For more than a decade, libraries have seen a larger percentage of their materials budgets spent on electronic resources. Since 2002, Project COUNTER (Counting Online Usage of eTworked Electronic Resources) has been the standard for recording and reporting online use stats. Even with these standards in place to make reporting easier, and the understanding of the importance of gathering use stats, librarians are often intimidated by the task of collecting e-resource stats. These tips will help with gathering stats of collections, both big and small.

Tip #1 Use everyday tools

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Tip #2 Sometimes the answer is "no".

Tip #3 Be patient, but persistent

Gathering e-resource use stats can be time-consuming, and at times, frustrating. Vendor-publishers merge with other companies and often change who helps you access your use stats and how. Unavoidable technical problems arise periodically to make collecting use stats problematic. But with patience, persistence, organization and easy-to-use tools, you can gather the data that help make important decisions on how your library makes the most of its limited materials budget. Keep calm and gather on!

Tip #4 Look at the BIG picture

Tip #5 Something is better than nothing

Tip #6 Keep it simple

Not all stats will be COUNTER. Track them anyway.

Use an open source content management system to disseminate your stats.

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