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College Bookstores to Begin Selling eTextbooks on Demand

Soon students will be able to buy electronic textbooks at the college bookstore, using kiosks that will download files and burn them to CD's. The kiosks will also offer the latest Hollywood movies, which the machines will be able to burn onto DVD's on demand.

The National Association of College Stores announced today that it has formed a spinoff company, NACS Media Solutions, to broker the deals with publishers to support the new on-demand service.

Movies will be the first product offered at the kiosks, which are scheduled to appear at seven stores next month. The plan is to add digital textbooks to the kiosks starting next summer, says Charles Schmidt, a spokesman for the association.

"As educational content and course materials evolve to include more multimedia, stores will be prepared to provide that content with lower-cost solutions," said Mark Nelson, vice president for strategy and development at the new spinoff company.

Starting this month, students will be given the choice of buying or renting DVD's from the kiosks. Rental DVD's will be encoded so that the quality of the images degrade after a set period of time — meaning that essentially they self-destruct after use. "It's not exactly like *Mission: Impossible* where a little puff of smoke comes out," jokes Mr. Schmidt.

The first colleges to get the kiosks will be Bowling Green State University, New York University, **San Diego State University**, the **University of California at Los Angeles**, the University of Colorado at Boulder, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Thirty more stores are expected to add the kiosks by January, says Mr. Schmidt. —*Jeffrey R. Young*

http://chronicle.com/wiredcampus/article/3342/college-bookstores-to-begin-selling-etextbooks-on-demand?utm_source=at&utm_medium=en