



e-Books

talk to us ...



Leading academic resource supplier

Van Schaik Bookstores has partnered with Ingram Vitalsource, the leading US supplier of academic e-textbooks to provide our customer (students, professionals and institutions) with an unparalleled Africa-ready electronic option to access their academic materials.

As digital technology is continually evolving, Van Schaik has made a significant investment in ensuring that our e-book solution meets the needs of both students and Academics that may be faced with technical limitations based on internet access and device acquisition.

Our e-book solution is:

- device agnostic
- suitable for “digital natives” and “digital migrants”
- available on-line and then off-line after registration
- completely downloadable
- fully mobile

The e-textbook content is provided under agreement from individual publishers. As our partner is the largest distributor of academic textbooks in the US, the list of available titles surpasses any other offering on the market.

Van Schaik is the leading retailer of academic books in Southern Africa with nearly a Century of historical relationships with local Publishers and international Publishers’ Local agents. These relationships make it easier for Van Schaik to negotiate for any local texts to be converted into e-format. Publishers are able to trust us to obey intellectual property rights and convey the necessity for quality digital reproduction of their printed texts.

As an independent company under the Avusa Group of companies, Van Schaik is able to leverage digitising capabilities within the Avusa Group should lecturers, course instructors or content managers such as University librarians wish to digitise any authorised content for dissemination to students directly or through any web-based Learning Management Systems like Moodle, Blackboard, Angel, Open Class etc...



vitalsource

Some new features that are not available in other e-readers are:

- ability to high-light and annotate
- easily sharing notes with study partners over distance
- auto synchronization of labels across all of the user's devices
- auto citation/watermarking when any piece of content is copied
- in store support contact from more than 50 of Van Schaik physical stores in Southern Africa, major stores to be equipped with self-help download and burn kiosks

The e-textbook reading software is available for use 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in a variety of ways so that a student can utilise it wherever they are: on campus, at home or even on commuter transport via the most commonly available basic wap browser phones, 3G smart-phones and future LTE standard.

This is possible because the student can register up to 3 devices with access to the textbooks, as well as universal on-line access which supports even the most basic Nokia/Samsung/LG/Alcatel/Vodafone/Sony "Facebook capable" handset.



As a first for the industry Van Schaik will be utilizing industry grade technology for VitalSource® and local hardware solutions such as the proudly South African "Breadbin" toaster.

The ability to quickly download and activate access to books at the in-store kiosks will alleviate the hassles faced by students that do not have continual access to internet for the one-time decryption process. The books can then be used off-line thereafter. This technology has been field tested and proven to meet the challenges of high volume student through-put by UNISA.

Should the need arise for specific devices such as e-reader hardware, Van Schaik has enlisted vetted suppliers of the most well-known e-reader tablets, computers and cell-phone handsets for the purposes of the complete digital experience. Our suppliers have the capacity to offer warranties and "carry-in" customer care should the devices malfunction under normal use.

With the backing of Alexander Forbes as an under-writer, we are also able to provide insurance against theft and accidental damage of the device supplied by Van Schaik as an e-reader.

From less than 1% of total US book sales 10 years ago, to nearly 12% of all total book sales today. More and more people are choosing e-books over traditional print. Although e-readers are topical with students and academics due to the rise of mobile computing, there are some clear benefits to e-books that would advance the student learning experience beyond the confines of print and allow for academics to time-manage teaching activities better and thus be able to afford participating in much-needed scholarly research and academia. We believe e-textbooks are a definitive and revolutionary aspect of future learning systems.



We are therefore pleased to offer you tomorrow's learning technology as a unique solution that is available to you today, only from Van Schaik Bookstores.

Vitalsource® allows Van Schaik to offer custom solutions for many different users that we currently service in our stores:

Individual Students/Professionals

- Van Schaik will provide access to the individual's e-textbooks for up to 3 different devices. In this way, studying is not limited to when an internet connection is available on a desktop PC but also on the go and via an iPad or Android device.
- Content is accessible on-line, off-line and mobile with notes and highlights automatically synchronizing when an internet connection is available. This is particularly useful in South Africa where many students travel long distances to get to campus and where many professionals may not be able to access libraries/bookstores during working hours.

Academic Institutions and Research Hubs

- Van Schaik makes available the capability for these Institutions to deploy ready-made content into modules packaged with specific titles for user access via proprietary intranets, LMS', owned or Van Schaik supplied hardware such as dedicated iPads or PCs.
- Researchers will be able to access specific titles as per the permissions controlled by the institutions. These can then be managed in a way that was not possible before such that the institution can allow collaboration over great geographical distance within the same title.
- Researchers and lecturers can take home devices such as iPad "on-loan" for further use of the titles when the institutions allow it be it for conferences, symposiums or colloquium presentations.
- Van Schaik provides the device, the e-books and optional insurance, as well as connectivity for internet updates.



Libraries

Most available current e-book models are quite restrictive for libraries. Many offer collections of titles that become out-dated quickly or cannot be purchased as single titles. Costly entire collections may not contain titles relevant to all library patrons.

- Van Schaik offers libraries a "per seat" customized solution within the formal environment controlled by the subject head librarian.
- The libraries can issue or loan out iPads or Android devices containing titles in a similar manner to physical books with the added benefits of e-books in terms of search, discoverability, highlight and notation functions that do not damage the book. Insurance for a variety of devices provided by Van Schaik is available through Van Schaik.
- Specific titles can be purchased with no waiting time for delivery and with automatic updates as new editions roll out.



Having served the academic market for nearly a century, Van Schaik has a clear understanding and unique insight into the needs of our customers. Whereas there may be many digital e-book options becoming common-place, we have deliberately taken the care to couple what we know of our users with the best and most robust technology.

Vitalsource® was thus chosen as this is a comprehensive solution because of it's versatility in "extreme" conditions where internet connectivity may often not be available. As is still the case in some areas of Southern Africa.

Frequently Asked Questions

In a nutshell, what is the e-book offering that Van Schaik is launching?

- Van Schaik is offering customers a one-stop-shop for electronic versions of academic titles that were previously only available in print or from overseas vendors. Van Schaik e-books will allow customers to rapidly search through pages of text, make notes and allow for sharing of notes between users thus encouraging more powerful collaboration between participating students and even lecturers.

Who is the e-book offering aimed at?

- Van Schaik caters for anyone wishing to take advantage of the benefits of going “e” in terms of their consumption of books and scholarly work textbooks. This will be the target market we currently offer physical textbooks: students, parents and professionals

Van Schaik is partnering with international digital content / e-book software supplier VitalSource® - What are the terms of the partnership and the scope of the new offering?

- Van Schaik will be the sole / exclusive partner of VitalSource® in South Africa. A perfect complementary relationship since Van Schaik is Southern Africa’s largest retailer of academic material through it’s physical stores and VitalSource® is the leading e-textbook vendor based on it’s parent company Ingram which is the largest wholesale distributor of textbooks in the United States. Both companies know textbooks, and both companies have a deep understanding of our unique textbook customer requirements.

How will the Van Schaik market benefit from e-books compared to traditional printed books.

- E-books are quickly searchable, meaning that any keywords and instances of phrases can be found virtually in an instant. This helps in the study of concepts and cases as definitions of unknown words can then be found via electronic dictionary within an instant.
- Van Schaik e-books will be interactive and not just pictures of the pages of a printed book meaning students will be able to do things such as highlight text, set priorities for what they are reading, tag words, make notes and share notes with fellow students, colleagues or collaborators reading the same book no matter how far they are in physical location to each other.
- E-books are able to automatically “update” material and information that often becomes out-of-date in the usual print version cycle of editions. In print, some information is too “old” by the time a student reaches that topic in a course of study. E-books synchronize and update relevant chapters to the latest information thus resulting in an up-to-date and current discourse on a topic incorporating the latest in trends and developments that may not have been available when that textbook was first published.
- The days of carrying over 7 kg of printed dead trees on the slender frame of many-a-student’s back are over with e-books since electronic copies only weigh as much as the device they are accessed on. In most cases this will be a laptop or other mobile device which does not usually weigh more than 2 college textbooks and is in fact less bulky and easier to carry.
- VitalSource® technology allows the latest version of a textbook that a user is reading to be available anywhere on the web, on a mobile laptop or tablet and even the basic version of a smartphone cell-phone depending on the network characteristics.

Does Van Schaik see e-books as ultimately replacing traditional printed textbooks?

- No. We believe the two will coexist for the near-to-distant future since even the developed world still has challenges with electronic access and there are infrastructure limitations for global e-book usage at present. The happy medium will be found between the two extremes similar to the way in which ancient technology such as radio still has a role to play in today’s advanced “everything is downloadable” world.

Is the Vitalsource® Van Schaik e-book offering, a threat or an aid to the publishing industry?

- It is an aid to the industry since it allows for more types of editions to be made available instead of sitting unsold somewhere.
- It allows for some authors to publish with less financial obstacles.
- Studies indicate sales of many physical book reference texts increase when an e-book version is made available.

Is South Africa ready/geared for the new Van Schaik e-book offering:

a) Publishers?

- Some publishers are further along than others but yes, content is a key component of e-books so Van Schaik, as the leading retailer has been approaching more and more publishers to get them on board since deciding to have a reasonable and sustainable platform that is trusted by the key stakeholders in the publishing industry for our market. Publishers such as Pearson, Wiley, Elsevier and others have shown trust in the technology being able to cater for their DRM concerns as well. Local SA publishers we have approached have applauded the benefits of an additional sales channel. These key local stakeholders including JL Van Schaik Publishers, LexisNexis, Wiley & Sons, Oxford University Press, New Holland and Struik are already involved in digital content generation and are e-book ready to supply the market in the same way that we stock their books in our physical stores.

b) Academic institutions?

- In the past, many of these Higher Ed and Research Institutions were severely limited to purchasing complete collections of aged manuscripts and series of content that they may only have found superfluous to some degree. The Van Schaik's e-book approach is to supply "exactly" the required titles and any institution generated content, in a specific yet easy-to-use manner. Similarly, Libraries appear to have been Ham-strung by long-term platform heavy solutions from agregators which were not always current and automatically up-to-date.

c) Students?

- Many students, professionals and parents are looking forward to getting more use out of the iPads and Galaxy tabs that they got for Christmas. E-book applications like Vitalsource® allow for users to access their books via different operating system (OS) standards. This device agnostic approach is another great reason why Van Schaik e-books will be a success with students, professionals and parents owing to the many different personal computers, tablets and mobiles phones that people choose from.

What e-book services will Van Schaik offer to students, publishers and academic institutions?

- Access to e-books, storage and collaboration via downloadable software as a service and hardware platforms for on and off-line use.

Vitalsource® bookshelf offers the most advanced e-book software in the world, that enables users to download, read online or access books on mobile. Will Van Schaik incorporate this aspect of the Vitalsource® offering into the Van Schaik website?

- Yes, as indicated above this means the ability to access your e-books on variety of devices via a single sign-on, the ability to make notes and share them.

How does the new e-book offering position Van Schaik in the SA academic bookselling market?

- It supports and strengthens our role as the leading retailer of academic resources.

