

State Library of Kansas Launches Online Audio Books

Posted by Eric Hansen, Director, Statewide Resource Sharing

In the heart of rural Kansas, where tractors share the road with cars, library patrons will be able to download audio books directly to their MP3 players and PCs using the Internet. In May 2006, the State Library of Kansas and contributing libraries will launch a new online service called *Audio Books, Music and More* (<http://kansas.lib.overdrive.com>) for the people of Kansas enabling browsing and check out of popular audio books from libraries, homes, offices or schools.

More than 50 libraries are sharing their resources to provide *Audio Books, Music and More*. OverDrive, Inc. (www.overdrive.com), a leading vendor of online audio books and music for libraries, is supplying the technology for the new service.

Christie Brandau, State Librarian of Kansas, says, "This project is a demonstration of how Kansas libraries lead technology innovation while providing a service patrons will really use. It is another example of how our state's libraries share resources in order to better serve Kansans."

Bestsellers and classics, fiction and non-fiction from popular authors and leading publishers such as HarperCollins, McGraw-Hill, Zondervan, and John Wiley and Sons are available in MP3 format. Patrons download free reader software and use their Kansas Library Cards to check out and download audio books from the website to their PCs, MP3 devices, Pocket PCs and certain Smartphones. Audio books will automatically return to the collection at the end of the loan period.

To browse Kansas Virtual Library's audio book collection, go to <http://kansas.lib.overdrive.com>. A valid Kansas Library Card (available to any Kansas resident at www.kslc.org) is required to check out and download the audio books.

A list of the libraries who have partnered with the State Library of Kansas to fund this service is available at <http://kansas.lib.overdrive.com>.

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