



Profiles of Technology  
IN TENNESSEE

## Cheatham County Library's eBooks Make the Long Way Home Seem a Little Shorter

**Name:**

Cheatham County Public Library's READS program

**Internet:**

[www.cheathamlibrary.com](http://www.cheathamlibrary.com)

**Technology Tool:**

Downloadable books

**Location:**

Ashland City/Putnam County

**Leadership:**

Janet Batson, Library Director

**Innovative Insight:**

*"Technology is here and it's such a way of life now. It is probably one of the most important things that can happen to our community, economically and for educational purposes."*

**The Impact of Broadband:**

*"We have people download books who have never even stepped foot in the library."*

**Importance of Broadband:**

*"There are a lot of people here still on dial-up (in Cheatham County.) And those people are being left behind. We're becoming a left behind people."*

**Ashland City, TN** - Today, libraries are more than just books on the shelves. Everything from the card catalog to check out is simplified with the help of high-speed Internet. Tennessee libraries are continuing to develop new methods and uses for broadband to keep patrons up-to-date. Many of these methods are proving to be extremely popular. Two years ago, the Cheatham County Public Library System launched their eBook & Audiobook Download System, or R.E.A.D.S. program, and almost immediately started to see a huge spike in the program at the South Cheatham branch of the library. What they found to be the source of the spike surprised them a little. Truck drivers, while en route delivering goods, were stopping into the library to download books to listen to on their long journey.

"We've had wives of truckers come in and tell us how much their husbands love this program," explains Cheatham County Public Library's Director, Janet Batson. "They tell us they love the convenience of being able to just download a book and be on the road."

While some truckers come into the library to select their digital books, many download titles directly from home. The program allows patrons to download books to CD's or mp3 players the same as if they were checking them out of the library, complete with a virtual bookshelf! "We have people download books who have never even stepped foot in the library," explains Janet.

R.E.A.D.S. is constantly adding new titles, and the popularity of the program continues to grow. "We just purchased a computer for the library that will be used specifically for R.E.A.D.S." says Janet. "Technology is here and it's such a way of life now. It is probably one of the most important things that can happen to our community, economically and for educational purposes."

As a member of the Cheatham County eCommunity Strategies Team, Janet is a huge supporter of the Connected Tennessee mission to increase the presence of broadband throughout the state, and particularly in her county. "We have over twenty computers here at the library and they are filled up all the time with people who have dial-up at home. There are a lot of people here still on dial-up," she explains. "And those people are being left behind. We're becoming a left behind people."

**About TN 95:**

*Citizens across the state are using technology in innovative ways to ensure that Tennessee remains the place of choice to live, work and raise a family. Connected Tennessee is profiling businesses and Tennesseans in each of the state's 95 counties to identify lessons learned on the path to successful innovation. For more information visit our Web site at [www.connectedtn.org](http://www.connectedtn.org) or call 615-242-9508.*