NEW MILESTONES AND POTHOLES ALONG
THE ROAD TO ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING

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The road to electronic publishing reaches new milestones every few months, it seems. Reference-work publishers are increasingly abandoning print altogether, and whole libraries are migrating online. Books and archival documents are now becoming as readily available as journals in digital formats. Major vendors are moving to make digital products just as resalable as tangible products have been in the past. But many potholes old and new litter the road ahead. New gadgetry is multiplying and connectivity costs keep rising. Publishers are trying new ways to limit piracy and copyright infringement. Limitations on “fair-use” are still being debated, and degrees of copyright are multiplying. And the complexities of the new technologies are requiring ever more attenuated production lines, with each step outsourced to different specialists, and massive aggregations of content dependent on outsourced hosting sites subject to many unforeseen vulnerabilities.