Good afternoon, my name is Oliver Pesch. In this section we will be talking about the standards related to usage statistics.
Overview

- History of COUNTER & SUSHI
- The reports and what they are used for
- Best practices surrounding SUSHI
- Looking ahead

In the next 20 minutes, I will cover a brief history of COUNTER and SUSHI. We will talk about a few of the more important COUNTER reports. Have some discussions on SUSHI before wrapping up with what’s in store for these initiatives.

We have a lot to cover and there may be some slides that I will skip over in the interest of time, but if you are interested in more of the details, the presentation, with speaker notes, will be made available online or drop me an email and I will send you a copy.
We go back to 2002 – Online collections were growing and taking up an increasing share of library materials budgets. Librarians found it difficult to get comparable statistics (or statistics at all).

That was the year when a group of publishers, librarians and aggregators got together with a goal of solving what was really a common problem for all stakeholders.
2003 – The following year the first release 1 of the Code of Practice for Journals & Databases was published.
2004 – ERM systems were new to the market and the new COUNTER code of practice created an opportunity for the ERM to take on usage analysis. The challenge was the growing number of content providers offering COUNTER reports and requiring a lot of work to collect and load those reports into the ERM. The belief was that there must be a way to automate this! This year work commenced on creating a client-server protocol that would allow COUNTER reports to be pulled into the ERM automatically – this came to be called SUSHI.
2005 – Release 2 of the COUNTER Code of practice on Journals & Databases was published, mainly addressing some of the short-comings from the initial release.
2006 – Release 1 of the Books Code of Practice was released. Prior to this, the focus had been on journals, but with the growing number of eBook offerings, tracking their usage became important.

Meanwhile the work on SUSHI was wrapping up and in 2006, the SUSHI standard was released as a draft standard for trial use.
2007 – SUSHI was published by NISO as an official ANSI standard – Z39.93
2008 – Release 3 Journals & Databases added a few more reports and tweaks
2012 – NISO’s SUSHI committee published the COUNTER SUSHI Implementation Profile (1st edition) to assist content providers and auditors in understanding how SUSHI should be implemented.
Release 4 of the COUNTER Code of Practice went into effect at the end of 2013. Significant was that this release brought books, journals, databases into a single code of practice as well as adding support for multimedia collections.
In 2015 Usus, a community web site about usage statistics was launched. Supported by COUNTER, this is a site run by librarians and designed to be a focal point for information and conversations around usage statistics. If you haven’t used the site, please do... It is a great place to report issues and find solutions.
Before we jump into the reports, I want to start with defining one term that often causes confusion.
Platform

COUNTER reports provide usage statistics for the journals, books, databases and multimedia collections accessed on the Platform.

The Platform is the host or site where that content is accessed.

Examples include ScienceDirect, EBSCOhost, Taylor & Francis, etc.

PLATFORM. COUNTER reports provide usage statistics for journals, books, databases and multimedia collections for a given “Platform”. The platform is more or less equivalent to the host website. Examples of platforms are EBSCOhost, ScienceDirect, Web of Knowledge. So when you see “platform” think “host website”.
Now let's talk about COUNTER reports...
Here is the list of “standard” reports – those that must be supplied (when applicable) by the publisher or content provider to be considered compliant... I won’t read them to but you will see they cover books, databases, journals, multimedia collections as well as platform-level reporting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Name</th>
<th>Report Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book Report 1</td>
<td>Number of Successful Title Requests by Month and Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Report 2</td>
<td>Number of Successful Section Requests by Month and Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Report 3</td>
<td>Access Denied to Content Items by Month, Title and Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Report 4</td>
<td>Access Denied to Content Items by Month, Platform and Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Report 5</td>
<td>Total Searches by Month and Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database Report 1</td>
<td>Total Searches, Result Clicks and Record Views by Month and Database</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database Report 2</td>
<td>Access Denied by Month, Database and Category</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journal Report 1</td>
<td>Number of Successful Full-Text Article Requests by Month and Journal</td>
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<td>Journal Report 1 GOA</td>
<td>Number of Successful Gold Open Access Full-Text Article Requests by Month and Journal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journal Report 2</td>
<td>Access Denied to Full-Text Articles by Month, Journal and Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal Report 5</td>
<td>Number of Successful Full-Text Article Requests by Year-of-Publication (YOP) and Journal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multimedia Report 1</td>
<td>Number of Successful Full Multimedia Content Unit Requests by Month and Collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platform Report 1</td>
<td>Total Searches, Result Clicks and Record Views by Month and Platform</td>
</tr>
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Let’s focus on three reports that you are most likely to need to know about.
They are, Journal Report 1, Database Report 1 and Platform Report 1. In am sidestepping the book reports in the interest of time -- they are in many ways similar to the journal reports, but they do have their own idiosyncrasies. We can talk about book report challenges during the question period at the end if there is time and interest...
Let's start with Journal Report 1 -- the “Number of successful full text requests by month and journal”.
So what is counted?

- Full Text Requests are the main statistics -- these counts increment each time a user clicks a link to view or download the actual article – regardless of format.
- HTML Requests and PDF Requests are broken out separately as totals on the tabular (Excel version) of the report.
- For the most part, you will likely use Full Text Requests in your analysis.

*HTML and PDF metric types were added in Release 3 of the Code of Practice in an attempt to provide transparency into what was termed the “interface effect” of usage. – Consider for example, a user clicks to view the details of an article. One publisher may show the abstract and allow the user to select the HTML version or the PDF version, while another publisher might automatically show the HTML full text and include a link to the PDF. When the user is looking to view the PDF... With the the first publisher, the “Full Text Requests” would go up by one; whereas, for the second publisher the Full Text Requests would go up by two (one for the HTML that displayed by default and another for the PDF view. Adding these two format-based totals to the report was an effort to be more transparent.*
Journal Report 1 covers ALL usage for the journal in the platform. Including usage that came from Gold Open Access articles, articles that were part of a paid archive or acquired via pay-per-view.
The reports also include several identifiers for the journal... The goal is that these can be used to match up usage with cost information, or merge usage into package title lists, etc.
So what do you do with these statistics?

Calculate cost-per-use... If the result is less than the cost of an ILL or individual article purchase, then there is a good argument for renewing the subscription.... Lower numbers are better

Analyze publisher packages by taking the title list of the publisher package and merging in usage for each title, you can analyze the performance of the overall package.
Here is an example of the type of package analysis that can be done when usage is combined with subscription data. We see some summary data for the overall package...
And if we scroll down a bit
We see the titles in the package with usage and cost per use shown for each... Helpful information when managing the package renewal and the swaps and drops....
Moving along to Database Report 1. -- “Total searches, result-clicks and record views by month and database”
The focus is on A&I and full text databases. This report is NOT intended for publisher packages and does not work well for multimedia collections where the hosting site isn’t using the notion of a database as a container for the content.

There report counts two kinds of searches...

- Regular searches are searches where the user selects which database to search.
- Federated and Automated searches are when the system automatically searches a bunch of databases as is the case with federated search and some discovery services.

Result-Clicks – the actual user “clicks” from the publisher host’s result list and Record Views (the user looking at the detailed (abstract) view of the result) closely coincide with user actions and thus are a better indication of the value of the database.

Of the two, we feel that in most cases the best one for evaluating the effectiveness of a database is “Result Clicks”.
So how do you use this information?
Cost-per-use of a database can be calculated -- you probably want to use result clicks not searches for the denominator. In general, the lower the cost-per-use, the more valuable the database.

You can also use these metrics to look for trends. Tracking result-clicks over time and seeing a drop, could mean your users aren’t finding the database very useful... But it could also mean they are not FINDING the database. If you see a downward trend, did you add a federated search or discovery service and not include this database? Are users able to find it on the library web page? This report may give an indication of a problem...
And here is Platform Report 1 -- “Total searches, result-clicks and record views by month and platform”
This is about the overall statistics for the platform.

The metric types are the same as those reported for Database Report 1; HOWEVER, Searches-Regular are the unique searches performed by a user using that platform’s user interface regardless of how many databases were searched.

If you need to track searches, the Platform Report provides the most usable numbers.
As to how platform reports are used. Filling in surveys...

You can also use Platform reports for trend analysis. A downward trend could mean that vendor’s resources are less desirable... Or it could mean that they are harder for your users to find. This report provides a means to measure and monitor progress.
OK, lets switch gears a bit and talk about SUSHI.
SUSHI is a standard that describes a method by which two computer programs can automatically exchange COUNTER reports. One program, the “client”, requests the report from another program, the “server”, running on a content provider’s reporting service.
SUSHI does require a client application. There are some options for open source clients (you can find some suggestions on tools section of the NISO SUSHI website), but these don’t come with any support. Or, you could create your own... but for this you need to be a pretty skilled software developer. So, most likely the SUSHI client you will be using is part of an ERM or commercial usage consolidation system – these tend to be more robust and the vendor has a vested interest in fixing problems.
Assuming you have your SUSHI client, now you need to get it to work!
The SUSHI protocol is pretty simple. To harvest COUNTER reports from a given platform, you need to configure your client with some critical information about that platform:

1. The URL of that Platform’s SUSHI server
2. Identity of who is making the request -- the “requestor”
3. Identity of the institution’s that you want to retrieve usage for – the customer ID
4. The name of the report you want
5. The date range for the usage
SUSHI Configuration Basics

When a SUSHI client requests a report it needs to know:
• The URL of the SUSHI Server

And it needs to tell the server:
• Who is making the request
• Which institution’s usage to return
• What report it wants
• For what date range

These are the three key elements...
If you are using a commercial tool for managing your COUNTER statistics, you will probably need to fill out a form like this for each platform. You will recognize the three key fields -- the SUSHI Server URL; the Requestor ID and the SUSHI Customer ID. This information comes from the content provider...
So where do you find this information? The first place to look is on the content providers online reports application. Let's walk through an example from MIT Press – a publisher that uses Atypon for their hosting and usage.
We start by accessing MIT Press Journals web site and logging in with our administrative username and password.
You will see a multi-tabbed interface.
We want the “Institutional administration” tab. If you don’t see this, you don’t have administrative rights on your login so contact MIT Press customer service for assistance (or find someone else within your organization that has administrative rights.)
See the section “Retrieval via SUSHI”?
This is where the needed information is...
Zooming in a bit we see the URL for the SUSHI server, the Requestor ID and the Customer ID. If you are observant you will notice that the Requester ID is the username from the administrative login and the Customer ID is the customer number for our institution. *(Note that the information presented here is merely sample data so don’t try to use it.)*
Setting up SUSHI isn’t the simplest thing in the world, but it’s worth it in the end as it will save a lot of time otherwise spent retrieving and loading reports.

And the good news is that using SUSHI is getting easier. Like we have shown with the MIT Press example, publishers are doing a better job of making SUSHI configuration data available and the quality of SUSHI implementations are improving.
Let's look at some numbers...

Last February, EBSCO's SUSHI harvesting was averaging 60% FAILURE rate. Since that time we introduced an updated version of our SUSHI Client...

This coupled with significant improvements on the part of publishers, we have gone from seeing a 60% FAILURE rate in February of 2015 to a 95% SUCCESS rate in February of 2016.

There are probably some in the audience that tried SUSHI a couple years ago and decided it wasn't worth the effort.... Hopefully numbers like this will provide some optimism that there is hope!
Increasing your chances of success with SUSHI...

- Look for SUSHI configuration options in the publisher’s online reporting system
  - You may have to “activate” your account for SUSHI
- Check the SUSHI Server Registry for instructions
- Contact the publisher’s technical support
  - You may need to register the IP address of your SUSHI client
- Never guess (you have a 100% chance of guessing wrong)!
- Be patient when harvesting usage
  - Usage is often not available until the end of the next month

Here are a few pointers that may help you increase your chances of success with SUSHI...

- When configuring for SUSHI, start with the publisher’s online reporting system. You likely have to activate SUSHI for your account, and the majority of publishers and content providers allow you to do that from within their reporting system – and they give you the key details for SUSHI configuration.
- Check the SUSHI Server Registry for help
- Failing that, contact the content provider’s technical support
- The key is don’t guess. You have a better chances of winning the Powerball lottery than guessing the right SUSHI configuration details.
- And be patient when harvesting. Many publishers don’t make their COUNTER reports for a given month available until the 28th of the NEXT month. So if you are looking for April usage... It may be May 28th before you will be successful.
Looking ahead...

Lets take a look at what’s next with all of this...
Within the next year we expect significant improvements to the SUSHI Server Registry. It will be moving to the COUNTER web site (which is also being redesigned) where it will be integrated with their registry of compliant vendors. The self-reporting will be supplemented by proactive registration of SUSHI servers by the Usus community web site team. Also, improved searching will make it easier (possible even) to find out how to get COUNTER stats for a given publisher – too often the platform name is different from the publisher name (HighWire is a good example of this – if you didn’t know that the publisher titles were available through HighWire you wouldn’t know where to look for the usage statistics.)
Another big advance will be the creation of a COUNTER-SUSHI Testing Tool. This will be a free online service that will allow virtually anyone to test a COUNTER report or SUSHI implementation. If you are a publisher, you would use this to make sure your implementation was truly compliant. COUNTER auditors could use it to test compliance. Librarians can use it to verify report and, when problems are found to submit details to the publishers. The goal is much improved compliance of both tabular and SUSHI-harvested reports.
Here is a quick screenshot of an Excel-based prototype of the testing tool. In this case 27 different tests are conducted against a JR1 report with pass/fail showing for each test.
And a separate “Error Log” provides details as to the problems... In this case there were issues with ISSNs.
In 2018 COUNTER expects to publish Release 5 of the COUNTER Code of Practice. The focus of this release will be:

- Fixing some metric types that need it
- Consistency between reports
- Consistency between formats
- Clarity in definitions and processing
- Simplify where possible

Fixing some metric and reporting problems... Like those we see when trying to compare one vendor’s BR1 report with another vendor’s BR2 report... And minimizing the interface effect between PDF and HTML views of full text.

Consistency is another area of focus. Consistency between reports and consistency between formats so that a tabular report provides the same information as an XML version harvested via SUSHI... That is not always the case today.

Clarity is another theme... Clarification of definitions... Clarification of what events or actions count against which metric types...

A focus on simplicity means making it easier for vendors to create reports, easier for librarians to use and compare reports. Part of this comes through consistency and clarity, but we also hope to reduce the number or reports while introducing some flexibility in reporting systems so COUNTER reports can meet a wider range of needs.
## References....

- Usus website: [http://usus.org.uk](http://usus.org.uk)
- COUNTER website: [http://www.projectcounter.org](http://www.projectcounter.org)
- NISO SUSHI website: [http://www.niso.org/workrooms/sushi](http://www.niso.org/workrooms/sushi)
- Implementing SUSHI at your institution: [http://www.vivalib.org/usus/SUSHI/SUSHITraining.pdf](http://www.vivalib.org/usus/SUSHI/SUSHITraining.pdf)
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Thank you