

Microsoft's Next Purchase: Nook Media?

Written by Marco Attard
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Microsoft plans to buy the Nook Media Barnes & Noble eBook joint venture, TechCrunch reports-- and is willing to cough up \$1 billion for the pleasure.



Through the acquisition Microsoft will get the Nook Media digital operation (eBooks) and the Nook eReaders and tablets hardware unit, leaving the college book division to B&N.

According to TechCrunch Nook Media also plans to discontinue making Android-based tablets by end fiscal 2014, part of a transition towards an entirely app-based "3rd party partner" device retail model.

Originally part of B&N, the Nook business split from the retailer on April 2012 following a Microsoft investment worth \$300m (or 16.8% of the joint venture) made in order to get Nook content on then nascent Windows 8 devices. Nook apps are currently also available on every major platform, including Android and iOS.

According to Forbes 2012 Nook business sales total \$933.7 million (up from \$695.1m for 2011), making it the fastest growing part of B&N. Should it sell the eBook unit, B&N will only have a slow growth (if not declining) bookstore business, one with 691 big-box stores (down from 720 in 2010) and sales worth \$4.85bn (from \$4.95bn in 2010). It also has 533 employees tasked with pushing Nook devices to unsuspecting bookstore visitors.

Then again, maybe B&N wants to stick to knows best-- books-- leaving technology to the, well,

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tech giant.

What does the future reserve for the humble Nook devices? Would Microsoft fold the tablets within its Surface business and let the eReaders die a natural death? As one might expect, neither Microsoft nor B&N want to comment on the story, but we might learn more on the proceedings in the following weeks.

Go [Microsoft Mulling Nook Media Purchase for \\$1 Billion \(TechCrunch\)](#)

Go [What's Left if B&N Sells the Nook Business to Microsoft? \(Forbes\)](#)

Go [Microsoft and B&N in Joint Venture](#)