
COUNTER Annual General Meeting

Directors' Report 2022

A report to the members of COUNTER on the organisation's activities and financial report for 2022

Code of Practice

The primary focus of work throughout this year was Release 5.1 of the COUNTER Code of Practice. Through the last part of 2021 and into mid-2022 our Technical Advisory Group (TAG) worked on an extensive program of improvements to the Code designed to resolve issues arising from earlier iterations, better address changing reporting requirements, and streamline technical delivery of reports.

During summer 2022 we sent out a community consultation for Release 5.1 of the COUNTER Code of Practice (CoP). The Project Director offered three public webinars attended by more than 150 member and non-member participants globally, in addition to a wrap-up video offering the same content plus responses to all of the questions raised during the webinars and by email. To maximise feedback the TAG offered multiple routes for providing consultation responses; 54 unique responses were received to the full consultation, together with a dozen responses to specific points, making Release 5.1 the most-commented iteration of the Code of Practice to date. A summary of the responses is available on our website at projectcounter.org/community-feedback-on-counter-release-5-1.

The primary changes proposed to the community were introducing a more consistent focus on Items (e.g. chapters) as the unit of reporting in place of the traditional focus on Title-level (e.g. book) metrics, though these will remain available; improved definitions of access types (open versus controlled); and some significant upgrades to the SUSHI protocol to make it more robust, and associated JSON report schema upgrades to make the reports more compact and easier to work with.

Key aspects of the CoP remain unchanged from Release 5: the Platform, Database, Title and Item Reports and their derivative Views remain in place, and the metrics themselves (Investigations, Requests, Searches, and Denials) are similarly unaffected.

Following completion of the consultation in September, TAG began work on the fine implementation details for Release 5.1. This was complemented by work by the Communications and Outreach group on an update of our educational materials, including the Friendly Guides, Foundation Classes and Manuals.

Looking forward to 2023

We aim to deliver Release 5.1 of the COUNTER Code of Practice and associated educational materials by the time of the 2023 Annual General Meeting, with compliance required from January 2025.

TAG identified a discrepancy between the COUNTER Swagger file, which specifies our SUSHI API, and Release 5.0.2 of the Code of Practice, which will be resolved during 2023 with a Fix Release 5.0.3.

Operations, communications and outreach

Early in 2022 COUNTER launched a new Media Library (medialibrary.projectcounter.org), a central hub in which members and non-members can find Friendly Guides, Manuals, Foundation Classes and webinar recordings. The Library has proven popular, with high view rates particularly for our Release 5.1 consultation webinar.

In addition to digital delivery through the Media Library and activities for Release 5.1, our Project Director has been active in seminars and conferences, both online and in person, presenting at the FEDLINK/Library of Congress Spring Expo, an ICOLC webinar, the UKSG Conference (all in May), a joint RLUK / COPIM session (June), Road to Open Meta - Challenges of Metadata Communication (September), NEC's Publishing Technology

Conference (October), and the Charleston Conference and UKSG's webinar on statistics for decision making (both November). Heather Staines, Anne Osterman, and the Project Director also presented at NASIG in June, and other committee members have similarly promoted COUNTER.

Having been released in late 2021, the COUNTER Registry (registry.projectcounter.org) is now fully operational with up-to-date information on publishers' SUSHI services, audit status, and contact details.

Our new Project Director implemented some infrastructure upgrades through 2022, including migration from manual accounts to Xero cloud accounting, and migration from wordpress to the GlueUp membership database system.

Looking forward to 2023

COUNTER is already lined up for several 2023 conferences, including Researcher to Reader in February and two breakout sessions at the UKSG Conference in Glasgow in April.

Reviewing use of the Media Library suggests a need for short-form materials, a finding backed up by feedback from librarians and publishers alike. The Communications and Outreach group plans to create 'tiny tutorials' and infographics for key aspects of the Code of Practice, for example the difference between Investigations and Requests. To expand our global reach, we also plan to produce translations of our video transcripts and our guides wherever it is possible to do so.

Future plans: COUNTER strategy

During 2022 the Board of Directors and Executive Committee approved two projects that will run through 2023, as well as a critical change in resourcing.

In 2023 we plan to expand the COUNTER team. To date, COUNTER has had limited dedicated resource, with 20 hours per week from our Project Director. The addition of a new role is designed to better serve our members through creation and delivery of projects to address their needs (such as rapid-response educational materials), as well as raising awareness of COUNTER through creating and delivering a social media strategy, marketing campaigns, etc. The role is financed through a rearrangement of existing budgets, though we anticipate being able to recoup some of the costs through additional sponsorship and growth in membership.

Our first project is a review of our membership structure and benefits. This is designed to assess how our membership structure and fees compare with those of similar industry organisations, identify the benefits of COUNTER membership and define a communication strategy around them, and finally to recommend any necessary changes to our membership structure to ensure our long-term sustainability.

Our second project, a review of our overall strategy, will run throughout 2023. COUNTER's current strategy was set in 2015 and has served us well so far. However, the environment in which we operate has changed significantly and feedback gathered during 2022 suggests the Code of Practice is not commonly seen as something that adds value to publishers, funders, and researchers, as well as libraries. Particularly with the expansion of open access and diversification of research outputs, a metric that helps define the value of subscription content risks becoming defunct. Release 5.1, with its focus on open access, offers an opportunity to make COUNTER an integral part of this wider scholarly communication system. To achieve this, however, we need to assess our strategy and how we communicate with the community. A new strategy, including objectives, will be launched at the 2024 AGM.

Our Board and Committees

Board of Directors

Anne C. Osterman, VIVA (Chair)
Irene Barbers, Forschungszentrum Juelich
Jo Lambert, Jisc
Heather Loehr, Hanover College
Richard Gallagher, Annual Reviews
John McDonald, EBSCO Information Services

Executive Committee

David Sommer, Kudos (Chair)
Irene Barbers, Forschungszentrum Juelich
John Chodacki, California Digital Library
Jill Emery, Portland State University Library
Jacqueline Gillet, National Institute for Research in Digital Science
Kornelia Junge, Wiley
Paul Needham, Cranfield University
Bernd Oberknapp, Freiburg University Library
Nicola Haden, Royal Society of Chemistry
Jack Ochs, American Chemical Society
Svenja Nemetschek, Springer Nature
Oliver Pesch, EBSCO Information Services
Sara Rouhi, PLOS
Heather Staines, Delta Think
Alexandra Winzeler, OCLC
Elena Zapryanova-Hadjinikolova, Elsevier

Executive Committee members serving a partial year in 2022

Daniel Albertsson, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
Marie Kennedy, Loyola Marymount University
Harald Wirsching, Springer Nature

Technical Advisory Group

Senol Akay, American Chemical Society
Melissa Belvadi, NASIG
Andrew Goldthorpe, Audit Bureau of Circulation
Ian Hayes, Atypion
Athena Hoeppner, University of Central Florida
Kornelia Junge, Wiley
Bedřich Košata, Big Dig Data
Sonja Lendi, Elsevier
Stuart Maxwell, Scholarly IQ
Paul Needham, University of Cranfield
Bernd Oberknapp, Freiburg University Library
David Perry, New York University

Oliver Pesch, EBSCO Information Services
Thomas Porquet, Consortium Couperin
Peter Vlahakis, ITHAKA/JSTOR
Elena Zapryanova-Hadjinikolova, Wiley

Communications and Outreach Group

Jill Emery, Portland State University Library (Chair)
Nicola Haden, Royal Society of Chemistry
Anne C. Osterman, VIVA
Heather Staines, Delta Think

Financial Statements for 2022

Counter Online Metrics
Company Limited by Guarantee
Income Statement
year ended 31st December 2022

	2022	2021
	£	£
Turnover	126,654	123,167
Other charges	(96,070)	(97,976)
Profit	<u>30,584</u>	<u>25,191</u>

Counter Online Metrics
Company Limited by Guarantee
Statement of Financial Position
31st December 2022

	2022	2021
	£	£
Current assets	257,236	267,918
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	<u>44,542</u>	<u>85,808</u>
Net current assets	<u>212,694</u>	<u>182,110</u>
Total assets less current liabilities	<u>212,694</u>	<u>182,110</u>
Capital and reserves	<u>212,694</u>	<u>182,110</u>

For the year ending 31st December 2022 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 have been prepared in accordance with the micro-entity provisions.

These financial statements were approved by the board of directors and authorised for issue on 28th February 2023, and are signed on behalf of the board by:

Ms J Lambert
Director



Company registration number: 4865179

The company is a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales.

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