

Christian Stores Debut E-Book Sales

With digital readers and tablets expected to be popular Christmas gifts, accelerating the growth of non-print book sales, Christian suppliers and brick-and-mortar retailers have been launching e-book programs in time for the holidays.

Berean Christian Stores and some leading independents have already introduced services, with Mardel Christian & Education and The Parable Group due to follow soon.

Chuck Wallington's Christian Supply in Spartanburg, S.C.—one of the industry's top stores—unveiled its e-book initiative at Thanksgiving, with plans to roll it out to stores that are part of Wallington's Covenant Group marketing network in the New Year.

E-books are available for purchase at the Christian Supply website, through Ingram Digital Content Services, with an in-store center to be introduced to answer customers' questions. Wallington said that the e-books initiative was a significant shift in book selling. "I am convinced more than ever that if we are not where they are shopping, we are losing them for life."

Digital marketing supplier Innovative Inc. has launched Christian e-books for more than 300 users of its Signature Websites, with in-store signage promoting the service. Among those using the service are members of the Association of Logos Bookstores, whose executive director Becky Gorczyca said it was "exactly what we had in mind when we began searching for an e-book solution a year and a half ago."

Innovative's program, which includes audiobooks and apps, has been developed in partnership with audiobook and digital publisher eChristian.

“We are committed to providing Christian retailers the products and promotions critical to their success, so they can give their customers information and access to new release, bestseller and sale titles in all formats,” said Innovative President Larry Haege. “By providing a quality physical store and a best-in-class e-book user experience, Christian retailers can meet customer needs across the spectrum.”