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Comments sought on the draft COUNTER Code of Practice for Books and Reference Works

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Within weeks of the release **Peter Binkley** at the **University of Alberta Libraries** wrote an extension for **Firefox** that adds OpenURL links to the **Google Scholar** results screen. **Binkley's** extension scrapes the **Google Scholar** results screen, parses a citation out of the data, and builds an OpenURL to a designated link resolver. (<http://www.ualberta.ca/~pbinkley/gso/>) **Art Rhyno** at the **Leddy Library** at the **University of Windsor** wrote a similar bookmarklet designed to "add a proxy address to the search results on a **Google Scholar** page of results." (<http://webvoy.uwindsor.ca:8087/artblog/librarycog/1100880268>) Coupled together these bookmarklets created the base for the **Windsor-Alberta-Georgia Google Scholar** Localization project (WAG the Dog), an open-source project available via **SourceForge**. (<http://gslocal.sourceforge.net/>) While the WAG the Dog bookmarklet is effective, it requires a great deal of user intervention, and a more seamless method of providing OpenURL links would be more effective.

This past spring, **Google** began pursuing OpenURL linking on its own, launching a pilot program testing OpenURL linking within **Google Scholar** in conjunction with several link resolver vendors, including **Ex Libris**, **Serials Solutions**, and **1Cate**. Initially, OpenURLs from **Google Scholar** included only **Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs)** and **PubMed IDs**, leading to a high rate of failure when retrieving the full text. Since then, **Google** has begun transmitting additional pieces of metadata, like title, author, volume, and issue information, and the resolution rate has improved.

There are distinct advantages to setting up **Google** as a source in a library's link resolver, such as the ability to push services out to users in a way that has never been permitted before and at the same time brand those services to the library. **Google's** implementation of the OpenURL allows an integration of a Web search engine and the library's resources that has not previously been possible. However, **Google's** policies and procedures for setting up the OpenURL links have created a stir and are hotly debated in the library and information science world.

Before **Google** will turn on OpenURL linking for a library, it requires the library to submit its electronic full text holdings. Submitting the holdings themselves is a relatively simple process, as **Google** has expedited processes for this with many link resolver vendors. It is how **Google** has put those holdings to use that has created controversy. Using the holdings information **Google** determines if the electronic full text is available via the library's subscriptions, and, if it is, the link to the resolver appears prominently in the citation in a large font.

If the electronic full text is not available, the link to the resolver still appears but it is in a smaller font face and buried below the citation. Libraries have control over the wording of those links, but they cannot use a button or some other image to represent the link.

Many libraries are reluctant to share their holdings with **Google**, feeling that the policy is against the principle of the OpenURL. Other issues of concern are the lack of information about what **Scholar** is indexing, the completeness of the OpenURLs **Google** is sending, and the placement of the two OpenURL links.

Conclusion

Google Scholar is not bad, but it's not great either. It is what it is, a Web search engine focused on scholarly materials. Based upon the few simple searches I conducted, the materials cited in the database seemed either scholarly themselves or at least related to the scholarly materials in some way. But we are still talking about a search engine, and I still want my patrons to approach it with the same caution that they would any other search engine for all the same reasons (incomplete indexing, lower quality metadata, unreliable linking, "scholarlyness" is subjective, Web-crawlers can only do so much, etc.).

However, my gut feeling is that no matter what I tell the students I see at the reference desk they are going to hear the words "**Google**" and "**Scholar**" and think they have found the cure for what ails them. One of the reasons setting up **Google Scholar** as a source in our link resolver is appealing is the fact that once users perform a search we can at least point them back to our full text electronic resources, print subscriptions, and document delivery services. On the other hand, I don't particularly want to have to maintain our electronic subscriptions in another location. Nor do I want **Google** to bury the link to the link resolver if the electronic full text is not available through our subscrip-

tions. The OpenURL link should appear in the same place every time. While we have not set up our link resolver in **Google Scholar** at this time, it is easy to foresee that we will should the need seem sufficient enough or if our users specifically request to be able to link directly to our electronic resources from **Google Scholar**.

This conflict between libraries and **Google** over the best way to implement the OpenURL in **Google Scholar** is a demonstration in the fundamental differences in a library's philosophy and **Google's** philosophy. **Google's** main priority is to get the user to the electronic full text, and their policies on the submission of holdings information and the format of the OpenURL links reflect that. While as librarians, our main priority is to find users the appropriate copy whatever its format, print, electronic, microform, or a document ordered through a document delivery service.

If you are interested in further reading about **Google Scholar** and the OpenURL, these issues are explored in greater detail, including interviews with librarians, link resolver vendors, and **Google Scholar**, in an article by myself and **Jill Grogg**, Electronic Resources Librarian at the **University of Alabama** in an upcoming issue of *Searcher Magazine*.

Other Articles of Interest

Grogg, Jill E. and Christine L. Ferguson. "OpenURL Linking in **Google Scholar**." *Searcher Magazine* [forthcoming].

Notess, Greg R. "Scholarly Web Searching: **Google Scholar** and **Scirus**." *Online* 29, issue 4. (July/August 2005): 39-41.

Tenopir, Carol. "Google in the Academic Library." *Library Journal* 130, issue 2 (February 1, 2005): 32.

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Comments sought on the draft COUNTER Code of Practice for Books and Reference Works

by **Peter T. Shepherd** (Project Director, COUNTER)
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The draft of Release 1 of the new **COUNTER Code of Practice** for online books and reference works was published in January 2005. This marks the first expansion of **COUNTER's** coverage beyond journals and databases. The **Code of Practice** for online books and reference works has been developed with input from a task force of librarians and publishers with expert knowledge of these products and is the first attempt to introduce a compre-

hensive industry standard for the recording and reporting of online book usage data. Its overall format and structure are consistent with the existing **COUNTER Code of Practice** for journals and databases: only the content of the usage reports has been changed and the set of definitions of terms expanded. The specifications for report delivery, data processing, auditing, and compliance are identical to those already prescribed in the **Code of Practice** for journals and databases.

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One of the main challenges we faced in developing this draft **Code of Practice** was the lack of consistency among publishers in the ways in which they define, structure and distribute online books. In the case of online journals there was a wide consensus that the most important content unit whose usage should be measured is the full-text article. Even before **COUNTER** most journal publishers were measuring downloads of full-text journal articles. **COUNTER's** main role was to ensure that they all did so using the same standards and protocols. For books there is no such consensus. Some publishers make online books available only as a single file that can be downloaded in its entirety, with no further vendor monitoring of usage being possible. Other publishers allow the downloading of individual chapters or entries, such as dictionary definitions or chemical structures. We felt it was appropriate to cover both these scenarios in the draft **Code of Practice** and this is reflected in the Usage Reports described below.

The full text of Release 1 of the **COUNTER Code of Practice** for Books and Reference Works is freely accessible on the **COUNTER** Website (www.projectCounter.org). It is available for comment until December 2005. Both vendors and librarians are encouraged to review the document and to submit their comments to the **COUNTER** Project Director. It is planned to publish the final version of this **Code of Practice** in early 2006. Its main features are summarised below.

Definitions of Terms Used

The original **Code of Practice** for Journals and Databases contains an extensive list of data elements and other terms used in the Usage Reports and other parts of the Code. Where possible, existing definitions from **NISO**, **ISO**, **ARL** and other organizations have been used. Among the terms defined are "Vendor," "Aggregator," "Search," "Item request," "Consortium" and "Consortium member." This comprehensive list of definitions is proving to be a useful industry resource and is becoming more and more widely used for purposes not directly related to **COUNTER**. It has now been expanded to cover books and reference works. New definitions include:

- **Book:** "A nonserial printed publication of any length bound in hard or soft covers or in loose-leaf format. Also called monograph." (**NISO**)
- **Chapter:** "A subdivision of a book or of some categories of reference work; usually numbered and titled."
- **Entry:** "A record of information in some categories of reference work (e.g., a dictionary definition)."
- **Reference Work:** "An authoritative source of information about a subject; used to find quick answers to questions."
- **Section:** "A subdivision of a book or reference work (e.g., Chapter, entry)"

As with journals and databases, where an

appropriate existing definition exists this has been used and the source, such as **NISO** (the **National Information Standards Organization**) given. Other definitions have been developed by the books task force, using a number of sources.

Also defined are the protocols to be observed when an aggregator or gateway is involved in the delivery of vendor content to the customer. These protocols are particularly important to avoid duplicate counting of usage by publisher and aggregator in situations where an intermediary aggregator or gateway is involved.

Data Processing and Auditing

The way usage records are generated differs from one platform to another and it is impractical to describe all the possible filters used to clean up the data. Instead, the **Code of Practice** specifies the requirements to be met by the data to be used for building the usage reports. A guiding principle is that only intended usage should be recorded, and all requests that are not intended by the user are removed. To this end, all double clicks on an http-link within 10 seconds of each other will be counted as only one request. Where a PDF-link is involved, this filter is set at 30 seconds, due to the longer time it takes to render a PDF.

Auditing of vendor usage reports and processes by an approved third party will be a requirement for compliance when the **Code of Practice** for books and journals is implemented. Detailed auditing specifications are provided as an Appendix to the **Code of Practice**.

Usage reports

The draft **COUNTER Code of Practice** for Books and Reference Works provides a set of five basic usage reports that cover full-text requests for a whole title, as well as for sections (chapters, encyclopaedia entries) within a title. Searches, sessions and turnaways are also covered.

The reports specified are:

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: Number of Turnaways by Month and Title

Book Report 4: Total Searches and Sessions by Month and Title

Book Report 5: Total Searches and Sessions by Month and Service

The report formats, data processing guidelines and delivery protocols are exactly the same as those already in use for journals and databases. Likewise, searches, sessions and turnaways have been defined in the same way as for journals and databases and the usage reports relating to these (3, 4 and 5 above) parallel those for journals and databases. For this reason attention here will focus on **Book Report 1** and **Book Report 2**, as these contain the key new elements on the draft **Code of Practice** and merit further discussion. **Book Report 1** is designed to provide usage statistics for those titles that can only be downloaded in their entirety and which online usage cannot be moni-

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IMHBCO (In My Humble But Correct Opinion) — Four Mantras for the Patron-Centered Technical Services Librarian

by **Rick Anderson** (Director of Resource Acquisition, University of Nevada, Reno Libraries; Phone: 775-784-6500 x.273) <rickand@unr.edu>

In the interest of promoting a more patron-centered approach to technical services work, I'd like to offer four mantras that we can all chant every morning as we prepare for the day. May they help all of us to align our service chakras more effectively.

Mantra #1: My job is not to manage information, but to deliver it.

In the work that we do, all of us have both intermediate tasks (the things we work on and try to accomplish every day) and ultimate goals (the larger things that we hope our intermediate goals will add up to). As librarians, our ultimate goal should be to get the best possible information to our patrons as quickly and effectively as possible, and to do so in the way that works best and makes most sense for our particular patrons. The intermediate tasks that we set for ourselves should be ones that move us toward the ultimate goal of effective patron service. We catalog our resources so that our patrons can find them; we fine-tune approval plan profiles to bring them into better conformity with our patrons' needs; we monitor usage of e-journals and databases so that we can target our scarce re-

sources more accurately to the needs and interests of our patrons.

The problem comes when we get intermediate tasks and ultimate goals confused. Especially for those of us who work in technical services, it's easy to develop a kind of professional myopia — the kind that leads us to lose sight of our ultimate goal as we focus more and more sharply on the intermediate tasks that lie directly in front of us.

Most of the intermediate tasks in technical services areas have to do with managing information. Thus, the more myopic we get, the easier it becomes to think that our real goal is to create and maintain a well-managed collection. But a well-managed collection is really only a means to an end. The end towards which we're working is our patrons getting the information they want, when they want it, in the format that works best for them. Our ultimate goal is not to *manage* information, but to *deliver* it. This doesn't mean that we neglect important management tasks, of course, but it does mean that we design them with our patrons in mind — our real patrons, not necessarily those who do what we wish they'd do or who know what we wish they'd know.

pliant. These reports will then be listed in the Register of Vendors on the **COUNTER** Website. Only reports listed there may be regarded as being **COUNTER** compliant.

Report Delivery

Report delivery will have to conform to the following standards:

- Reports must be provided either as a CSV file, as a **Microsoft Excel** file, or as a file that can be easily imported into **Microsoft Excel**
- Reports should be made available on a password-controlled Website (accompanied by an email alert when data is updated)
- Reports must be provided monthly
- Data must be updated within four weeks of the end of the reporting period
- All of last calendar year's data and this calendar year's to date must be supplied

*Vendors and librarians are encouraged to review the draft **Code of Practice** for Books and Journals and to pass comments to the **COUNTER Project Director** before the end of 2005 via the **COUNTER Website** (www.projectCounter.org).*

Mantra #2: I will not try to think like a good librarian, but like a bad patron.

Despite all the progress we've made over the past ten years, our libraries are still primarily designed as if our patrons lived in a world in which good information is hard to get. To really make effective use of a research library, you should know how to use **Boolean** logic; you need to know how to formulate a good search strategy; you need to be willing to ask for help when you need it (and you will). For some bizarre reason, we librarians tend to see this complexity as a badge of honor — as part of what separates us from (insert derisive snort here) the **Google** world.

The problem is that **Google** is not simply a new, simplified window on the same old world of online information. By virtue of its straightforward user-friendliness and the quality of the results it delivers, **Google** itself has fundamentally changed the world of online information. In general, we librarians are not doing a good job of adapting to this new world. One problem, I think, is that we're still trying to think like good librarians. When faced with the Internet, we ask ourselves all the Good Librarian questions: "How can we categorize this mass of information?" "How can we guide our patrons away from the garbage and toward the gold?" "How can we make our online interface more like the traditional catalog that our patrons know and (we're pretty sure) love?"

People prefer **Google** because it's designed for bad patrons, not for good librarians. The ideal **Google** user is someone who doesn't know how to use Boolean logic; who doesn't want to ask for help; and, most importantly, who is much more interested in finding information than in perfecting her searching skills. If we really want to be of service to our patrons, I suggest that we'd do well to focus less on teaching them how to search and more on making it easier for them to find.

Mantra #3: Not everything worth doing is worth doing well.

Your father was wrong about this. Here's the harsh reality: almost all of us have more work to do than we have time available to do it. If you do the math, that means the option of doing everything well is not available to us. Instead, we have three choices:

1. **Try to do everything well.** Unfortunately, this way madness lies, and also ineffectiveness. Try to do everything well and you'll end up doing a few things well and everything else will come out more or less half-baked.

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tored further by the vendor. **Book Report 2** is designed to allow the vendor to measure usage of individual sections within a title. A "section" is the next level of organizational structure below the complete title, such as "chapter" or "entry." We felt that this single report based on the more comprehensive definition was more appropriate than having separate reports for "chapter," "entry" etc., as a title whose structure is based on "chapters" is unlikely to contain "entries" and vice versa.

Compliance with the Code of Practice

As with journals and databases, compliance with this **Code of Practice** will be encouraged in two ways. First, customers will be urged to include a clause in all relevant licence agreements specifying that vendors provide usage statistics that are **COUNTER** compliant. A standard form of words for this clause is provided in the **Code of Practice**. Second, to obtain "COUNTER-compliant" status for their usage reports vendors will be required to sign a formal **Declaration of COUNTER Compliance** and to allow **COUNTER** to review those of their usage reports that they claim are com-