
Directors' Report

2020

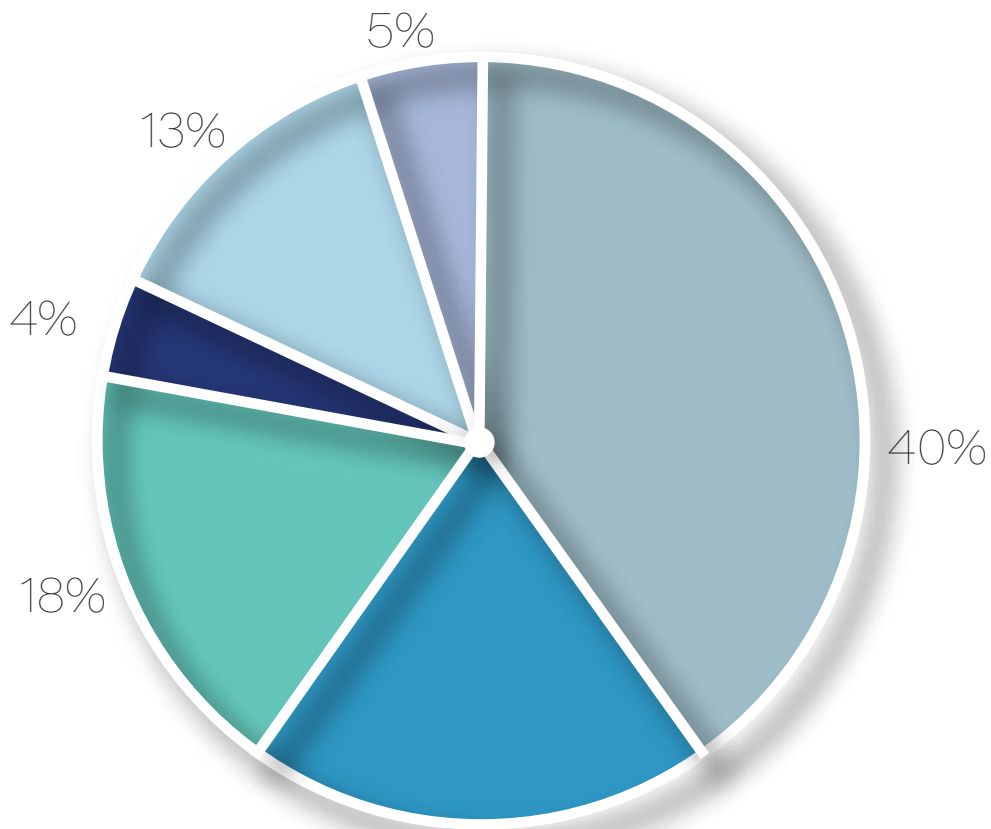
COUNTÉR

Directors' Report 2020

This year we have focused on supporting our community in implementing and using the COUNTER Code of Practice. Our members have enabled us to reach goals that would otherwise have been impossible. In 2020 they have maintained the Code of Practice, created training materials and presentations in English and local languages, and built tools which are open to everyone.

Our membership

COUNTER Members



- Libraries
- Library consortia
- Large publishers and vendors
- Medium publishers and vendors
- Small publishers and vendors
- Industry organizations

Our structure



Additionally, COUNTER sets up Task and Finish Groups, using members' expertise to address issues of the day and to oversee projects. This year we have established an Open Access Advisory Group to provide strategic advice to the Board of Directors.

This year we welcomed three new Directors to the Board: Heather Loer, Jo Lambert, and Irene Barbers.

The Executive function is provided by the Project Director. She reports to the COUNTER Board.

Listening to our members

Our members are experts, and we listen to you very carefully. Every year we survey our members, but this year independent consultants undertook a review via interviews, surveys, and focus groups. The Executive Committee and Technical Advisory Group are working to implement the recommendations in the report. For example, the report noted that 'There was not great awareness of COUNTER, what it is for, and how it could be useful within the born-OA publishing community. Mixed-model publishers were not clear how COUNTER supported their fully OA titles nor their Read & Publish (or other OA transformative) agreements. Better support from COUNTER would be welcome as OA publishing is increasingly important.' In response we have established an Open Access Advisory Group. The group has international membership with representatives from libraries, library consortia, OA publishers, and hybrid-publishers. It had its inaugural meeting in December and will be advising the Board at a strategic level about how we can ensure that COUNTER metrics and reports are fit for purpose in an increasing open-access environment.

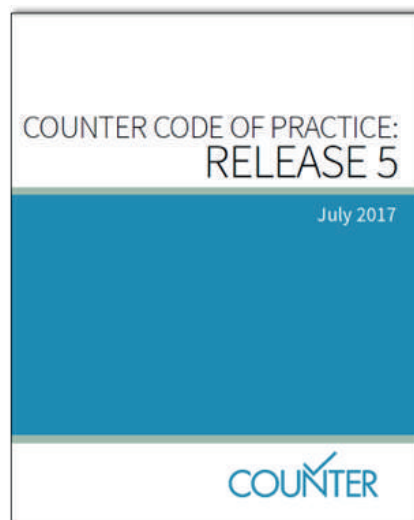
The report also noted, 'Our stakeholder interviews with publishers, libraries, and intermediaries surfaced opportunities to re-imagine the audit process.' We have established an Audit Task and Finish Working Group, which will make recommendations to the Executive Committee about improving the audit process, and reducing the cost burden for smaller publishers and vendors.



Maintaining the Code of Practice

The COUNTER Code of Practice operates under a continuous maintenance procedure to allow incremental changes to be made without creating a completely new release.

Most changes are made based on feedback, questions, and requests from the community. When we publish Release 5.0.2 of the Code of Practice in 2021, we will make that release available in a GitHub repository, so that forthcoming incremental changes are more transparent and improve our collaboration with the community.



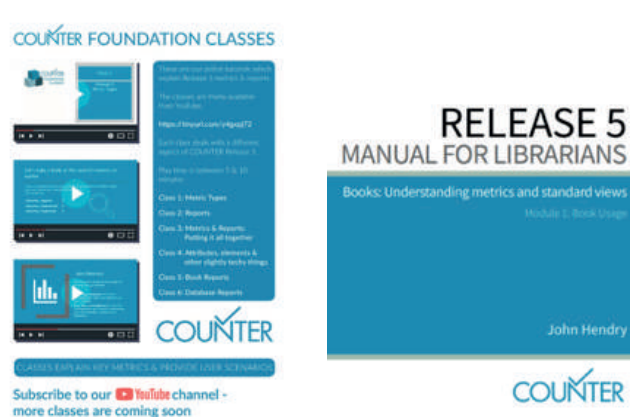
Creating our training materials

Our members create our training materials. These include our Foundation Classes, online tutorials on YouTube, our Manual for Librarians, and Friendly Guides, both for librarians and for content providers. Our members also translate our guides into local languages. As an international organization, it is important for us to produce guidance in a range of languages. We are deeply grateful to the members who undertake translations from English: Magaly Bascones, who works for Bloomsbury, translated our Friendly Guide for Librarians into Spanish.

The Couperin consortium translated our Friendly Guide for Providers into French and has translated several of our Foundation Classes. Couperin has also translated the whole Code of Practice into French.

CRKN/RCDR in Canada translated our Friendly Guide for Librarians into French.

Please let us know if you are interested in translating any of our materials into your local language.



In 2020 we published the first two modules in our Manual for Librarians. Two more modules are in production and will be published in 2021.

We also published two new Foundation Classes. Class 11 explains how to use Platform Reports and Class 12 explains the impacts of Covid-19 on usage statistics. We were delighted when three experts from the COUNTER Executive Committee volunteered to give two virtual workshops in the German language. In the first of these, Irene Barbers and Bernd Oberknapp provided a thorough explanation of the Code of Practice Release 5. In the second, Conni Jung explained how to use Microsoft Excel when analysing COUNTER reports. She showed us how to pivot tables and create totals for the metrics.

Conni also collaborated with UKSG to deliver a webinar about COUNTER 5 Reports in Microsoft Excel.

Jill Emery from the COUNTER Executive Committee gave an overview of COUNTER at the NASIG online conference.

We also interviewed Paul Meehan, who is an integral part of the Journal Usage Statistics Portal (JUSP), and he shared with us his 'top tips for COUNTER Compliance'.

Building tools which are freely open

Our members build tools which are freely open to the whole community.

- The Release 5 SUSHI Harvester built by EBSCO.
- CC-PLUS, an open-source software, community, and administrative tool for usage-statistics management. The COUNTER members involved are the Pennsylvania Academic Library Consortium, Inc. (PALCI) and seven partnering international library consortia (CDL, Couperin, CRKN, Jisc, SCELIC, USMAI, and VIVA).
- The Release 5 Validation Tool built by Bernd Oberknapp.
- The COUNTER-5-Report-Tool built by Melissa Belvadi and students from UPEI. There may be other free tools out there – please let us know if you have built one.



Quote: *"The Microsoft Access consortial harvesting tool that Oliver Pesch of EBSCO built has been incredibly helpful to us, as it has enabled us to gather usage statistics for our member libraries before the other planned tools become available. His contribution speaks to the value of COUNTER not only as a standard, but as a community."* VIVA

Keeping our membership fees low

We greatly value our members' involvement and expertise and are aware that in the current difficult economic situation members are looking carefully at all areas of expenditure.

COUNTER membership fees are tiered, and the COUNTER Board keeps them as low as possible – the fees have not increased for three years.

Priorities for 2021

- COUNTER will strengthen its engagement with libraries and library organizations and provide for them a Friendly Guide that includes a case study illustrating the strategic value of quality usage statistics.
- COUNTER will strengthen its engagement with publishers and system vendors and their trade associations.
- COUNTER notes the challenges in bridging Release 4 and Release 5. We will develop more explicit materials with more context to help address this problem.
- COUNTER will work with the newly established OA Advisory Group and develop its strategy for usage statistics for fully OA content and their role in this environment.
- COUNTER notes the importance of communications and, under the leadership of Irene Barbers, the COUNTER Communications and Outreach group will develop the strategy to improve the accuracy and timeliness of information made available about updates to the Code of Practice. This will ensure that information being shared addresses the diversity of needs, from novice librarians and publishers to experienced users pushing the boundaries in terms of their use of automation and Release 5. The strategy will ensure that communications and implementation support materials are correctly aligned with future iterations of the Code of Practice.
- The role of the COUNTER audit is essential in ensuring trust in the Code of Practice and in demonstrating good compliance. However, the audit process can be a financial barrier for smaller publishers. A Task and Finish Working Group will be established to consider how these barriers might be reduced and what measures could improve the audit process.

Our members who serve on our Board, Committee and Technical Working Group are:

Members of the Board of Directors

Oliver Pesch, Chair of the Board of Directors
Irene Barbers
Jo Lambert
Elisabeth Ling
Heather Loehr
Anne C. Osterman
Heather Staines

Members of the Executive Committee

David Sommer, Chair of the Executive Committee
Daniel Albertsson
Irene Barbers
John Chodacki
Jill Emery Thomas
Jouneau Kornelia Junge
Marie Kennedy
Tasha Mellins-Cohen
Paul Needham
Bernd Oberknapp
Jack Ochs
Oliver Pesch
Harald Wirsching
Elena Zapryanova-Hadjinikolova

Members of the Technical Advisory Group

David Sommer, Chair of the Executive Committee
Daniel Albertsson
Irene Barbers
John Chodacki
Jill Emery
Thomas Jouneau
Kornelia Junge
Marie Kennedy
Tasha Mellins-Cohen
Paul Needham
Bernd Oberknapp
Jack Ochs
Oliver Pesch
Harald Wirsching
Elena Zapryanova-Hadjinikolova

We would like to thank our Sponsors for their continued support of COUNTER.

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Jisc
SpringerNature

Bronze Sponsor

SAGE Publishing





FINANCIAL REPORT

Counter Online Metrics
 Company Limited by Guarantee
 Statement of Income and Retained Earnings
 year ended 31st December 2020.

	2020	2019
Note	£	£
Turnover	140,098	125,079
Gross profit	140,098	125,079
Administrative expenses	(137,146)	(90,835)
Operating profit	2,952	34,244
Profit before taxation	2,952	34,244
Tax on profit	-	-
Profit for the financial year and total comprehensive income	2,952	34,244
Retained earnings at the start of the year	153,967	119,723
Retained earnings at the end of the year	156,919	153,967

All the activities of the company are from continuing operations.

Counter Online Metrics

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Position

31st December 2020.

	2020		2019
Note	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	221,899		219,349
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	64,980		65,382
Net current assets		156,919	153,967
Total assets less current liabilities		156,919	153,967
Capital and reserves			
Profit and loss account		156,919	153,967
Members funds		156,919	153,967

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and in accordance with Section 1A of FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'.

For the year ending 31st December 2020 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 4th February 2021.