

The two new libraries are open for extended hours, weekends and even summer and winter breaks. In addition, the new libraries have condensed stacks to increase book capacity. Huang Wen-te, head of HCU Library's Reader Service Department, estimates that the two libraries will save the university about NT\$1.5 million a year in staffing costs. The RFID technology also reduces the book inventory time to just one and a half hours, compared with two weeks without RFID assistance. (Chinese text by Huang Wen-te, Hsuan Chuang University)

### ■ *National Taichung Library E-Book Online Service*

The National Taichung Library (NTL) launched an E-Book Online Service in 2009, providing readers with access to nearly 6,000 e-books over the internet. Anyone with a library card issued by any public library in Taiwan can sign up for the new 24-hour service, which is available free of charge and can be accessed from any computer with an internet link.

E-books available through the service include children's books, cooking books, examination books, and a wide range of other general titles. Readers can also access a large number of government publications, as well as some foreign language publications. The NTL plans to steadily increase its e-book collection to 11,000 volumes this year.

Readers can locate publications using basic and advanced search functions as well as conduct searches by book classification, number of character strokes, author, foreign title and publisher. The service also has several Web 2.0 functions, such as forums for user comments, ratings, and book recommendations.

Readers are allowed to borrow up to 4 e-books at a time for a period of 14 days. At the end of the loan period, books will automatically be returned, but the reader can check out the books one more time if no one else has requested the title. Readers can also reserve up to 3 additional books for a period



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of 7 days. Readers can access the e-books through one of three methods, including online reading, online borrowing, and offline reading. Due to copyright protection needs, readers accessing books offline need to first log onto the service by entering their account number from their browser.

As part of a plan to establish a national public e-library, NTL has been searching for digital resources that readers can access online through the e-book service. The library notes that Chinese language e-books published in Taiwan will be an important information resource, providing readers with an affordable and environmentally friendly means to access knowledge. The library has compiled a list of thousands of popular books in traditional Chinese for the e-book service. After acquiring authorization from the publishers, the library scans the books into digital form so they can be accessed online by readers. NTL hopes that the service not only can serve as a management and service platform for e-book sharing through the public library system, but will also encourage reading and spur development of the e-publication market in Taiwan. (Chinese text by Yu Wen-ching of the National Taichung Library)