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Consistent Squeeze

Gary Geer

University of South Carolina, geer@sc.edu

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Creating a Common Standard ... from page 30

At this stage, the **PIRUS2** team consensus is that it is not yet appropriate for repositories to attempt to supply **COUNTER**-compliant AR1 reports. The AR1 standard is still being developed. Technically, it is challenging to incorporate **SUSHI** into the wide range of repository softwares, and there are issues, even among publishers, about the size of **SUSHI** reports, lack of compression, etc. Business-model-wise, it would incur costs/time/effort for each and every IR to undergo regular **COUNTER** audit for compliance.

Publisher Test Usage Data

Ultimately, publishers will supply AR1 usage statistics reports via **SUSHI**. However, the AR1 Report is not yet an agreed **COUNTER** standard, and **SUSHI** implementations are technically demanding both on the server and client sides, so — for the purposes of the tests — **PIRUS2** has agreed to accept data in MS Excel format. Test usage data is now being obtained from the following **COUNTER**-compliant publishers: **ACS Publications, Emerald, IOP Publishing, Nature Publishing Group, NEJM, OUP, Springer, and Wiley**.

So far test usage data for 450,000 individual articles from 5,500 journals has been collected and is being processed.

User Interface

A skeletal user interface is in place; its development and testing is ongoing.

Central Clearing House

We face two main challenges in attempting to create a Central Clearing House (CCH) to consolidate individual article usage statistics at

a global level. The first is primarily technical. Not only will the CCH have to receive and manage usage data from a range of publishers, but is also has to deal with the diversity of repository softwares and implementations that are in use.

The second challenge is in persuading repositories, publishers, and other organizations to participate in and support such a CCH service. Meeting this challenge will require us to demonstrate not only the benefits of providing global usage statistics at the individual article level but also that this can be done cost-effectively and reliably.

Functions to be fulfilled by Central Clearing House

It has been agreed that the CCH will have to perform the following basic functions:

1. Receive and store the following categories of data:
 - a. Open URL logfiles from repositories
 - b. **COUNTER**-compliant usage statistics from repositories, publishers, and other organizations
2. Harvest Open URL logfiles from repositories, publishers, and other organizations
3. Collect and collate usage statistics by individual article (DOI)
4. Store usage statistics by individual article for a specified period
5. Control access to the stored usage data

Capabilities required of the Central Clearing House

1. Conversion of logfiles to **COUNTER**-compliant usage statistics
2. Collection, collation, and storage of usage statistics

3. Collection, collation, and storage of relevant metadata
4. Creation and management of a Registry of Participating Repositories
5. Management of access control
6. Billing of costs to participating entities

Organizational options for Central Clearing House

Broadly speaking, there are two organizational options:

1. A global organization that would be responsible for carrying out all the functions listed above
2. A network of national/regional organizations that would carry out the functions listed above in their own nation/region

Organizationally, the favoured option is to go for a global organization, as this will make it easier to implement and adhere to standards, and we are now exploring this. International standards organizations already exist in STM publishing and have shown that it is possible to collect and collect large volumes of publication-related data on a global basis. It may well be that no single organization has, or wishes to develop, all the capabilities required, but one can imagine a partnership between organizations with complementary capabilities to create a global service.

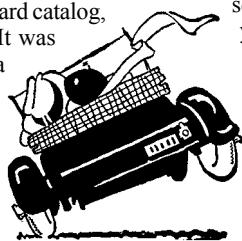
Project Timetable and Further Information

Work on **PIRUS2** commenced in October 2009 and the project is scheduled for completion in December 2010. Further information on **PIRUS2** may be found on the project Website at <http://www.cranfieldlibrary.cranfield.ac.uk/pirus2>. 🐼

Consistent Squeeze

by **Gary Geer** (Collection Development Librarian, University of South Carolina)
<geer@sc.edu>

“Do you have a consistent squeeze?” asked my boss, **Alexander (Sandy) Gilchrist**. I didn’t understand what he was asking me. My task, sometime back in the 1980s, was to figure out how many books we had in certain subject areas. In the days before you could ask and get an answer to this question from a computer, we had to have a method to quickly and accurately count the number of titles on a particular subject. Most card catalog users were familiar with the author, title, and subject sections of the card catalog. The part of the catalog they never saw was called the shelflist. The shelflist was the whole card catalog, but arranged in call number order. It was located in the technical services area of the Library, and not generally accessible to our users. Since the **Library of Congress** call number system is a subject classification system, books with call numbers in the range E 441 to E 665, for



example, all deal with U.S. History, Slavery, and The Civil War. To get a reasonably accurate count of the number of titles in a subject area, we held the cards in that call number range straight in the catalog drawer, measured the width of that group of cards, and then would multiply by the number of cards per inch. To know how many cards there were per inch, you had to be able to squeeze the cards with a consistent amount of pressure while you measured. If you had a weak squeeze, the number of cards per inch might be 50, a strong squeeze and your average might be 75, so your squeeze could make a big difference in your count. It took some practice to get your squeeze consistent and to figure your cards per inch average. I don’t remember what my squeeze equaled in cards per inch. I suspect it’s a bit less today.

This is a skill they just don’t teach in library school these days. 🐼

Rumors

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if you ask me. I have been reading an incredibly interesting book called *Hamlet’s BlackBerry: A Practical Philosophy for Building a Good Life in the Digital Age* (HarperCollins, 2010) by **William Powers** about this phenomenon. **Powers** wrote an earlier essay called “Hamlet’s BlackBerry: Why Paper is Eternal” in 2005/2007. I think we should have a book discussion group online about this. Anybody interested? <http://www.williampowers.com/about-me>

And did you know that **Elaine Robbins** (see above) is the new editor of *The Charleston Report (TCR)*? www.charlestonco.com

Speaking of *TCR*, the brainy **Laura Barfield**, Systems Librarian at Trident Technical College <laura.barfield@tridenttech.edu>, the last editor of *TCR*, just won an **IMLS planning grant** in her spare time. The project is called “**Lowcountry Foodways**.” [As] rapid

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