

dawsonera

Frequently Asked Questions

What is dawsonera?

It is software that contains a catalogue of ebooks for purchase by libraries. The software is held on the Dawson server (the library does not install it locally). It is accessed via the internet just like a website. The software enables a library to manage a growing collection of ebooks and to 'lend' them to their users (eg: students).

Can any library use dawsonera?

Yes, any library with an interest in building a collection of ebooks can use dawsonera. If your library is not a current Dawson customer you can still use dawsonera. The only thing you must do is sign a Licence Agreement before you start buying ebooks.

Can my library try dawsonera before signing the agreement?

Yes, and we would encourage you to do so. Any library can choose a 30-day trial before signing and Dawson staff will provide support by telephone or, when possible, in person.

What kind of support is needed?

dawsonera has been developed to be user friendly, but it has a great many features that cannot be understood instantly by a novice. There is a User Guide to help you. At the beginning, some technical support may be needed to ensure the digital link between your library and Dawson is operating smoothly.

What does dawsonera look like?

It looks like an interactive website. So, any website where you establish an account profile to research products and buy online has features that are similar to dawsonera. In fact, from the customer point of view, dawsonera is two websites – one for readers (students) and one for administrators (librarians). How they work is fairly obvious from their names – the Reader Portal is where a student finds an ebook in the library collection and reads it; the Admin Portal is where a librarian finds an ebook in the Dawson catalogue and buys it for the student to read. As a librarian, you have access to both portals – but only one at a time. Publishers also have password-controlled access to their own Publisher Portal.

How much does it cost?

There is no charge for becoming a dawsonera customer. Each ebook purchased is charged at the list price set by the publisher plus a small hosting fee. There are no other charges (ie: no annual subscription, maintenance or platform fees).

How will my library be invoiced for the ebooks I buy?

We will bill customers exactly as we do now for printed books. Invoices can be sent at a frequency that suits each library. We expect most libraries to operate a separate ebook sub-account under their existing Dawson account, but it is your choice.

How do I place orders?

You can order as you do now – via enterBooks or via EDI. You can also place orders via the dawsonera platform itself.

Will I receive order confirmations?

Yes, you will receive electronic order confirmations.

When do the ebooks arrive?

Very quickly. It depends at what time the order is placed, but normally within 24 hours.

How do customers log onto dawsonera?

A librarian logs onto the Admin Portal with a User ID and Password. Students log onto the Reader Portal with one of several different options. In the UK the most common is via Athens.

What about things like Shibboleth and IP address?

Dawson is Shibboleth compliant, and is working with numerous Federations such as the UK Access Management, HAKA, SWITCH and DFN to ensure that libraries can seamlessly authenticate to dawsonera.com. Unlike some online databases (eg: Oxford Dictionary of National Biography) where IP recognition alone is enough to authorise access, Dawson has to approve down to individual level (not just institutional level), hence Athens. Outside the UK other methods of authenticating individuals are supported (eg: EZproxy).

How will my readers find the ebooks they want?

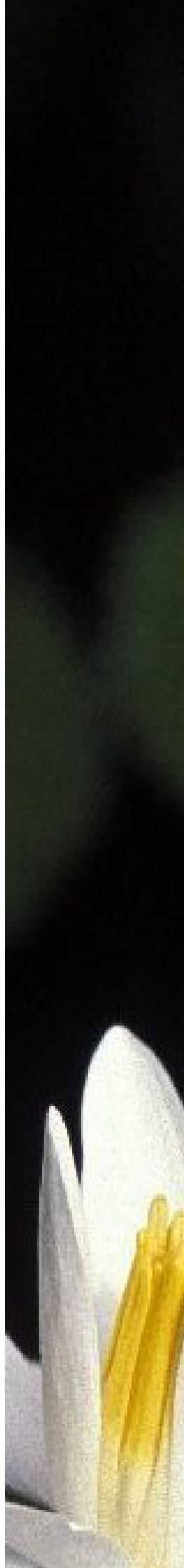
It is very likely that readers will reach the ebook via your library catalogue or institutional VLE. However, they can also search in dawsonera itself using a range of search parameters such as author, title or keyword.

Can catalogue records be provided?

Yes (to AACR2).

How are the ebooks viewed?

The ebooks are presented as PDFs and read using Adobe Reader. We recommend Version 9.0 but Versions 8.0 and 7.0 are fine.



Which browser works best with dawsonera?

When working with Windows we recommend either Internet Explorer Version 7.0 or Firefox Version 3. If using Mac OS, dawsonera supports the Safari browser.

Can my readers print and copy portions of an ebook?

Yes, in line with the 'fair dealing' rules of copyright protection, a reader may print 5% of the book and copy 5% of the text – but no more than that.

Does dawsonera support visually impaired students?

Yes, the standard functions of Adobe Reader that allow for a page to be enlarged or to be read aloud are available. Screen Readers such as JAWS, Text Help and Read & Write Gold are supported.

Is there a minimum number of orders that my library can place?

There is no minimum number of orders – purchase as many titles as you require for your library.

How does dawsonera work with enterBooks?

The dawsonera catalogue of ebooks is integrated with the enterBooks catalogue of all books. So, you can find ebooks in dawsonera itself or in enterBooks.

Will dawsonera integrate with enterProfile?

Yes, we will announce new ebook availability as part of the enterProfile monthly alerts and according to subject profiles established by customers.

How many ebooks are in the dawsonera catalogue?

As of May 2009, dawsonera has 96,000 titles from 225 Publishers and this is increasing rapidly. The acquisition of more content continues and many more thousands of titles of particular relevance to the academic community continue to be loaded every day.

Are new books added to dawsonera as they are published?

Yes, most publishers will automatically send new titles to Dawson as they appear. Our Content Administration team will do all they can to secure new titles in a timely fashion.

If my library buys ebooks from Dawson, do we own them forever?

Yes, although Dawson hosts the ebooks that are purchased, the ebooks are the library's forever. Access is not dependent on an annual subscription fee, you own them.

Can more than one person read an ebook owned by my library?

Yes, this is one of the special features of dawsonera. Because digitising a book makes it possible for lots of people to read it at once (unlike a printed book) why would anyone stop this from happening? We don't!

But doesn't that mean that my library will only ever buy one copy?

No. To preserve the intellectual property rights of the publisher, usage cannot be infinite. So, the solution is to cap usage during a year for each copy owned. If usage approaches this 'cap', the library will need to buy another copy to ensure continued access (as they would do with high demand printed books).

Can an ebook be downloaded for offline reading?

Yes, although reading online is more common, it is also possible to download the ebook to a laptop or memory stick. This is another special feature of dawsonera and not common in any similar product. Of course, after download, the student can't keep the ebook forever. Access will be denied after a few days.

Is it possible to check the availability of printed books in my collection against the dawsonera ebook collection?

Yes, it is and we call this "Title Matching". We can provide you with a spreadsheet that shows the printed books you have ordered from Dawson over a set time period that are now available as ebooks on dawsonera.

Are there any more special features?

Yes, all libraries that buy ebooks will make their collection available to readers. However, they won't buy all the ebooks Dawson has to offer. So, they can, if they wish, also show readers the whole catalogue of ebooks, including the ones they haven't bought. The reader can then ask the librarian to rent one of the 'non-owned' ebooks for a couple of weeks (eg: so that they can have it while they complete an essay). This is a bit like an Inter-Library Loan (ILL) for ebooks.

For a 30 day free trial please contact Jude Norris or Claire Chandler on +44 (0)1933 417500.

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Registered in England No. 6882367

Registered Office: AMP House, Dingwall Rd, Croydon, CR0 9XA

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