

## UKSG webinar – COUNTER for Librarians, 24 May 2016

**Speakers:** Anna Franca, King's College London with Lorraine Estelle, COUNTER for Q&A

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Should you have a question arising from the webinar and not answered below, please e-mail Anna or Lorraine who will be happy to respond.

### Questions arising from the Q&A session and the registration forms:

#### **Q1: Is there a new COUNTER version coming in next months/years?**

A: Yes, COUNTER is working on Release 5 of the COUNTER Code of Practice. We aim to publish the new release in summer of 2017 (and to become effective at the end of 2018), but drafts of the new release will be available before then for consultation. (LE)

#### **Q2: I pull stats directly from providers; we just implemented EDS, will the stats pulled directly from Gale or ProQuest be accurate?**

A: If you are referring to full text statistics (e.g. Journal Report 1) your stats from Gale, ProQuest and other providers will continue to be accurate since, unless the full text is part of an EBSCO database, the provider will be recording and reporting on the full text activity. If you are referring to database statistics, you will want to check if the discovery provider has a metadata sharing arrangement with the other content provider. If, for example, your Gale databases are hosted and indexed on the EBSCOhost platform, then the searches, result clicks and record views relating to EDS activity will be included in the EBSCOhost COUNTER reports – you will want to add the EBSCOhost statistics for that database to the reports from the provider. If there is no such metadata sharing agreement, then the COUNTER reports from the provider will represent activity on that databases. (LE)

#### **Q3: There is the possibility to get the statistics of subscribed to articles (not free articles) only? How to deduct/extract free articles from COUNTER JR1. E.g.: articles from Elsevier free backfiles of math journals.**

A: Answered in session. Please review the recording.

#### **Q4: What reports are recommend for conducting CPU? What types of analysis are libraries doing with COUNTER reports?**

A: You can use a number of reports to calculate Cost Per Use. Our COUNTER Friendly Guides have some tips (LE):

Journals: <http://www.projectcounter.org/guides/Journal.pdf>

Books: <http://www.projectcounter.org/guides/Library.pdf>

Databases: <http://www.projectcounter.org/guides/Database.pdf>

Libraries can use the reports to analyse the usage and value of their subscriptions at a package level (e.g. a journal or ebook package), or to do a more detailed analysis of usage against specific titles.

The standard format of the reports allows comparisons to be made from year to year, and trend analysis over longer periods. For example, at King's we have carried out some trend analysis on our database usage using the COUNTER reports that appears to indicate general pattern of usage



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decline. Anecdotally, we think this is connected to the implementation of our EDS in 2012 coupled with an increasing use of web based discovery tools like Google Scholar to find information. (AF)

**Q5: If a vendor does not provide all the COUNTER reports, suggested steps we can take so they are.**

A: Answered in session. Please review the recording.

**Q6: Why non-subscribed ejournals/ebooks appear in JR1s and BR1s - skewing cost-per-use calculations...**

A: Answered in session. Please review the recording.

**Q7: Is there any interest in trying to have vendors streamline the way their reports can be accessed, e.g. IP range vs login, etc.**

A: If this question is about identifying which activity is related to a given institution, COUNTER reports are intended to be authentication-agnostic. The content provider/host is responsible for identifying which activity is associated with a given institution and reporting on it. If the question is related to providing COUNTER reports that represent the activity for a given department or subset of users within the institution, the answer is that recent additions to the SUSHI protocol make this technically possible from the perspective of being able to request reports for a department, for example. However, since there no single way for providers to categorize usage transactions to capture reporting by subsets, any implementation of department or IP-range reporting would be a provider-specific implementation and is beyond the scope of the COUNTER code of practice. (LE)

**Q8: Kind of reports are institutions using to manage their ebooks? Accessibility of reports from vendor interfaces?**

A: **COUNTER Book Report 1 (BR1)** reveals the **total number of successful title requests by month and title**, but data from this report should only be exported when the vendor provides the entire e-book as a single file. As the majority of publisher sites present e-book content at a 'section' level (e.g. providing book chapters or encyclopedia entries in individual files), **COUNTER Book Report 2 (BR2)** can be applied to run more relevant usage metrics. It measures the **total number of successful section requests by month and title**.

**COUNTER Book Report 5 (BR5)** outlines **total searches by month and title**, highlighting how many searches are performed by library users at an e-book title level. This mirrors data collected in COUNTER JR4, and highlights different ways in which users may engage with e-book content on a publisher platform.

COUNTER BR1 and BR2 (and the upcoming BR7) provide usage data for e-books that libraries either purchase in perpetuity or lease from a service provider for a given period. **COUNTER Book Report 3 (BR3)** and **Book Report 4 (BR4)** concentrate on a different context – access denied to e-book content. BR3 highlights **access denied to content items by month, title and category** while BR4 reveals **access denied to content items by month, platform and category**. (LE)

At King's we have found that most vendors provide the BR2 reports and these reports allow us to evaluate usage at a more granular level than the BR1 report. We have found vendor interfaces can be variable when it comes to downloading the reports manually. In most cases the interfaces are fairly intuitive and downloading the reports is a straightforward process, but there are some that are more problematic. We keep a spreadsheet that lists the admin details for the different user



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interfaces, and we use this to note any special instructions about the downloading process for that vendor interface. (AF)

### **Q9: Creating custom related database reports.**

A: Providing custom (non-standard) COUNTER report is not a requirement of the COUNTER Code of Practice. Many providers do offer reports in addition to COUNTER reports to meet the specific needs of their users. If there are some common reports that are generally useful, please bring these to the attention of COUNTER so they can consider adding them as required reports. (LE)

### **Q10: Are there automated data collection tools available?**

A: The SUSHI protocol provides instructions to automate the collection of usage statistics reports from compliant vendors, which you'd otherwise manually download from a vendor website or receive via email. For information please see (LE):

<http://www.niso.org/workrooms/sushi/librarians/>

In terms of tools that make use of SUSHI, a number of commercial ERM and usage consolidation products are available on the market. Open source tools like CORAL (an open source ERM) also have included SUSHI. (AF)

### **Q11: How do you get link resolver click stats?**

A: At present link resolver usage is not covered by the COUNTER Code of Practice. You will need to obtain statistics from your link resolver provider. (LE)

### **Q12: We always used to add up the number of searches in db1 report for our yearly SCONUL report. But since you said they were replaced by result clicks then is that what we should add up or searches federated?**

A: Adding up searches from DB1 is problematic when you have a discovery service, federated search tool or use a service that allows multiple databases to be searched at the same time. In the event that a search is performed against 10 databases, each one of the 10 database will get credit for that single user action on the DB1 report; therefore, if you add up the DB1 values for searches, you will be adding ten to the SCONUL search report and not the actual "1". If you need to report searches it is better to use the Platform Report 1 from the provider. Platform Report 1 report includes "Regular Searches" which will represent the actual number of searches performed by users.

When it comes to evaluating the value of databases, when a discovery service, federated search or multiple database search is "searching" multiple databases, it is hard to tell from the search counts if a given database was providing value to the user. The Result Clicks were used to provide a measure of user activity related to a database. If a user clicked on a search result from a database (requesting full text, to view the abstract, to look at a list of cited references, etc.) that counts as a single Result Clicks and effectively represents an expression of interest for an item from that database. In terms of comparing the relative value among multiple databases, Result Clicks gives a better sense of which database the user was "using". (LE)



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### **Q13: What usage aggregate services would you recommend? Any freebies?**

A: There are a number of commercial usage consolidation and ERM products that will help you manage your COUNTER statistics. Most of these are tied to a knowledge base or other resource management tools from that vendor so the pros and cons of each are very much dependent on a given library's situation. If you are looking for a free option, CORAL is an option to take a look at. (LE)

### **Q14: Any idea why I can't get e-journal Counter stats for EBSCO Full-Text Finder? I can get eBook stats.**

A: EBSCO Full Text Finder is a link resolver and an A-to-Z list. As such, it isn't covered by the COUNTER Code of Practice; however, if you want usage reporting, there are reports available within EBSCOAdmin under the "Full Text Finder" section on the "Reports & Statistics" tab. Note that EBSCOhost statistics are available for both Books and Journals and you find that under the "EBSCOhost/EDS" section of the "Reports & Statistics" tab. (LE)

### **Q15: How do libraries deal with the fact that students might access OA books from their own computers elsewhere, bypassing the library systems/IP ranges? Usage Stats can't give the full picture - is this generally accepted/are libraries working on a solution?**

A: Answered in session. Please review the recording.

### **Q16: Anna, how easy have you found it to engage stakeholders outside the library with usage stats e.g. academic staff, senior managers?**

A: When we do share usage statistics with stakeholders outside the library we try to keep data simple and in a way that people outside the library can easily engage with. One way we have done this is by presenting summary figures in our annual report (see the infographic in my presentation) which shows increasing usage of our electronic resources over a period of 5 years. By presenting the figures in this way, we are demonstrating the value of the library's work to a wider audience without needing to give them too much of the detail.

Generally, we only share usage statistic reports directly with academics when we are considering a cancellation and we need to explain to the academics why. We might also share usage if we have had a trial of a resource, but the usage is poor and therefore we don't feel it is good decision to go ahead. Some of our academics are very engaged in the work of the library, but they are all busy so we wouldn't expect them to have the time to look at reports in detail. (AF)

### **Q17: How to deal with that BR2 from different vendors are hard to compare? E.g. One vendor defines section as chapter and another as pages giving very different results.**

A: Section type is variable by publisher for example chapter, part, unit, etc. This is because there is variation in the way that books are divided for use and download – sometimes this reflects that nature of the book(s) in question. There is not easy way to compare the different types of sections available.

To address this challenge, COUNTER recently introduced BR7 which provides a count of unique book views in a session. BR7 solves the problem with BR2 and the varying section types, it also solves the



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problem of BR1 not being comparable to BR2. BR7 is currently optional, but will become standard in the next release of the Code of Practice. (LE)

**Q18: Would you consider not subscribing to a resource if you knew it was not COUNTER compliant?**

A: Answered in session. Please review the recording.

**Q19: Where we can find the DOI for a journal?**

A: You could try the Crossref query: <http://www.crossref.org/SimpleTextQuery/> (LE)

**Q20: In increasing instances, a title subscription is for the current year only as the previous years' issues are OA. Will running JR1 and JR1GOA separate these figures effectively?**

A: The JR1-GOA is labelled by COUNTER 'number of successful full-text downloads published under a Gold Open Access (GOA) model'. It is designed for hybrid journals, which include traditional subscription and GOA content: all usage, including the GOA usage is also included in JR1. JR1-GOA reports on use of articles made open access via the publisher's website when an APC (article processing charge) is charged for open access in a hybrid journal. The APC is usually paid on publication – so the usage of articles reported in JR1GOA have been open access since publication. For libraries that are attempting to calculate cost-per-use value for journals via COUNTER JR1, subtracting the JR1GOA metrics from standard JR1 stats may provide a more accurate cost per use. (LE)

**Q21: Other than "encouraging" non-CC publishers, is there any other pressure to oblige some vendors (Law, I'm looking in your direction) to produce meaningful CC-compliant data?**

A: Please point non COUNTER compliant publishers in the direction of our Friendly Guide: <http://publishers.org/sites/default/files/uploads/counter.pdf> . This explains the benefits, and how to become COUNTER compliant. (LE)

**Q22: Apart from JR1 GOA there may be other types of open access articles that are included in the JR1? or sometimes there are issues that are offered free for a certain period of time. Example: Elsevier free access of backfiles of math journals from volume 1 to 24/48 recent months, that is not GOA.**

A: JR1GOA reports on the use of articles made freely available at the time of publication because an APC (article processing charge) has been charged. Such articles are permanently open access. However, other types of open articles can change status, for example they may be open on publication for a limited period, they may be open in response to a national or international crisis for a period of time, or they may be open access after an embargo period. JR1 will include all usage for the journal, including all usage of articles that are open access (regardless of model); however, only Gold Open Access is tracked in a separate report. (LE)



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**Q23: Other than helping their customers and 'doing the right thing' - are there other incentives for publishers to be COUNTER compliant?**

A: Answered in session. Please review the recording.

**Q24: I know it comes with the report. do we have any use of the DOI of a journal?**

A: The journal DOI provides a unique identification to content and a persistent link to its location on the internet even if its domain name changes. In COUNTER reports there are fields for Journal DOI, proprietary identifier, print ISSN and online ISSN (columns D-G): identifier values for each journal. These all help to ensure that a journal (and its use) is clearly identified. Important when journal names are similar or when they change.

One of the goals of including the DOI was that the persistence of the DOI allows it to serve as a match point to allow a COUNTER report to be merged with other analysis data, e.g. holdings, cost, etc. that may also include that DOI. (LE)

**Q25: Seen recently on LIBLICENSE maillist - someone in USA has noticed that in a few licenses, language is being added that restricts libraries' use and dissemination of COUNTER usage data. Have you seen anything like this?**

A: We have also seen the discussion about this on the mail list but have not seen any examples of such licences. (LE)

