

# An Introduction to COUNTER for Librarians

Anna Franca, Head of Collection Development, King's College London

Lorraine Estelle, Director, COUNTER

# Learning outcomes

- ❑ What is COUNTER?
- ❑ Why is it important?
- ❑ How do I get the reports?
- ❑ Overview of key report types
- ❑ Analysing the data
- ❑ Further help and support

# Who is involved?

COUNTER is a not-for-profit member organisation – and members serve on its Committees and working groups:

**COUNTER Board of Directors:** Governance  
Chaired by Oliver Pesch of EBSCO



**COUNTER Executive Committee:** Day-to-day oversight and development of the standard known as the COUNTER Code of Practice  
Chaired by David Sommer of KUDOS



**COUNTER Technical Advisory Group**  
Chaired by Paul Needham, University of Cranfield



“The purpose of the COUNTER Code of Practice is to facilitate the recording, exchange and interpretation of online usage data by establishing open, international standards and protocols for the provision of vendor-generated usage statistics that are consistent, credible and compatible”

COUNTER Code of Practice Release 4, p. 3

(<http://www.projectcounter.org/r4/COPR4.pdf> )

# What is COUNTER?

- ❑ Launched in March 2002
- ❑ Counting Online Usage of Networked Electronic Resources
- ❑ International initiative that sets standards that facilitate the recording and reporting of online usage statistics
- ❑ Supported by publisher, intermediary and librarian communities

# What is COUNTER?

- ❑ First Code of Practice covering journals and databases published in 2003
- ❑ Books and reference works in 2006
- ❑ Release 4 is now a single integrated Code of Practice covering journals, databases, books and multimedia
- ❑ Now considered the gold standard for measuring usage

The three Cs!

**CONSISTENT**

**CREDIBLE**

**COMPARABLE**

# Why is COUNTER important?

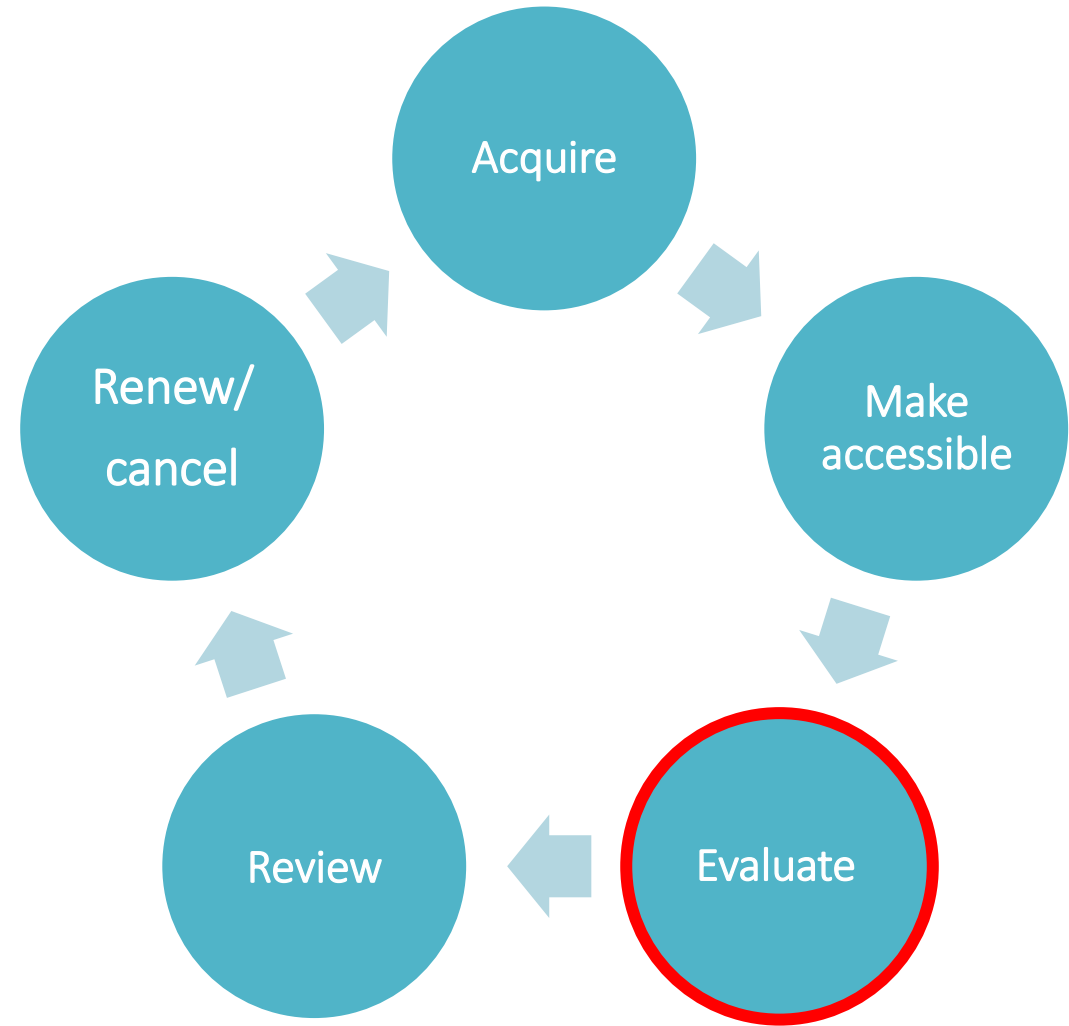
- ❑ Enables like for like comparison of usage statistics from different publishers
- ❑ Reports are easy to understand – no expertise required
- ❑ Data can be easily manipulated and analysed
- ❑ So this matters why?



VALUE

# Evaluation!

- ❑ Evaluation as crucial element of the e-resource lifecycle
- ❑ Usage statistics are required to support this process
- ❑ Helps to determine if a resource has 'value' to the subscribing institution
- ❑ Collection development



# Why do Librarians need it?

- ❑ Significant investment in e-resource subscriptions
- ❑ Libraries asked to demonstrate impact and value
- ❑ Increasing focus on student satisfaction (measured through NSS and other surveys)
- ❑ To support cancellation and renewal decisions
- ❑ Management information and reporting – e.g. SCONUL, library senior management

# STATISTICS

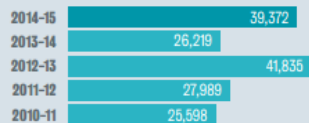
## USERS



External users (including NHS Trusts and Alumni) Total number of users entering the libraries during a year\*

## RESOURCES

### Total new catalogued books added to stock



### Total Archives & manuscripts linear metres



### New Digital Course Packs created



### Total number of Online Reading lists created



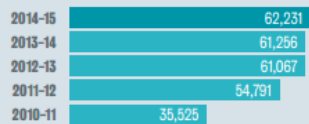
### Number of purchased Ebook titles available



### Number of Databases available



### Number of Journal titles (print & electronic) available

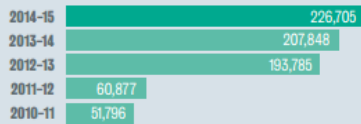


### Number of single title Ebooks purchased

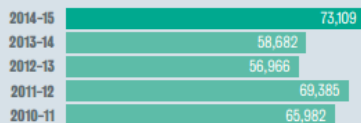


## USER ACTIVITIES

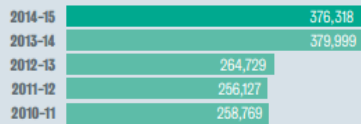
### Enquiries at Enquiry Desks



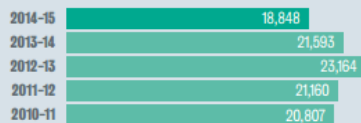
### Workstation usage hours per week



### Study space usage hours per week



### User orientation & information skills hours

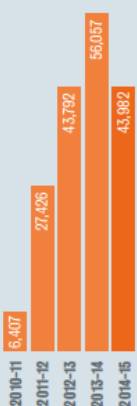


## LOANS

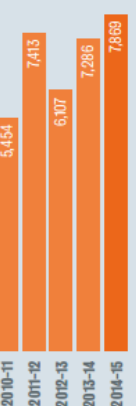
### Number of items of print collection loaned



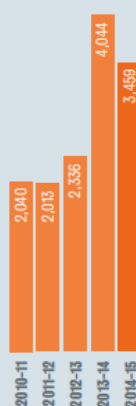
### Number of items of equipment loaned (including laptops)



### Number of items consulted in Archives

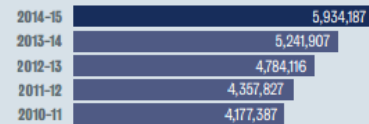


### Number of items consulted in Special Collections

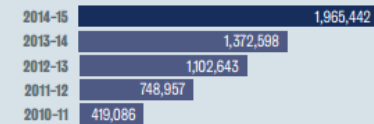


## ELECTRONIC RESOURCE USAGE

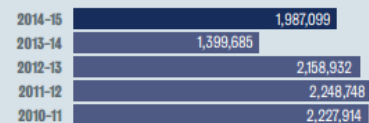
### Number of Electronic journals full text downloads



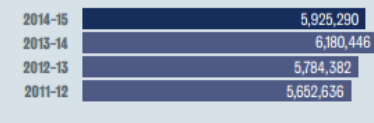
### Number of ebook sections accessed



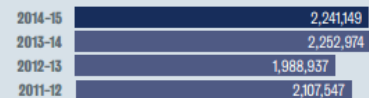
### Number of Catalogue searches



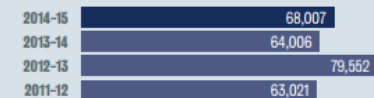
### Number of Database Searches



### Number of Link resolver click-throughs



### Number of Scholarly Recommender (BX) click-throughs



### Number of searches on Library Search (Primo)



## RESOURCE EXPENDITURE

### Expenditure on print and electronic collections



# How do I access the reports?

## MANUAL RETRIEVAL

- ❑ Download reports from publisher websites
- ❑ Request report by email from vendor
- ❑ May be required for some publishers or in the absence of a compatible ERM
- ❑ Repetitive and time-consuming process

## AUTOMATED RETRIEVAL

- ❑ SUSHI (Standardized Usage Harvesting Initiative)
  - NISO standard
  - Protocol for automating the collection of usage statistics into local systems
  - Replaces time-consuming user-mediated collection
  - Works with ERMs and usage aggregation services e.g. 360 Counter, Ustat, JUSP (Journal Usage Statistics Portal)
- ❑ Frees up Librarian time for evaluation and analysis

# Standard reports

Report	Description
Journal Report 1	Number of successful full-text article requests by month and Journal
Journal Report 1 GOA	Number of successful gold open access full-text article requests by month and Journal
Journal Report 1a * (Optional report)	Number of successful full-text article requests from an archive by month and journal
Journal Report 2	Access denied to full-text articles by month, journal and category
Journal Report 5	Number of successful full-text article requests by year-of-publication (YOP) and journal
Database Report 1	Total searches, result clicks and record views by month and database
Database Report 2	Access denied by month, database and category
Platform Report 1 (formerly Database Report 3)	Total searches, result clicks and record views by month and platform
Book Report 1	Number of successful title requests by month and title
Book Report 2	Number of successful section requests by month and title
Book Report 3	Access denied to content items by month, title and category
Book Report 4	Access denied to content items by month, platform and category
Book Report 5	Total searches by month and title
Multimedia Report 1	Number of Successful Full Multimedia Content Unit Requests by Month and Collection

# Journal Report 1 (JR1) – Number of Successful Full-Text Article Requests by Month and Journal

About the report

Yearly totals

Journal Digital Object Identifier

Unique journal identifier

Journal Report 1 (R4)																				
Number of Successful Full-Text Article Requests by Month and Journal																				
Institution X																				
Period covered by Report: 2015-01-01 to 2015-12-31																				
Date run: 03/03/2016																				
Title	Publisher	Platform	Journal Doi	Print ISSN	Online ISSN	Reporting Period Total	Reporting Period HTML	Reporting Period PDF	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15
Total for all journals	Karger	karger.com				18441	9424	9017	1613	1588	2065	1787	1376	1484	1405	1114	1068	1621	1912	1408
Acta Cytologica	Karger	karger.com	10.1159/issn.0001-5540	0001-5547	1938-2650	31	5	26	0	2	2	3	1	1	13	1	0	1	6	1
Acta Haematologica	Karger	karger.com	10.1159/issn.0001-5790	0001-5792	1421-9662	122	59	63	9	5	17	23	6	10	7	1	10	9	15	10
American Journal of Nephrology	Karger	karger.com	10.1159/issn.0250-8095	0250-8095	1421-9670	212	117	95	26	34	17	15	12	9	18	6	17	28	17	13
Analytische Psychologie	Karger	karger.com		0301-3006	1421-9689	2	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Annales Nestlé (English ed.)	Karger	karger.com		0517-8606	1661-4011	3	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Annals of Neurosciences	Karger	karger.com	10.1159/issn.0972-7530	0972-7531	0976-3260	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Annals of Nutrition and Metabolism	Karger	karger.com	10.1159/issn.0250-6800	0250-6807	1421-9697	598	307	291	45	38	49	236	16	27	24	43	21	39	43	17
Audiology and Neurotology	Karger	karger.com	10.1159/issn.1420-3031	1420-3030	1421-9700	57	36	21	8	5	6	5	3	4	4	0	0	9	8	5
Audiology and Neurotology Extra	Karger	karger.com	10.1159/issn.1664-5537		1664-5537	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Biomedicine Hub	Karger	karger.com			2296-6870	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Blood Purification	Karger	karger.com	10.1159/issn.0253-5060	0253-5068	1421-9735	118	61	57	11	22	10	9	18	8	6	6	7	7	7	7
Brain, Behavior and Evolution	Karger	karger.com	10.1159/issn.0006-8970	0006-8977	1421-9743	157	88	69	8	19	14	23	13	14	7	13	12	5	15	14
Breast Care	Karger	karger.com	10.1159/issn.1661-3791	1661-3791	1661-3805	34	18	16	1	2	0	6	1	2	6	0	4	4	7	1
Cardiology	Karger	karger.com	10.1159/issn.0008-6310	0008-6312	1421-9751	206	89	117	50	10	24	13	7	13	18	9	10	16	29	7
Cardiorenal Medicine	Karger	karger.com	10.1159/issn.1664-5500	1664-3828	1664-5502	6	4	2	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0
Caries Research	Karger	karger.com	10.1159/issn.0008-6560	0008-6568	1421-976X	1646	775	871	80	132	176	184	134	129	175	172	128	126	115	95
Case Reports in Dermatology	Karger	karger.com	10.1159/issn.1662-6567		1662-6567	11	6	5	1	0	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	0	0
Case Reports in Gastroenterology	Karger	karger.com	10.1159/issn.1662-0631		1662-0631	11	8	3	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	5	1	0
Case Reports in Nephrology	Karger	karger.com	10.1159/issn.2296-9705		2296-9705	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Case Reports in Neurology	Karger	karger.com	10.1159/issn.1662-680X		1662-680X	14	9	5	4	2	0	2	1	2	2	0	1	0	0	0

# What about Archival content?

- ❑ JR1A provides the total number of successful full-text article requests from an archive by month and by journal
- ❑ JR5 provides the total number of successful full-text article requests by year of publication (YOP) and journal

Both these reports can be used in conjunction with the JR1 to help institutions determine which usage has come from a backfile or from older years.



## An important point:

- ❑ COUNTER reports can show all the usage for all titles on a particular platform or in a particular package. This may or may not be what your institution actually subscribes to. So, some titles with zero usage may actually be unsubscribed, and some titles with usage may be open access content that you haven't paid for.

# Database report 1 (DB1) – Total Searches, Result Clicks and Record Views by Month and Database

Database Report 1 (R4)		Total Searches, Result Clicks and Record Views by Month and Database						
Institution X								
Period covered by Report:								
2015-01-01 to 2015-12-31								
Date run:								
12/01/2016								
Database	Publisher	Platform	User Activity	Reporting	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15
Natural Product Updates	Royal Soci	pubs.rsc.o	Regular Searches	1	0	0	0	0
Natural Product Updates	Royal Soci	pubs.rsc.o	Searches-federated and automated	0	0	0	0	0
Natural Product Updates	Royal Soci	pubs.rsc.o	Result Clicks	0	0	0	0	0
Natural Product Updates	Royal Soci	pubs.rsc.o	Record Views	0	0	0	0	0
Synthetic Reaction Updates	Royal Soci	pubs.rsc.o	Regular Searches	0	0	0	0	0
Synthetic Reaction Updates	Royal Soci	pubs.rsc.o	Searches-federated and automated	0	0	0	0	0
Synthetic Reaction Updates	Royal Soci	pubs.rsc.o	Result Clicks	0	0	0	0	0
Synthetic Reaction Updates	Royal Soci	pubs.rsc.o	Record Views	0	0	0	0	0
<b>The Merck Index Online</b>	<b>Royal Soci</b>	<b>rsc.org</b>	<b>Regular Searches</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
The Merck Index Online	Royal Soci	rsc.org	Searches-federated and automated	0	0	0	0	0
The Merck Index Online	Royal Soci	rsc.org	Result Clicks	54	0	0	1	2
The Merck Index Online	Royal Soci	rsc.org	Record Views	54	0	0	1	2

Type of activity



Subscribed database



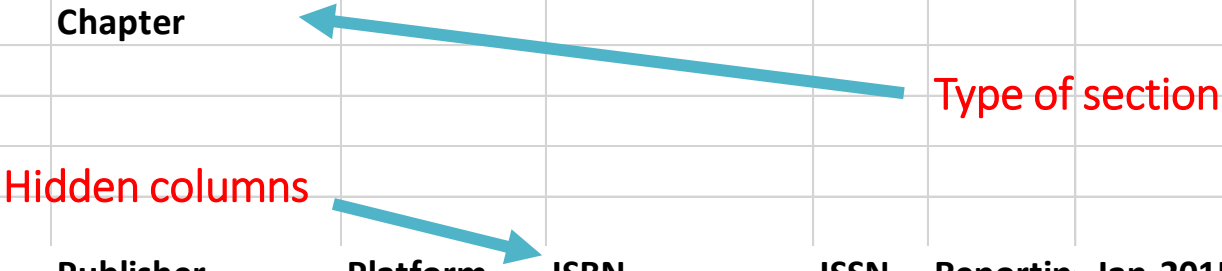
# Book report 1 (BR1) – Number of Successful Title Requests by Month and title

COUNTER Release 4

Book Report 1 (R4) Number of Successful Title Requests by Month and Title												
Institution X												
Period covered by Report: 2015-01-01 to 2015-12-31						Reporting Period Total						
Date run: 2016-03-03												
	Publisher	Platform	Book DOI	Proprietary Id	ISBN	ISSN	Reportin	Jan-2015	Feb-2015	Mar-2015	Apr-2015	May-2015
Total for all Titles							5055	608	432	547	496	419
ABC of Antenatal Care	BMJ Books	EBSCOhost	320867		978-1-280		3	0	0	0	0	0
ABC of Asthma (ABC series)	BMJ Books	EBSCOhost	1046771		978-1-405		2	0	0	1	0	0
ABC of Clinical Genetics	BMJ Books	EBSCOhost	320368		978-1-280		8	0	0	2	4	2
ABC of Clinical Haematology		EBSCOhost	1006833		978-1-280		1	0	0	1	0	0
ABC of Complementary Med		EBSCOhost	993766		978-0-585		3	0	0	0	0	0
ABC of Diabetes	BMJ Publishin	EBSCOhost	1008571		978-1-280		2	0	1	0	0	0
ABC of Eyes	BMJ Books	EBSCOhost	1035140		978-1-405		24	0	0	6	1	4
ABC of Heart Failure		EBSCOhost	1046773		978-1-405		6	0	0	2	0	0
ABC of Hypertension	Wiley	EBSCOhost	1046810		978-1-405		12	1	1	1	0	0
ABC of Nutrition	BMJ Publishin	EBSCOhost	1012719		978-1-444		3	0	0	0	0	0
ABC of Palliative Care (ABC s	BMJ Books	EBSCOhost	1046806		978-1-405		7	0	0	0	0	1
ABC of Resuscitation	BMJ Publishin	EBSCOhost	1026648		978-1-280		3	0	0	1	1	0
ABC of Sexual Health		EBSCOhost	993680		978-0-585		1	0	0	0	1	0
Accident and Emergency Nu	Whurr Publish	EBSCOhost	1028252		978-0-470		8	1	0	0	0	0
Action Research in Health Ca	Blackwell Publ	EBSCOhost	993153		978-0-632		3	0	0	0	1	0
Adult Cardiac Surgery: Nursi	Whurr Publish	EBSCOhost	1025529		978-0-470		3	1	0	1	0	1

# Book report 2 (BR2) – Number of Successful Section Requests by Month and Title

Book Report 2 (R4)	Number of Successful Section Requests by Month and Title									
Institution X	Section Type:									
	Chapter									
Period covered by Report										
2015-01-01 to 2015-12-31										
Date Run:										
2016-03-04										
	Publisher	Platform	ISBN	ISSN	Reporting	Jan-2015	Feb-2015	Mar-2015	Apr-2015	
<b>Total for all titles</b>		<b>Project MUSE</b>			<b>3971</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>379</b>	
Low-Wage Work in the Wealthy World	Russell Sage Found	Project MUSE	9781610446303	n/a	367	12	41	6	97	
Cyberspace and National Security	Georgetown Univer	Project MUSE	9781589019195	n/a	138	4	8	20	4	
Women, Gender, and Terrorism	University of Geor	Project MUSE	9780820341309	n/a	130	3	3	12	12	
Biopolitics	NYU Press	Project MUSE	9780814752999	n/a	111	3	4	27	13	
Anthropology at the Front Lines of Gender-B	Vanderbilt Univer	Project MUSE	9780826517821	n/a	61	0	30	22	3	
Beyond the Resource Curse	University of Penn	Project MUSE	9780812206173	n/a	59	23	13	5	0	
Water Pollution Policies and the American St	State University of	Project MUSE	9781438435435	n/a	58	0	0	58	0	
Transitional Justice	Rutgers University	Project MUSE	9780813550695	n/a	52	5	5	37	1	
Europe and China	Hong Kong Univer	Project MUSE	9789882208940	n/a	50	3	0	0	0	
Venezuela’s Bolivarian Democracy	Duke University Pr	Project MUSE	9780822394310	n/a	50	0	50	0	0	
Global Governance and the UN	Indiana University	Project MUSE	9780253004154	n/a	48	1	0	10	0	
Child Rights	Purdue University	Project MUSE	9781612492056	n/a	47	2	0	0	0	
Cosmopolitanism in the Age of Globalization	The University Pre	Project MUSE	9780813134666	n/a	46	0	26	0	14	
Pax Sinica	Hong Kong Univer	Project MUSE	9789882208773	n/a	46	0	0	0	0	



# A few observations from King's

- ❑ Ebook usage has sometimes been disappointing
- ❑ However, this might not mean that the ebook is not useful or valuable. In our experience, there are greater challenges around making ebooks discoverable and accessible that can negatively impact usage
- ❑ Points to consider with low ebook usage:
  - *Would the ebook benefit from greater promotion?*
  - *Is the ebook easily searchable in your catalogue or discovery system?*
  - *Does the ebook have a restrictive concurrent user licence?*
  - *If it is a one-off purchase then remember that your investment will grow over time*

# ACCESS DENIED

Access denied reports can help you evaluate what your users are interesting in accessing that you don't already subscribe to.

Journal Report 2 (R4) - Access Denied to Full-Text Articles by Month, Journal and Category							
Institution X							
Period covered by Report: 2016-01-01 to 2016-04-30							
Date run: 05/04/2016							
Journal	Publisher	Platform	Access Denied Category	Reporting Period Total	Jan-16	Feb-16	Mar-16
Total for all journals	Future Medicine	Future Medicine	Access denied: concurrent/simultaneous user license limit exceeded	0	0	0	0
Total for all journals	Future Medicine	Future Medicine	Access denied: content item not licensed	646	207	199	233
Aging Health	Future Medicine	Future Medicine	Access denied: concurrent/simultaneous user license limit exceeded	0	0	0	0
Aging Health	Future Medicine	Future Medicine	Access denied: content item not licensed	17	5	4	8
Biomarkers in Medicine	Future Medicine	Future Medicine	Access denied: concurrent/simultaneous user license limit exceeded	0	0	0	0
Biomarkers in Medicine	Future Medicine	Future Medicine	Access denied: content item not licensed	40	6	10	22

Hidden columns



# Making sense of the data

- ❑ Reports can be used to evaluate the value of individual titles or packages. E.g. Journal of statistics is subscribed to at institution X.

JR1 total usage	2013	2014	2015
Journal of statistics	224	175	132

- ❑ Usage for this title has declined over a 3 year period – Cancel?
- ❑ Need for additional context

# Making sense of the data

- ❑ Journal of statistics is part of a package with 40 other titles from publisher X. The institution subscribes to Package C. Total usage for the package during the same period has risen:

JR1 total usage	2013	2014	2015
Package C	7,056	7,321	7,798

- ❑ So we might conclude that overall this isn't a cause for concern
- ❑ A cost per use analysis might also help to assess the value of the package...



# Cost-per-use analysis

- ❑ Package C cost institution X a total of £15,000 in subscription fees in 2015.
- ❑ The total usage for that year was 14,563 full text downloads

$$\underline{\underline{\text{£15,000 divided by 14,563} = \text{£1.03}}}$$

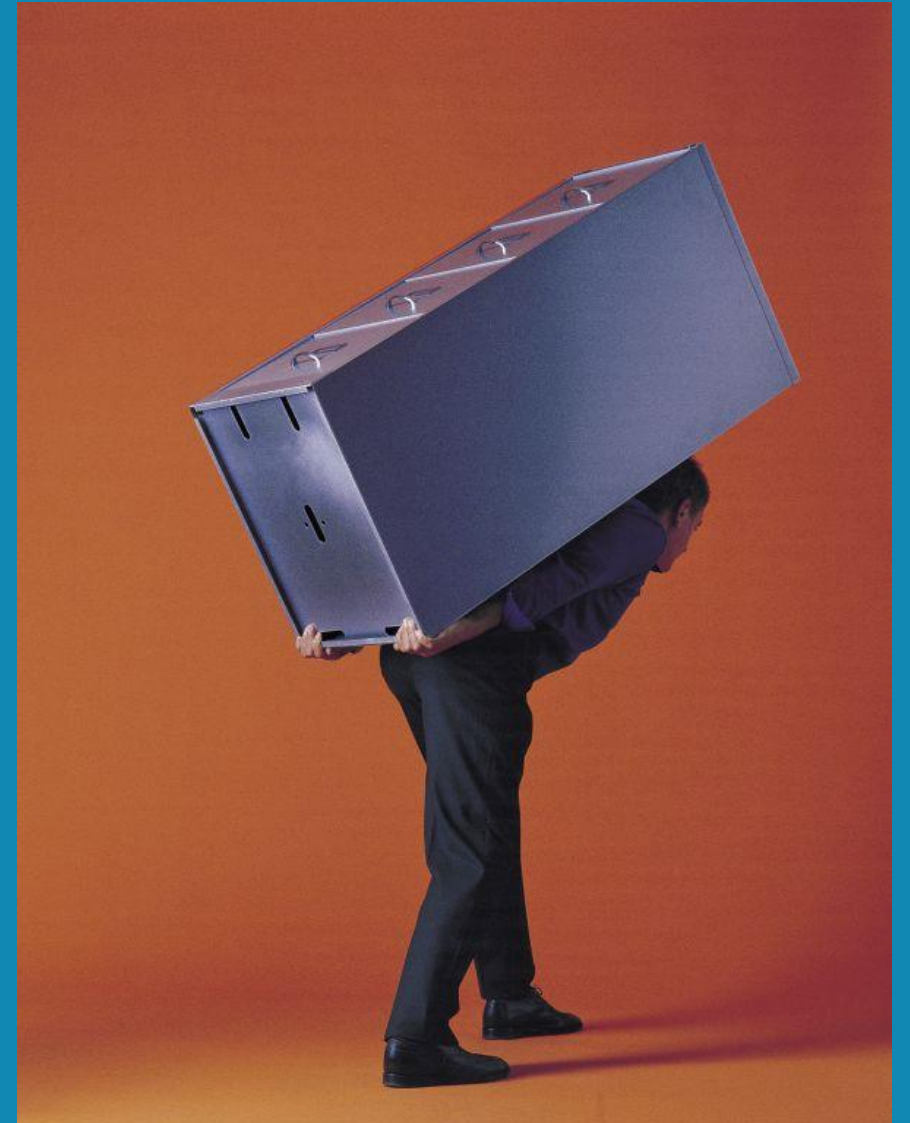
- ❑ This gives us a cost per use of **£1.03** per full text download
- ❑ Overall, we might say that this package represents good value for money

# A few points on Cost-per-use

- ❑ Cost-per-use analysis can be performed on any subscription if you have the two ingredients of **cost** and **usage**
- ❑ Cost-per-use can indicate if a resource is value for money
- ❑ Beware of the ‘long tail’ – big deal vs individual subs
- ❑ What about OA titles? JR1 GOA might help
- ❑ Remember that ‘value’ is subjective and can vary across different disciplines and at different institutions
- ❑ Context is important!

Isn't this all a lot  
of hard work for  
Librarians?

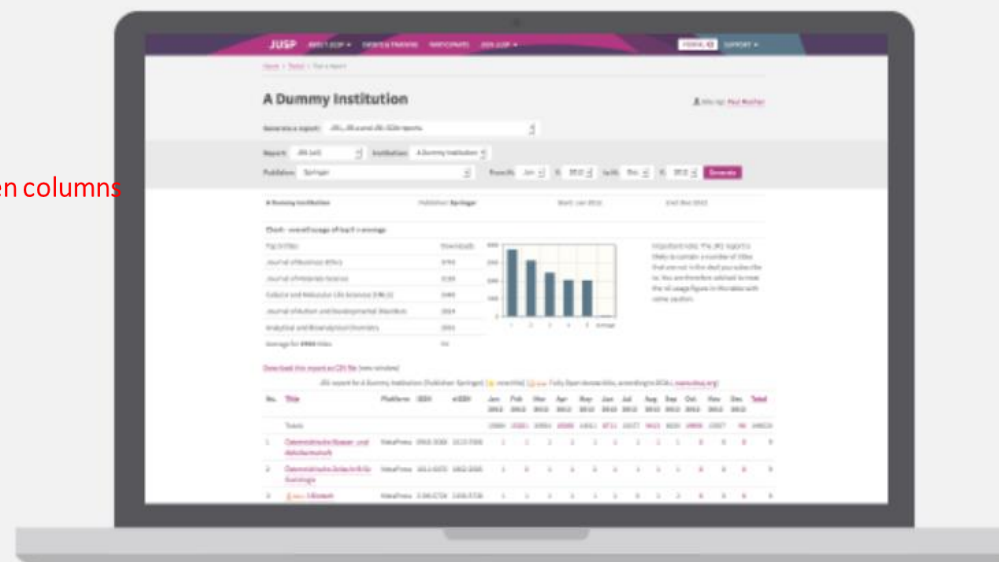
Yes, but thankfully there is  
help at hand...



# Journal Usage Statistics Portal

JUSP gives librarians a simple way of analysing the value and impact of their electronic journals and books through accurate and comparable usage statistics. JUSP saves academic libraries time and duplicated effort by providing a single gateway for them to access their usage statistics from participating publishers.

Hidden columns



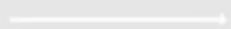
Access the Portal ↗

Learn more



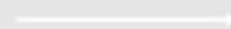
Collect

Collect COUNTER-compliant usage data,



Analyse

Track titles with high usage, analyse trends /



Report

Complete annual SCONUL returns for titles

[Home](#) » [Portal home](#) » [Run a report](#)

# King's College London

Site rep: [Anna Franca](#)  
[Your latest 50 reports](#)

Generate a report:

Please select ▾

- Please select
- Journal level reports --
- JR1, JR1a and JR1 GOA reports
- JR1 reports including gateways and host intermediaries
- JR1 reports excluding backfile usage and GOA
- Individual journal(s) search and usage
- Summary reports --
- SCONUL returns
- Annual summary of publisher usage
- Summary of publisher usage by date range
- Annual summary use of gateways and host intermediaries
- Annual summary use of backfiles
- Number of titles and requests in various usage ranges
- Number of titles and requests in various usage ranges (enter dates)
- Trends over time - tables and graphs
- Titles with the highest use (calendar year)
- Titles with the highest use (academic year)
- Breakdown of publisher and gateway usage by title and year

NEWS YOUR DATA

## News headlines

- Apr 1 - [March newsletter](#)
- Mar 31 - [JUSP Comm](#)
- Mar 16 - [Microbiology](#)
- Mar 2 - [February new](#)
- Feb 9 - [ASA/CSSA/SS](#)
- Jan 29 - [January new](#)
- Dec 17 - [December n](#)
- Dec 2 - [November ne](#)
- Nov 16 - [De Gruyter d](#)

SUSHI SERVER ADMIN COMMUNITY AREA

weets by @JUSPSTATS

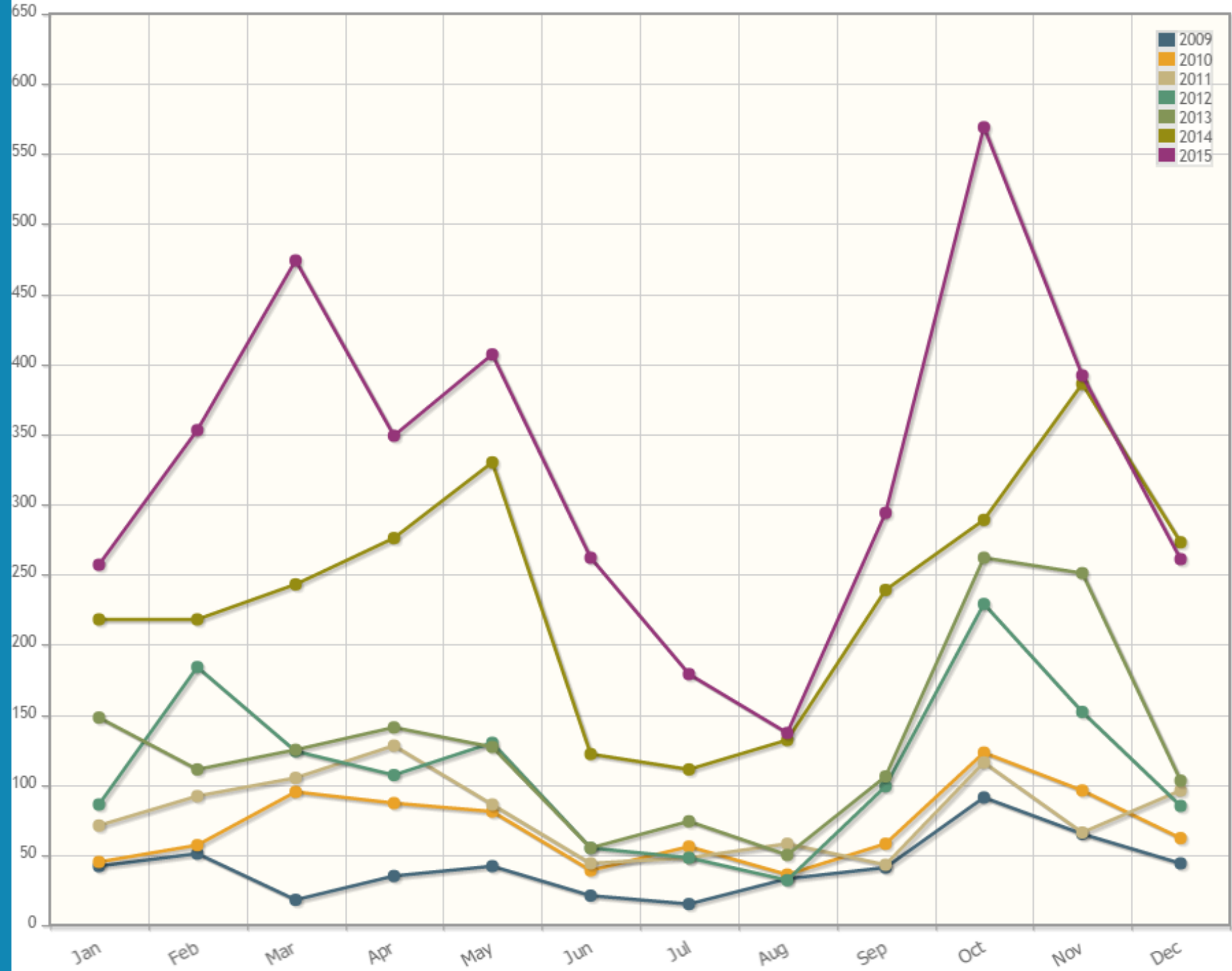
**JUSP @JUSPSTATS**  
Interesting articles from @ARLnews on data visualisation including electronic resource usage [arl.org/news/arl-news/...](http://arl.org/news/arl-news/)  
25 Apr

JUSP Retweeted

**UKSG @UKSG**



Trends over a six year period for a publisher ejournal package at King's – shows usage increasing steadily over 6 year period



# Pitfalls

- ❑ Issues with reports – incorrect data or display issues
- ❑ Spikes can inflate overall figures – e.g systematic downloading from one user, crawling
- ❑ Title transfers
- ❑ Transitioning to the latest Code of Practice
- ❑ Platform design – HTML v PDF
- ❑ What a user does with an article is not measured – download does not equal read!
- ❑ Not concerned with article length or publication schedule
- ❑ Not concerned with subject area

# Apples and oranges

- No obligation for vendors to sign up to COUNTER
- Vendors may provide NCC stats but there is no standard governing how they do this
- They can package and present statistics as they choose
- Difficult to compare different formats
- Encourage Non-CC publishers to become COUNTER members





# Its not all about the usage!

- ❑ Usage statistics are ONE way the library can assess the value of its electronic resources subscriptions
- ❑ BUT, important to remember the other factors at play...
  - Niche/specialist resources
  - Changes to teaching/research
  - Impact of discovery solutions
  - Wider environment
- ❑ Treat all usage data with caution and view alongside qualitative data

# Further information & contacts

- ❑ Project COUNTER: <http://www.projectcounter.org/> or follow on Twitter @ProjectCounter
- ❑ NISO/SUSHI: <http://www.niso.org/workrooms/sushi/>
- ❑ ARL (Association of Research Libraries) Statistics and Assessment: <http://www.arl.org/focus-areas/statistics-assessment>
- ❑ USUS: <http://www.usus.org.uk/>
- ❑ JUSP: <https://jusp.mimas.ac.uk/>

[anna.franca@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:anna.franca@kcl.ac.uk)

[lorraine.estelle@counterusage.org](mailto:lorraine.estelle@counterusage.org)