Directors’ Report 2018

Supporting the transition to Release 5 of the COUNTER Code of Practice

COUNTER’s focus in 2018 has been on helping its community prepare for the transition to the new release of the Code of Practice in January 2019.

A wide range of content providers have been implementing the new release on their platforms. Thanks are due to the COUNTER Technical Advisory Group, which has reviewed and responded to hundreds of technical questions. In response to frequently asked questions the group has also clarified and updated the Code of Practice. The group members are:

- Senol Akay, American Chemical Society
- Andrew Goldthorpe, ABC
- Athena Hoeppner, University of Central Florida
- Harriet Joyce, Taylor & Francis
- Kornelia Junge, Wiley
- Tasha Mellins-Cohen, Microbiology Society
- Bernd Oberknapp, Freiburg University Library
- Paul Needham, Cranfield University
- Oliver Pesch, EBSCO
- Thomas Porquet, Couperin.org
- Elena Zapryanova-Hadjinikolova, Elsevier

As well as providing bespoke advice and answers to questions, members of the Technical Advisory Group and the Executive Committee have collaborated to provide webinars, guides, and online tutorials to help the COUNTER community prepare for Release 5.

Webinars

Senol Akay; Jill Emery and Marie Kennedy; Irene Barbers and Bernd Oberknapp; Kornelia Junge; and Thomas Porquet and Thomas Jouneau presented seven webinars between February and June 2018. Webinars were in English, French and German and can be viewed on the COUNTER YouTube Channel. Lorraine Estelle, the COUNTER Project Director, also presented webinars hosted by Ingenta Connect and ACRL – Choice Webinars sponsored by Accessible Archives.

In 2018 COUNTER presented nine webinars in three languages: recordings are available on our YouTube Channel.
Guides
We are grateful to Couperin.org for translating into French our Friendly Guide for Content Providers and the Release 5 Technical Notes; to Tasha Mellins-Cohen for creating our Friendly Guide for Librarians; and to CRKN for translating this publication into French. The guides can be found on our website. A Spanish language translation of the Friendly Guide for Librarians is also being prepared.

Foundation Classes
Many of our members have told us that they would like online tutorials. We have so far produced four of these in our COUNTER Foundation Class series and there are more under construction. Each tutorial lasts between 10 and 15 minutes and deals with a different aspect of Release 5. The tutorials can be viewed on the COUNTER YouTube Channel.

Community Support
We have established two electronic mailing lists that enable the sharing of questions, answers, and best practice about Release 5. There is a list for content providers – COUNTER-R5@JISCMAIL.AC.UK – and another for librarians – COUNTER-R5-LIB@JISCMAIL.AC.UK. Members can join these lists by visiting https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/. Those signing up to a list can unsubscribe at any time.

Conferences
We have been delighted this year to meet so many COUNTER members at conferences and events. Members of our Executive Committee collaborated to present Release 5 at the following:

• Jill Emery and Oliver Pesch at the American Library Association Midwinter Conference in February
• Daniel Albertsson at the Swedish Medical Library Conference in April
• Lorraine Estelle at the Charleston Conference in November
• Daniel Albertsson at LIR HEAnet User Group in December

Development of Tools
The COUNTER Technical Group has been overseeing the development of free tools to support the COUNTER community. Special thanks go to Bernd Oberknapp, who has led the work on these initiatives. Thanks also to the group of library consortium managers who helped us to define the requirements for the Consortium Harvesting Tools. Following an open tender process, MPS Technologies were awarded the contract to develop these tools.
The **COUNTER Release 5 Validation Tool** will enable content providers and libraries to:

- Validate Release 5 Report in tabular format
- Validate SUSHI
- Get on-screen error display and email report

The COUNTER Consortium Harvesting Tool will enable library consortia to automate the harvesting of reports for member libraries. We are very grateful to RedLink and OCLC, whose funding contributed to the development of these tools.

**Code of Practice for Research Data**

Repositories and platform providers are keen to understand how the research data they make publicly available is used and reused. They would like academics and funders to value the metrics for research data as they do with articles. Usage statistics are an important component in this understanding, but data usage metrics are tricky and until now there has been no common best practice, nor a standard report format. This is why COUNTER and members of the Make Data Count team collaborated in drafting the Code of Practice for Research Data Usage Metrics Release 1.

This first release is aligned with the COUNTER Code of Practice Release 5 and provides a framework for counting and reporting use of research data. COUNTER welcomes feedback from the data repositories that implement this first release of the Code of Practice. Their experiences will help to refine and improve it and inform a second release.
Distributed Usage Logging

Technology and innovation have transformed researcher workflows significantly in recent years. Researchers today have more ways to access scholarly content, as well as new ways to share and collaborate on publisher platforms, aggregators, repositories, and academic social network sites. COUNTER has collaborated as part of the Distributed Usage Logging working group, led by Crossref, to explore how publishers can report this type of usage in Release 5. In 2019, Atypon, Elsevier, and Digital Science will collaborate to deliver Distributed Usage Logging reporting in COUNTER-compliant reports.

Welcoming 12 new members

- ALANTIS
- AtoZdatabase
- The Broad Institute
- Cabell’s International
- Canadian Electronic Library
- Canadian Science Publishing
- DataCite
- Ex Libris
- Frontiers in Bioscience
- Overt Software Solutions
- Texas State Library and Archives Commission
- University of Central Florida

Technical Advisory Group members collaborated with other organizations to develop a Code of Practice for research data and to progress Distributed Usage Logging.

Membership

Members make COUNTER possible, both through their membership fees and through their expert input. Our membership is made up of libraries, library consortia, publishers, vendors and industry organizations, reflecting the collaborative nature of COUNTER. We have welcomed 12 new members this year.
Consultation

We consult with our membership annually through our satisfaction survey. The feedback we received in 2018 informs our operational plan for 2019.

Through the survey, members told us that they use our Friendly Guides and have attended our webinars and they rate them highly, as these two comments on the Friendly Guides illustrate:

• Examples are very useful and realistic.
• The clarity of information, and easy to search/use layout is excellent. I’m able to answer any questions I have about COUNTER 5 so far from the guide.

Members also told us they would like more guides and webinars, and so we are working on more COUNTER Foundation Classes and will hold more webinars in 2019.

Respondents to the survey made some requests and raised some areas of concern:

‘More examples’
We will produce more worked examples for Release 5.

‘The audit should be much stricter…’
We will be issuing date-stamped logos to content providers when they pass their Release 5 COUNTER audits. This will help librarians know at a glance which content providers are COUNTER-compliant. The Release 5 Validation Tool will also enable content providers to test their reports, which will aid compliance and make COUNTER audits more efficient.

‘Please continue to do everything possible to help get *easy* COUNTER Release 5 Consortia Harvesting Tool set up’
This is under construction.

‘There should be a “sweet spot” of frequency of updating releases of the COUNTER Code of Practice’
We agree. Release 5 will operate under a continuous maintenance procedure to allow changes to be made without creating a completely new release.
COUNTER Board of Directors

- Oliver Pesch  
  Chair  
- Lorraine Estelle  
  Project Director and Company Secretary  
- Enrique Juan Gonzales  
- Elisabeth Ling  
- Ross Macintyre  
- Anne C. Osterman  
- Heather Staines

COUNTER Executive Committee

- David Sommer  
  Chair  
- Daniel Albertsson  
- Irene Barbers  
- Simon Bevan  
- John Chodacki  
- Jill Emery  
- Kornelia Junge  
- Thomas Jouneau  
- Marie Kennedy  
- Paul Needham  
- Tasha Mellins-Cohen  
- Bernd Oberknapp  
- Jack Ochs  
- Elena Zaprano-Hadjinikolova

Our Sponsors

We would like to thank the following organizations for their support

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Scholarly iQ

Silver Sponsors  
ABC  
Atmire  
BPA Worldwide  
IOP Publishing  
Jisc  
MPS  
Springer Nature

Bronze Sponsor  
Sage Publishing
Our audited accounts for 2018

Income statement year ended 31st December 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnover</td>
<td>124,249</td>
<td>121,876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross profit</td>
<td>124,249</td>
<td>121,876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overheads</td>
<td>123,696</td>
<td>111,043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative expenses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other operating income</td>
<td>17,000</td>
<td>18,422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating profit</td>
<td>17,553</td>
<td>29,255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit before taxation</td>
<td>17,553</td>
<td>29,255</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our balance sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current assets</td>
<td>196,627</td>
<td>164,626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash at bank and in hand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</td>
<td>76,904</td>
<td>62,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net current assets</td>
<td>119,723</td>
<td>102,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total assets less current liabilities</td>
<td>119,723</td>
<td>102,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital and reserves</td>
<td>119,723</td>
<td>102,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit and loss account</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members funds</td>
<td>119,723</td>
<td>102,170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Detailed Income and Retained Earnings Statement for year ended 31st December 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>18,422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>29,255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Profit before taxation</strong></td>
<td>17,553</td>
<td>29,255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax on profit</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Profit for the financial year and total comprehensive income</strong></td>
<td>17,553</td>
<td>29,255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retained earnings at the start of the year</td>
<td>102,170</td>
<td>72,915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retained earnings at the end of the year</td>
<td>119,723</td>
<td>102,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax on profit</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>102,170</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

All the activities of the company are from continuing operations.
These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies’ regime and in accordance with FRS 102 ‘The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland’.

For the year ending 31st December 2018 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors’ responsibilities:

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476;

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

These financial statements were approved by the board of directors and authorised for issue on 28th February 2019.