



Counting Online Usage of
Networked Electronic Resources

News Release

29 April 2004

Draft Release 2 of the COUNTER Code of Practice available for comment

The draft of Release 2 of the COUNTER Code of Practice is now available for comment and can be accessed on the COUNTER website at www.projectCounter.org. This draft further refines and clarifies the specifications that vendors must meet to have their online usage reports designated COUNTER-compliant. Comments will be accepted until 30 September 2004 and the final version of Release 2 will be published in January 2005. The existing Release 1 will remain valid until January 2006.

Release 2 of the COUNTER Code of Practice has been developed with input from librarian focus groups, from the COUNTER International Advisory Board and from other sources over the last year. A very strong message received from all groups is that COUNTER should concentrate on ensuring that vendors can provide customers with a reliable set of basic usage reports that are consistent and compatible. It is not COUNTER's objective to develop an ever-expanding list of increasingly detailed usage reports. This philosophy is reflected in the scope and timetable for Release 2.

The draft text of Release 2 has been approved by the COUNTER Executive Committee. It will continue to focus on journals and databases (a separate COUNTER Code of Practice for e-books and e-reference works will be developed during 2004). To avoid confusion, the original format and structure of Release 1 has been retained as far as possible. Changes in Release 2 include:

- The complete list of Definitions of Terms Used has been moved from Section 3 to an Appendix to the Code of Practice. A subset of those definitions that are specific to the usage reports included in Release 2 has been extracted from this list and is published in Section 3 of the Code of Practice itself.
- A new 'Journal Report 1a: Number of Successful Full-text Requests in html and PDF Formats' has been included. This is in response to unambiguous feedback from the librarian focus groups
- The Level 2 usage reports from Release 1 (Journal Report 3 and Journal Report 4) have been moved to Appendix F to Release 2. These more detailed reports are not a requirement for Counter compliance, but are provided by several vendors and are valued by many customers.
- The protocols used for recording and reporting usage when an intermediary aggregator or gateway is involved have been consolidated in the new Table 2.

About COUNTER

COUNTER (Counting Online Usage of NeTworked Electronic Resources) is a multi-agency initiative whose objective is to develop a single, internationally accepted, extendible Code of Practice that will allow the usage of online information products and services to be measured more consistently. COUNTER is actively supported by the international community of librarians and publishers, and by their professional organisations.

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