Chapter 6

COUNTER and Non-COUNTER:
Consolidating Vendor-Provided Usage Reports

ABSTRACT

While ebrary, EBSCO, and Safari have implemented COUNTER reports to supply customers with standardized usage data, their "coexisting" non-COUNTER reports offer unique and in-depth information on user activities. Therefore, librarians should explore the benefits of both data and find strategies to overcome the inconsistencies and fill the gaps. Chapter 6 evaluates vendor COUNTER and non-COUNTER data in a larger context. It explores the possibility and feasibility to consolidate useful data from vendor COUNTER and non-COUNTER reports and discusses how to overcome the disparities and fill the gaps among the usage data from different vendors. The chapter focuses on the following basic questions: 1) What unique data from each vendor are significant? 2) Is it feasible to consolidate COUNTER and non-COUNTER usage data provided by a single vendor? 3) Can the differences between COUNTER and non-COUNTER data be reconciled?

INTRODUCTION

While ebrary, EBSCO, and Safari have implemented COUNTER reports to supply customers with standardized usage data, their "coexisting" non-COUNTER reports offer unique and more detailed information on user

activities. Therefore, librarians should explore the benefits of both data and find strategies to overcome the inconsistencies and fill the gaps.

In this chapter, the authors will evaluate COUNTER and non-COUNTER data from a broader perspective and explore the following questions:

1. What unique data from each vendor is significant?
2. Is it feasible to consolidate COUNTER and non-COUNTER usage data provided by a single vendor?
3. Can the differences between COUNTER and non-COUNTER data be reconciled?

Usage data for e-books is permanently linked to the vendor. Regardless of the type of report (COUNTER or non-COUNTER), e-book usage must be provided by the vendor. This creates a tendency to look at e-book usage by vendor.

- Ebrary has the most COUNTER reports among the vendors as well as three non-COUNTER reports. How do ebrary COUNTER and non-COUNTER data contribute to the totality of e-books usage?
- EBSCO provides the least numbers of reports – COUNTER and non-COUNTER reports included. Is the data sufficient?
- Safari has the highest number of reports. Does it offer the most complete usage data?

EBRARY

Ebrary COUNTER reports provide numbers of successful section requests (BR2), turnaways (BR3), and searches (PR1). The ebrary non-COUNTER reports – Title Report (TR), Category Summary Report (CSR), and Site Activity Report (SAR), provide more descriptive and nuanced usage data such as the number of pages viewed, copied or printed, chapter or full text downloads, and the number of user sessions. Table 1 shows a summary of the data categories provided in ebrary's COUNTER and non-COUNTER reports.

There are very few overlaps of usage data categories between ebrary COUNTER and non-COUNTER reports. Neither do COUNTER data in BR2, BR3, and BR5 duplicate one another. In contrast, the three non-COUNTER reports include essentially the same usage categories. It is interesting to

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