members were not from any unifying organization. There was no common bond between responders beyond working in the same field at an upper level. The response rate of over 48% is significantly higher than the usually expected upper bound for 'no relationship' marketing surveys.
- Second is the quality of the respondent sample. All members of the sample were of a level to speak knowledgeably about e-book platforms in qualified companies and institutions. It was a random sample within the bounds of the expert population.

- Third is the large skewing of the expressed opinion. The respondents show interest in the iPad and Android by responding at a 48% rate and by indicating the desirability of the iPad capability of 80% and Android capability of 73%, both quite high.
- Fourth is the relationship of the sample size to the population size. Research in September 2010 by the Frankfurt Book Fair involving all large and midsize publishers in the United States and the United Kingdom of senior executives indicated that the population of such individuals is approximately 1500. These two countries are among those with highest level of adoption of digital publishing products worldwide. Based on this number, a goal of this survey was to obtain sufficient response to represent the views of a population of 5,000 such experts with a 90% confidence.

7. Statistical Significance of the Results

The positive response of 80.8% to the iPad question for the sample indicates a 90% confidence that a population of 5,000 individuals with the same level of familiarity with electronic publishing would respond positively at a rate between 70% and 95% concerning the importance of the iPad in their organizations.

The positive response of 73.1% to the Android question for the sample indicates a 90% confidence that a population of 5,000 individuals with the same level of familiarity with electronic publishing would respond positively at a rate between 58% and 88% concerning the importance of Android in their organizations.

Even the lower bound of extrapolated iPad responses shows a clear majority. The Android, while a smaller percentage, is still a majority. These results are taken as a good indicator that iPad and Android are considered to be important to publishers because they are important to readers, and by extension they are important to the spread of Sophie as an authoring environment. The intention of this survey was only to gauge the merit of adding iPad, Android devices, or both as available platforms for Sophie books. The results give good support for adding both the iPad and Android as reading platforms.

8. Intellectual Property

Sophie 2.0 is free and open source; the code and documentation can be found within the “Developers” section on the Sophie 2.0 website: sophiecommons.org. The code is licensed under the ECL 2.0, and all other information is licensed under the Creative Commons By Attribution 3.0 United States License. Licensing information is available from the Sophie Website.

9. Initiative Two Staff and Contributors

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Hannah Johnson, Publisher, Publishing Perspectives
Thomas Minkus, Vice President, Frankfurt Book Fair
Ludmil Pandeff and the Sophie development group at Astea Solutions

10. References

Reference 1: Initiative Two, Part One, Marketing Analysis Results