



Quick Guide: Result Clicks Record Views

RECORDING USER ACTIONS **NOT** MACHINE ACTIONS

COUNTER

Result Clicks and Record Views

In Release 4 of the COUNTER Code of Practice, **Result Clicks** and **Record Views** are new usage metrics for databases and platforms that replace outdated Sessions and often-ambiguous Searches metric types.

The key difference between the metrics is that **Result Clicks** count all the clicks originating from the result list displayed by a search or browse, including links to external resources as well as records included in the databases on that platform. **Record Views** only cover views of the detailed metadata (e.g. abstract view) of records from databases on that platform.

By including clicks on links to external resources, the Result Clicks metric is intended to demonstrate the value of a given database even when a record from that database is not being viewed. Be aware that these can reflect the same action by the user, for example when a user clicks a result to view the Abstract view of a record – for this reason use these two metrics independently when evaluating a database.

Record Views

Report the number of times the detailed metadata of records within the database are viewed, irrespective of whether these records are reached from a set of search/browse results from the platform or from a link-in from an external source.

Record Views are **not** views of the actual item (e.g. Full Text), but represent a view of the detailed metadata display.

Typical examples of Record Views counted in COUNTER Database Reports are abstracts views, descriptive data on molecular structures, and chemical reactions.

Result Clicks

Report the number of times that users click on results from a given database from the result list displayed by a search or browse action on that platform.

The Result Click is counted irrespective of whether it takes the user to an internal record within the database searched (e.g. Full Text or an abstract/detailed display), or to an external resource (e.g. an OpenURL link such as “findit@mylibrary”, a document delivery form).



<http://www.projectcounter.org/>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Here are answers to some of the questions you have asked us about Record Views and Result Clicks.

For further help please visit



Usus is an independent community-run website, building a community engaged in best practice

You can send the team your comments and questions via the [Usus online form](#).

Why are Record Views and Result Clicks a better measure of database value than Searches?

The Record View and Results Click metrics represent user actions and thus correlate to a direct interest a user expressed in a given database. Searches can be conducted across multiple databases, particular when a library has pre-selected database to search by discipline or when a discovery system automatically searches dozens of databases to find relevant results, and thus the fact that a database was searched may not have much meaning if the user never took action on a result from that database. The new metric types are about measuring user action not system action.

I regret the loss of the sessions count; are result clicks meaningless in comparing databases?

In today's world of discovery services and federated search technology, "searches" are no longer a reliable measure. To provide the best results to users, database systems automatically search multiple sources and pull in the most relevant results with the effect that search statistics can increase dramatically. As a result, COUNTER introduced Result Clicks and Record Views. Both of these *record user actions* **not machine actions** and thus are a much better gauge of value of a database to your users.

If a user finds a record in one database and the full text in another, is there a double counting of the search?

No, because COUNTER Release 4 reports treat the second action as a Full Text request and not as a Search and Full Text Request. The first database records the Record View/Result Click and the second database gets credit for the Full-Text Article Requests but is not credited with another search.

When looking at a Database Report we notice that the Record View count is much higher than the Result Click count, how can this be possible if the user has to click a result to get to the detailed record?

It is likely that your organisation is using a federated search, or perhaps using external pages to store links to articles (e.g. reading lists). In these cases, the search and Result Click take place on another platform (or in the case of reading lists, there is no search or Result Click recorded) and the user is linked to the platform that hosts the detailed record.

If a user clicks an item on a result list to view the detailed record (e.g. abstract view), will this be counted as both a Result Click and a Record View? If so, isn't that double counting?

Yes, the click from the result list will generate a Result Click and the viewing of the abstract record will generate a Record View. This single action on the part of the user is counted twice, once each, as different actions. For this reason, when analysing Database Reports, the Record Views and Result Clicks should not be added-up but rather viewed and evaluated separately.