

COUNTER

Counting Online Usage of NeTworked Electronic Resources



Using the COUNTER Code of Practice: a tutorial

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COUNTER
September
2006**

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Why COUNTER?

- Libraries and consortia need online usage statistics
 - To assess the value of different online products/services
 - To support collection development
 - To justify their materials expenditure budget proposals

- Publishers need online usage statistics
 - To experiment with new pricing models
 - To assess the relative importance of the different channels by which information reaches the market
 - To provide editorial support
 - To plan infrastructure

- COUNTER's Goal
 - To develop "Codes of Practice" which will generate credible, compatible, consistent publisher/vendor-generated usage statistics for the global information community

The logo for COUNTER, featuring the word "COUNTER" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letters are contained within a grid of dark grey rectangular boxes. Below the text, there is a graphic consisting of overlapping colored squares (yellow, red, blue) and a black crosshair.

COUNTER: strategy for developing Codes of Practice

- Respond to the requirements of the international librarian, publisher and intermediary communities
 - An open, inclusive and interactive process
 - Representation of all three communities on COUNTER
- Limit scope of first Code of Practice to journals and databases
- Systematically extend scope of the Code of Practice
 - Horizontally, to cover other content types, such as e-books
 - Vertically, to provide more detailed statistics on journals
- A cost effective-process for all parties involved



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Codes of Practice

- Definitions of terms used
- Specifications for Usage Reports
 - What they should include
 - What they should look like
 - How and when they should be delivered
- Data processing guidelines
- Auditing
- Compliance
- Maintenance and development of the Code of Practice
- Governance of COUNTER

COUNTER: current Codes of Practice

■ **1) Journals and databases**

- Release 1 Code of Practice launched January 2003
- Release 2 published April 2005 replacing Release 1 in January 2006
- Now a widely adopted standard by publishers and librarians
- 60%+ of Science Citation Index articles now covered
- Librarians use it in collection development decisions
- Publishers use it in marketing to prove 'value'

■ **2) Books and reference works**

- Draft Code of Practice published in February 2005 for comment
- Final version incorporating feedback was launched March 2006
- Relevant usage metrics less clear than for journals
- Different issues than for journals
 - Direct comparisons between books less relevant
 - Understanding how different categories of book are used is more relevant

Journal and Database Code of Practice

Usage Reports

- **Journal Report 1**
 - Full text article requests by month and journal
- **Journal Report 2**
 - Turnaways by month and journal
- **Database Report 1**
 - Total searches and sessions by month and database
- **Database Report 2**
 - Turnaways by month and database
- **Database Report 3**
 - Searches and sessions by month and service

Journal Report 1

Full text article requests by journal

Release 2 of the Code added a publisher field

Publisher

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Journal Report 1 (R2)	Number of Successful Full-Text Article Requests by Month and Journal									
2	Sample University										
3	Date run:										
4	2005-04-05										
5		Publisher	Platform	Print ISSN	Online ISSN	Jan-2005	Feb-2005	Mar-2005	YTD Total	YTD HTML	YTD PDF
6	Total for all journals		EBSCOhost			3942	10006	11093	25041	15776	9265
7	Harvard Business Review	Harvard Business	EBSCOhost	0017-8012		1117	707	702	2526	1591	935
8	Scientific American	Scientific American	EBSCOhost	0036-8733		92	230	221	543	342	201
9	Reading Teacher	International Readi	EBSCOhost	0034-0561		11	190	179	380	239	141
10	Economist	Economist Newspa	EBSCOhost	0013-0613		33	95	155	283	178	105
11	Child Development	Blackwell Publishi	EBSCOhost	0009-3920		32	68	103	203	128	75
12	American Journal of Public Hea	American Public H	EBSCOhost	0090-0036		59	48	80	187	118	69
13	Journal of Marriage & Family	Blackwell Publishi	EBSCOhost	0022-2445		32	68	195	295	186	109
14	Explicator	Heldref Publication	EBSCOhost	0014-4940		12	196	188	396	249	147
15	Sports Marketing Quarterly		EBSCOhost	1061-6934		10	121	32	163	103	60
16	Journal of Learning Disabilities	PRO-ED	EBSCOhost	0022-2194		24	122	142	288	181	107

Journal Report 1

Full text article requests by journal

Release 2 of the Code added a "Platform" column to facilitate merging of stats from multiple vendors.

Platform

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Journal Report 1 (R2)	Number of Successful Full-Text Article Requests by Month and Journal									
2	Sample University										
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16	Journal of Learning Disabilities	PRO-ED	EBSCOhost	0022-2194		24	122	142	288	181	107

Journal Report 1

Full text article requests by journal

Html and PDF totals reported separately

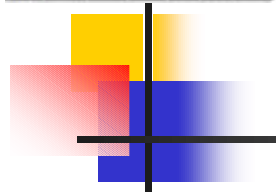
YTD Total YTD HTML YTD PDF

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Journal Report 1 (R2)	Number of Successful Full-Text Article Requests by Month and Journal									
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A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide, featuring a vertical black line and a horizontal black line intersecting at the top left of the main title. There are also overlapping colored squares in yellow, red, and blue.

Report layouts clearly stated

1. **Cell A1** contains the text "Journal Report 1(R2)"
2. **Cell B1** contains the text "Number of Successful Article Requests by Month and Journal"
3. **Cell A2** contains the "criteria" as defined in the COP (eg "NorthEast Research Library Consortium" or "Yale University")
4. **Cell A3** contains the text "Date run:"
5. **Cell A4** contains the date that the report was run in yyyy-mm-dd format. For example, a report run on 12 Feb 2005 would show "2005-02-12".
6. **Cell A5** is left blank
7. **Cell B5** contains the text "Publisher"
8. **Cell C5** contains the text "Platform"
9. **Cell D5** contains the text "Print ISSN"
10. **Cell E5** contains the text "Online ISSN"



Journal Report 2: Turnaways by Journal

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Journal Report 2										
2	<Criteria>										
3	Date run:										
4	yyy-mm-dd										
5		Publisher	Print ISSN	Online ISSN	Page type	Jan-01	Feb-01	Mar-01	YTD TOTAL		
6											
7	Total for all journals		Publisher X			453	233	318	4765		
8	Journal of AA		Publisher X	1212-3131	3225-3123	Full-text Turnaways	23	40	12	342	
9	Journal of BB		Publisher X	9821-3361	2312-8751	Full-text Turnaways	18	20	16	287	



Database report 3:

Searches and Sessions by Service

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	
1	Database Report 3 (R2)	Total Searches and Sessions by Month and Service						
2	<Criteria>							
3	Date run:							
4	yyyy-mm-dd							
5		Platform		Jan-2001	Feb-2001	Mar-2001	YTD Total	
6	Total for Service AA	Platform Z	Searches run	16567	18643	20987	56197	
7	Total for Service AA	Platform Z	Sessions	12007	12677	13003	37687	
8								

Data processing guidelines

- Only valid requests counted
 - Return Code 200 (OK)
 - Return Code 304 (Not modified)
- Filter out multiple successive clicks on same link by same user
 - 10 seconds for html
 - 30 seconds for PDF

Who counts full text requests?

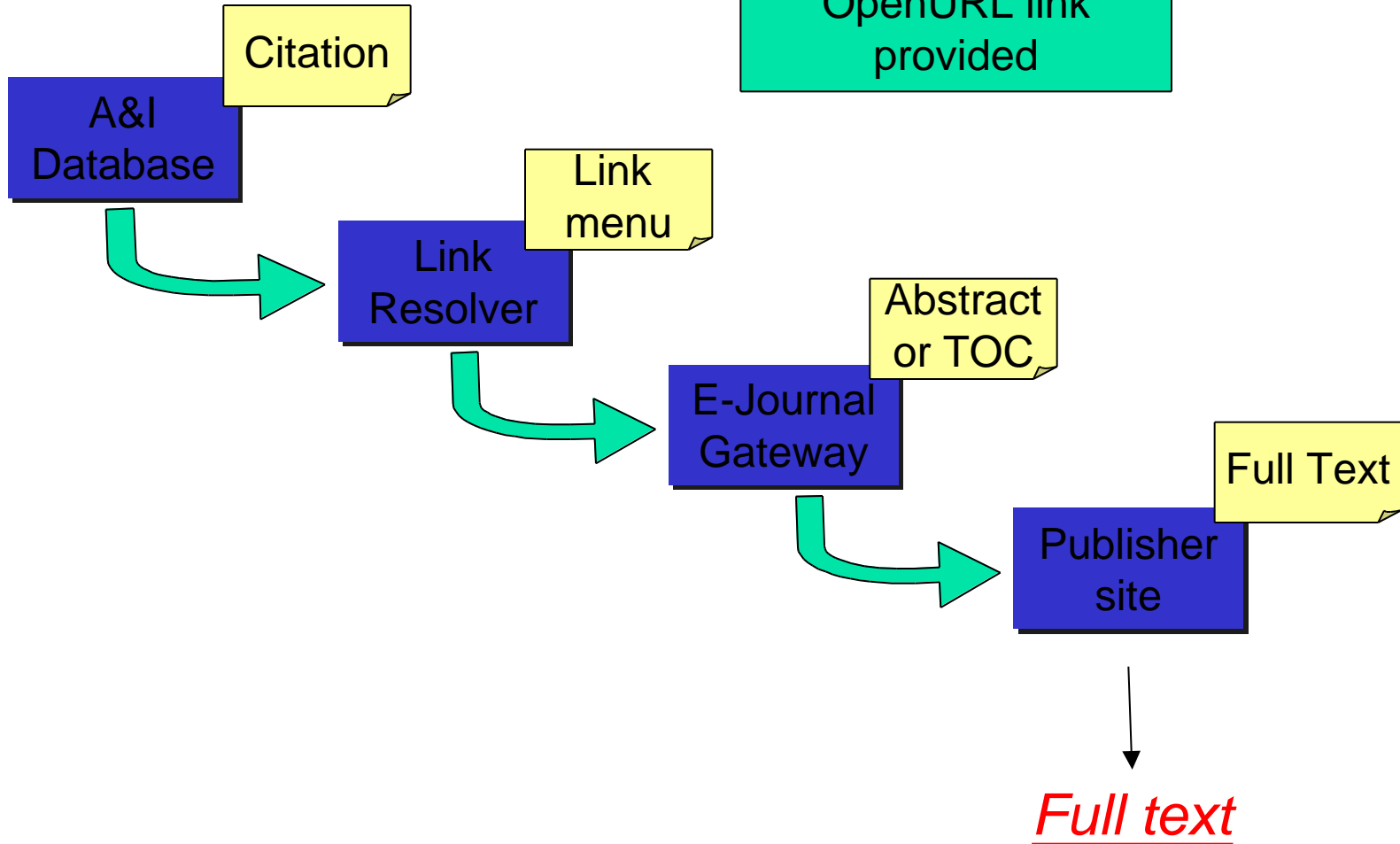
- Q: Who counts full text requests?
 - Publisher?
 - Aggregator?
 - E-journal gateway?
 - Link resolver?

- A: The party that delivers the full text to the user.

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Linking

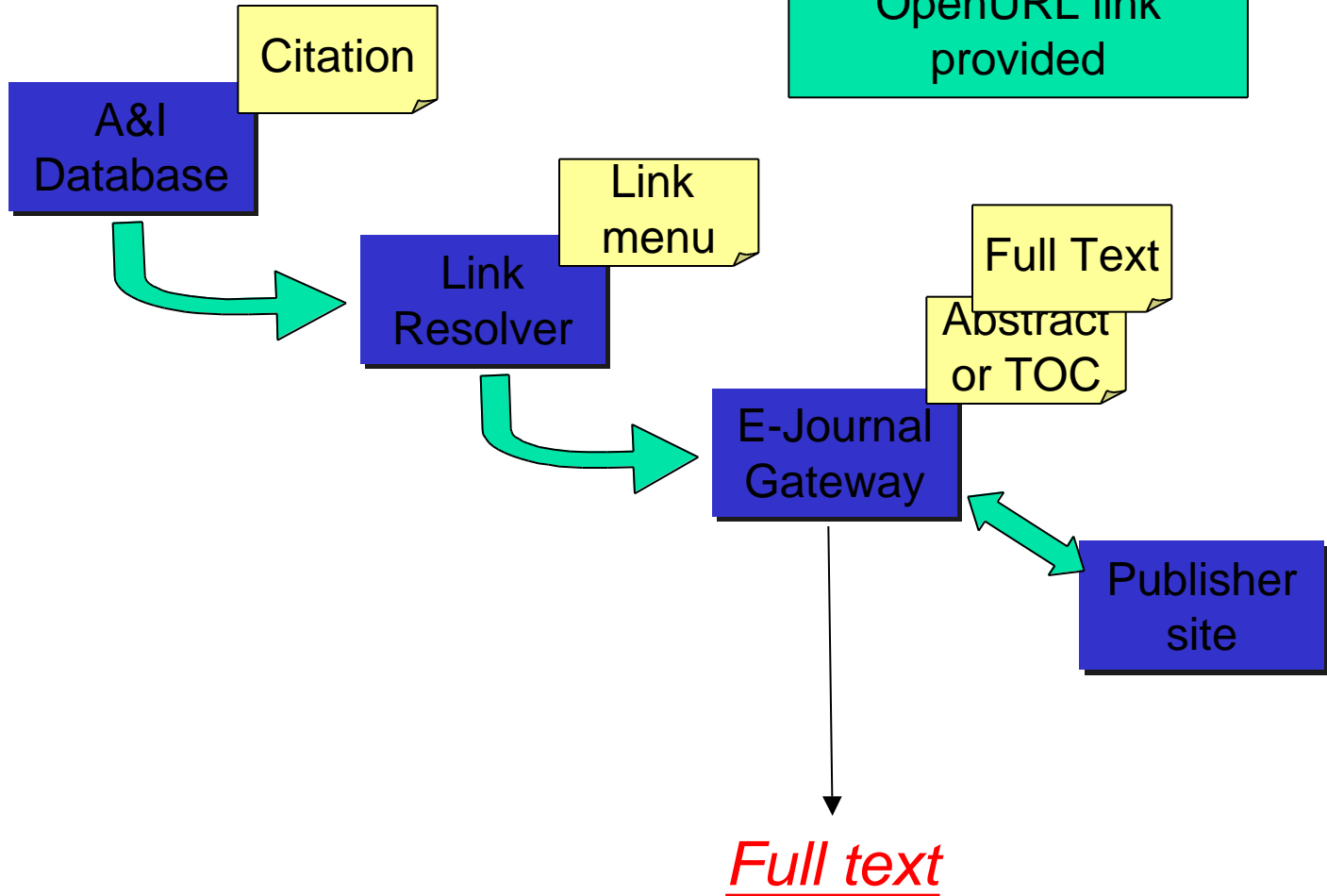
User finds citation of interest in an A&I database. An OpenURL link provided



COUNTER

Linking

User finds citation of interest in an A&I database. An OpenURL link provided



Delivery of usage reports

- CSV, Excel or a file that can be imported into Excel (XML is also an option)
- On a password controlled website
- E-mail alert of availability of updated reports
- Provide reports monthly
- New reports available within 4 weeks of end of reporting period
- Current and previous calendar year's data available

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Consortium reporting requirements

- **Only two reports apply**
 - Journal Report 1: Number of successful full text article requests by month and journal
 - Database Report 1: Total searches and sessions by month and database

- **Vendor must provide (in separate files)**
 - Aggregated reports for entire consortium
 - Individual reports for each member institute

- **Aggregated reports include totals for the whole consortium**

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Compliance

- Vendor submits reports to COUNTER for initial check.
- Then at least one COUNTER “library test site” reviews them, highlighting any modifications necessary to achieve compliance .
- Once they are deemed to be compliant, vendor signs a declaration and the compliant product(s) are added to the Register at www.projectcounter.org
- Within 18 months, compliance must be confirmed via an independent audit

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Audit

- Required within 18 months of compliance; annually thereafter
- Independent auditor
- Online audit
- Audit will check each report for
 - Layout (correct rows, columns, headings)
 - Format (CSV or Excel)
 - Delivery (E-mail alert, access on password-controlled website)
 - Accuracy (Tolerance is -8% to +2%)
- More details of the auditing process can be found at:-
www.projectcounter.org/r2/R2_Appendix_E_Auditing_Requirements_and_Tests.pdf

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Libraries: what do you measure and why?

- Anything which tells you about the utilisation of services in your library
- Data which might help you to demonstrate whether you are getting a reasonable return on your investment
- Data which might help to support cases for funding
- Data which can inform your strategic planning

Libraries: usage data can be.....

- A practical management tool – helps assess effectiveness
- A means of assessing performance
- A planning tool
- A political tool
- A means of helping demonstrate value for money
- A means of highlighting user satisfaction
- Support for funding bids

Librarians: key performance indicators

- Gross library expenditure per staff/student FTE
- Gross information expenditure per staff/student FTE
- Expenditure on e-resources as % of total
- Cost per seat hours per annum
- **Total full text downloads**
- **Downloads per FTE user**
- **Cost per download of online journals**



Example: faculty want a new journal

- There is a new journal called Nature Physics. This is essential for my research so please subscribe immediately.
- Question: how can you justify funds for this new title?



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Example: building up evidence using COUNTER data

- Average cost per full-text download of current Nature Journal Collection = \$1.40
- Average cost per full text download of all online journal titles = \$2.80
- Usage of Nature Journals Collection has increased year on year by 30%
- Would be worth securing trial access to the title to see how usage compares with the rest
- This may provide evidence to make a case for funding a subscription

COUNTER: a large scale application

- JISC (UK Joint Information Systems Committee)
 - Funded by UK higher education funding councils
 - Supports higher education in the use of information and communications technologies
 - Access to information and communication resources
 - Advice on creation and preservation of digital archives
 - Implications of using ICT
 - Network services and support
 - Research to develop innovative solutions
- National overview of online journal usage
 - Develop a reliable, widely applicable methodology
 - Use COUNTER Journal Report 1 'article full-text requests'

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JISC Project

- **COUNTER data was analysed in relation to:**
 - usage range
 - Price band
 - Subject category
- **Metrics derived from this analysis**
 - Trend in number of full-text article requests
 - Full text article requests per title
 - Full text article requests per publisher package
 - Full text article requests per FTE user
 - Most requested titles
 - Usage of subscribed vs.. unsubscribed titles
 - Cost per full-text article request
 - Cost per FTE user
- **Summary report available at:**
www.ebase.uce.ac.uk/projects/NESLi2.htm

COUNTER –based metrics

- **Growth in article downloads**

- Publisher A: 12%- 208%
- Publisher B: 12%- 59%
- Publisher C: 23%- 154%
- Publisher D: 22%- 81%

- **Cost per download**

- Publisher A: £0.97- £5.26
- Publisher B: £0.70 - £2.91
- Publisher C: £0.80 - £3.29
- Publisher D: £0.45 - £2.26

Code of Practice for books

- Covers online books, encyclopaedias, reference works
- Developed by a task force of publishers and librarians with expertise in online books
- Comments on draft were accepted February through December 2005
- Final version published in March 2006

Code of Practice for books

- Unit of access may include
 - Entire book
 - Chapter, entry ('Section')
 - Page
 - Paragraph

- Access depends on interface and organization of content
 - Entire book may be one PDF
 - Each chapter may have own PDF
 - Reference works may be organized by section, or entry

Code of Practice for books

- **Book Report 1**
 - Number of successful requests by month and title
- **Book Report 2**
 - Number of successful **section** requests by month and title
- **Book Report 3**
 - Turnaways by month and title
- **Book Report 4**
 - Turnaways by month and service
- **Book Report 5**
 - Total searches and sessions by month and title
- **Book Report 6**
 - Total searches and sessions by month and service

Current issues

- **Management of usage reports form different vendors**
 - Can be time consuming; tools/expertise needed
- **Interface and user behaviour effects on usage statistics**
 - E.g. downloading HTML and PDF of the same article in one session
 - COUNTER is testing data filter solutions, but what does the duplicate downloading signify?
- **Reporting separately purchasable digital archive usage**
 - Currently all usage for a journal is usually reported together
 - Separately purchasable archives mean we need separate reports for archival content, or a year of publication breakdown of usage
- **What to count and what not to count:-**
 - How to deal with partial open access journals
 - How to deal with journals whose content becomes free after a fixed time period
 - Oxford Journals is developing reports to take all these factors into account

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Current issues - Institutional repositories

- **Growth in Institutional Repository (IR) content**
- **Need for credible IR usage statistics**
 - **Authors, publishers, editors, IR administrators, research funders**
- **IR usage statistics already being collected**
 - **But no standards yet in place for comparable repository statistics, especially at the journal level**

New Development - SUSHI

- **Standardized Usage Statistics Harvesting Initiative (SUSHI)**
 - No mechanism yet for automatically retrieving, combining, and storing COUNTER usage data from different sources
 - NISO-sponsored XML-based SUSHI aims to provide a means to do just this, via a standard model for machine to machine automation of statistics harvesting.
 - COUNTER and NISO have signed an agreement to work together on the development of SUSHI. More details of SUSHI can be found at:-

http://www.niso.org/committees/SUSHI/SUSHI_comm.html

Conclusions

- Usage statistics are one indicator of usage, success and value, provided that....
 - They are reliable
 - Universal standards are adopted
 - Online products are structured to allow reporting of usage statistics at different levels
 - Support is provided to librarians to manage and analyse the usage statistics
- But...
 - They should not be over-complicated or over-interpreted
 - They should be used in context with market research
 - Both publishers and librarians are going to have to organize themselves to generate and handle usage statistics

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COUNTER Membership

- Member Categories and Annual Fees (2006)
 - Publishers/intermediaries: \$775
 - Library Consortia: \$515
 - Libraries: \$387
 - Industry organization: \$387
 - Library affiliate: \$156 (*non-voting member*)

- Benefits of full membership
 - Owner of COUNTER with voting rights at annual general meeting, etc.
 - Regular bulletins on progress
 - Opportunity to receive advice on implementation

COUNTER - Online Usage of Electronic Resources - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.projectcounter.org/

Customize Links Free Hotmail Windows Marketplace Windows Media Windows

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Counting Online Usage of NeTworked Electronic Resources

HOME | ABOUT COUNTER | SPONSORS | CODE OF PRACTICE | NEWS AND ACTIVITIES | COMPLIANT VENDORS | CONTACT US | MEMBERS

Update | Release 2 of the Code of Practice for Journals and Databases now published

Click here to [apply for COUNTER Membership](#)

Apply for COUNTER membership

About COUNTER

The use of online information resources is growing rapidly. It is widely agreed by producers and purchasers of information that the use of these resources should be measured in a more consistent way. Librarians want to understand better how the information they buy from a variety of sources is being used; publishers want to know how the information products they disseminate are being accessed. An essential requirement to meet these objectives is an agreed international set of standards and protocols governing the recording and exchange of online usage data. The COUNTER Codes of Practice provide these standards and protocols and are published in full on this website. Currently available are:

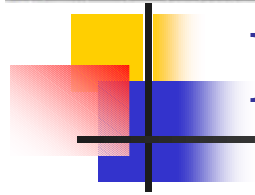
- [Release 1 of the COUNTER Code of Practice for Journals and Databases](#) (published in January 2003)
- [Release 2 of the COUNTER Code of Practice for Journals and Databases](#) (published April 2005)
- [Draft Release 1 of the COUNTER Code of Practice for Books and Reference Works](#) (published for comments in January 2005)

COUNTER Organizational Structure

In 2003 COUNTER was formally incorporated in England as a not-for-profit company, Counter Online

Done

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For more information.....

<http://www.projectcounter.org>

Thank you!

Peter Shepherd, COUNTER

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