

September 2012

# EBSCO Brings Integration to the Forefront with EBSCONET Usage Consolidation

Oliver Pesch  
EBSCO

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Pesch, Oliver (2012) "EBSCO Brings Integration to the Forefront with EBSCONET Usage Consolidation," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 24: Iss. 4, Article 13.  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.6181>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact [epubs@purdue.edu](mailto:epubs@purdue.edu) for additional information.

# EBSCO Brings Integration to the Forefront with EBSCONET Usage Consolidation

by **Oliver Pesch** (Chief Strategist, E-Resources, EBSCO)

In working with librarians, EBSCO spends a great deal of time talking about the ways their libraries are addressing current problems and the products and services they need. The transition to online-centric collections has basically turned librarians' worlds upside down. Management tools and techniques that were appropriate for print collections have proven ineffective when applied to electronic resources. Librarians are asking for services and tools created specifically for the evolving world in which they find themselves. EBSCO's challenge is to respond with effective solutions that offer the appropriate amount of sophistication without the added complications that can sometimes come along with it as an unwanted byproduct.

EBSCO began adding e-resource capabilities to our systems more than a decade ago, when publishers first began offering online versions of their journals. Since that time, we have worked with librarians to improve how they acquire, manage, and access their online collections. Today, EBSCO offers a complete, comprehensive range of products and services related to information management and discovery, and we continue to evolve. The breadth of our offerings also allows for the added efficiencies that can come with integration among products — integration that eliminates redundancies in both effort and information managed. Our goal is to make librarians more effective by providing them with ready access to the information they need to do their job, so they have more time to focus on building better collections and serving their constituents.

A common theme in many requests we received from librarians was to provide a better way to handle usage statistics, not only to simplify the gathering of usage statistics but also to allow the collected usage statistics to be applied in a way to efficiently inform collection analysis decisions (whether a library renews or cancels a journal, for instance, or moves to alternate methods of access). As a result of this feedback, we recently deployed *EBSCONET Usage Consolidation*. This latest addition to our family of products provides a key

component in addressing the library's need to quickly and effectively assess the value of a given electronic resource.

Effective management of any resource starts with measuring its use, which is definitely a challenge with online resources where usage information is collected by the content provider and not the library. The value of an e-resource is often judged in terms of usage and cost-per-use. For any product related to usage consolidation, the primary functions should be to make it easy to collect usage data and to combine that usage with cost data so cost-per-use analysis can be performed. EBSCO's approach with *Usage Consolidation* is somewhat different from other such tools on the market.

Virtually all usage management products help librarians collect the usage data, and *Usage Consolidation* is no exception. Where EBSCO differs is in how we provide cost-per-use analysis. Rather than requiring cost data to be loaded into the same system as the usage data, our solution makes the usage data available to the system where the cost data is managed. Librarians who use our *EBSCONET Subscription Management* system now have instant access to usage and cost-per-use information as part of their normal workflow. Our unique approach to managing usage allows us to keep *Usage Consolidation* affordable and easy to use. Its focus, after all, is collecting usage.

But the real power comes in how that usage data is integrated with our other products. Imagine you are responsible for managing e-journal renewals in a tough budget year, and you have to make some difficult collection decisions. As you scan the list of titles that are up for renewal, you find one title that you feel is questionable. With a simple positioning of the mouse, you can instantly see that this title was used only a few times last year, and the cost-per-use was approximately \$45, which is higher than you would like for your institution. As you consider your options, you wonder if this title is available through one of your full-text databases. With a single click of the mouse, you are presented with the complete list of

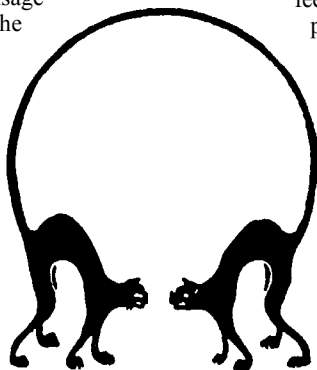
online holdings, which reveals that this title is, indeed, available in one of your full-text databases but has an embargo of 18 months. Since this particular title is one in which access to current content is required, you decide to proceed with the renewal. You managed to do all of this without leaving the renewal list within *EBSCONET*, and reaching the renewal decision took you less than 30 seconds. This description may sound like some promise for a future application, but it is not. It is exactly how *EBSCONET Usage Consolidation* works today in conjunction with EBSCO's subscription management tools.

As described in the example above, the integration goes even further than just usage data. With *Usage Consolidation*, librarians also have instant access to holdings and coverage data in their *EBSCO A-to-Z* list. It is this deep integration that sets EBSCO's products apart. Our philosophy is that usage should be easy to obtain and should also be made available in those tools where librarians are making decisions.

Librarians also have told us that they just don't have the time to spend gathering and loading usage data. EBSCO responded to this need by introducing our *Usage Loading Service* as an optional companion to *Usage Consolidation*. With the *Usage Loading Service*, a dedicated team of highly-skilled representatives handles the gathering and loading of COUNTER usage reports, leaving the librarian with more time for analysis and collection development activities.

*Usage Consolidation* and the *Usage Loading Service* were initially released in January 2012, after a beta test period of approximately six months, during which more than 20 institutions from all over the world had an opportunity to test the service and provide valuable product input. This type of customer feedback drives our development. In fact, the next release of *Usage Consolidation*, scheduled for a late-2012 release, will include features based on such input — support for eBook usage, improved reporting capabilities, improved SUSHI support, and several other improvements — in order to further increase productivity. Also in our sights will be full support for **Release 4 of the COUNTER Code of Practice**, which becomes a requirement of content providers by the end of 2013.

Our approach to *Usage Consolidation* gives us tremendous flexibility in how we can employ the usage data in other services. The instant display of usage and collection holdings within *EBSCONET Subscription Management* is just the beginning. We have some very interesting features planned that will provide extremely advanced point-of-need analysis capabilities. The future is quite exciting as we continue to strive for solutions that allow librarians to do their jobs better. 🌱



## Rumors

from page 40

you registered yet?) but she won't be able to come after all because of a family medical situation. Anne says, however, that she will be in **Charleston in 2013** with bells on!

Speaking again of the **Charleston Conference**, we are running ahead with registrations based on same time last year (over 100 strong) so be sure and register soon and definitely before **Early Bird** ends which is supposed to be **September 14**. <http://www.katina.info/conference/registration.php>

continued on page 53