

Nature Publishing Group provides timely usage statistics to their subscribers and publishing teams



Highlights

- **The Challenge**

Nature Publishing Group needed to process and deliver usage statistics to their customers and staff on time.

- **The Solution**

NPG implemented PublisherStats, a joint service from MPS Technologies and IBM SurfAid Analytics.

- **The Result**

The level of service to NPG's customers and publishing teams has been dramatically improved.

“The PublisherStats service from MPS Technologies powered by IBM SurfAid has greatly assisted NPG's online business analyses. Generation of our online statistics has never been so rapid and the powerful user interface allows NPG staff to effectively mine this rich resource.”

*—Howard Ratner
Chief Technology Officer and Executive Vice-President
Nature Publishing Group*

Statistics for online usage

Nature Publishing Group (NPG), a division of Macmillan Publishers Ltd, is one of the oldest and most highly respected publishers in the academic and professional

“NPG staff and our librarian customers can now have confidence that they are making better decisions.”

—*Jamie Sampson*
Web Services Supervisor

scientific community. NPG's flagship title, *Nature*, is the world's most highly-cited weekly multidisciplinary journal. NPG's other publications include *Nature* research journals, *Nature Reviews*, *Nature Clinical Practice* and a range of prestigious academic journals, including society-owned publications.

NPG has a strong customer base of institutional online customers who require usage statistics about the content being accessed by their constituents. NPG provides those statistics using IBM SurfAid Analytics, an on demand service offering that delivers comprehensive usage data into the hands of over 2000 subscriber sites each month. An impressive 25% of report recipients review the statistics within one week.

A solution for diverse users

Like many large publishers, Nature Publishing Group is a member of COUNTER, (Counting Online Usage of NeTworked Electronic Resources), a not-for-profit organization that provides a code of practice designed to govern the recording and exchange of online usage statistics for libraries, publishers and intermediaries. NPG has been providing COUNTER reports since 2003. Due to the amount of traffic and the number of customers needing reports, NPG's previous vendor had difficulties processing and delivering the required reports in a timely manner. The former solution did not scale sufficiently to the company's needs.

MPS Technologies provided the solution to NPG's challenge. With their extensive knowledge of the COUNTER code of practice and the publishing industry, MPS customized a solution for NPG, using the IBM technology provided by SurfAid Analytics. Since implementing SurfAid, the reporting process has improved and the level of service has been more dependable. In addition, all NPG reporting is now COUNTER-compliant.

Two distinct groups use the statistics provided by SurfAid. The first consists of librarians who subscribe to NPG's publications. They receive COUNTER reports on

The screenshot displays the Nature.com website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for NATURE.COM, NEWS@NATURE.COM, NATUREJOBS, NATUREEVENTS, and ABOUT NPG. A search bar is located on the left, and a login section with fields for USERNAME and PASSWORD is on the right. Below the navigation bar, the main content area is divided into several sections: 'Welcome to nature.com' with a list of links (Publications, Subscriptions, Librarian Gateway, Advertising, For authors, Business partners, Permissions, Work@NPG); 'TODAY'S NEWS' featuring articles like 'Stem-cell vote defies Bush' and 'Female spiders exploit double-barrelled sperm storage'; 'JOBS' listing positions at the University of California San Francisco and University of Sunderland; 'NPG Subject areas' with a list of scientific disciplines; and 'EVENTS' with a link to the Natureevents Directory 05. A vertical advertisement on the right side promotes new content and design unveiled on May 19th.

a monthly basis, and make purchasing and promotional decisions based on the detailed information they receive in their SurfAid reports. They may see that a journal is particularly popular and decide to promote it in their library, or they may wish to increase the emphasis on lesser-known publications. Many librarians find the IP range reports to be invaluable.

They can tell where their online usage is coming from, information that is especially important on larger campuses. "NPG staff and our librarian customers can now have confidence that they are making better decisions," says Jamie Sampson, NPG's Web Services Supervisor.

The second group who relies upon usage statistics is the internal staff at NPG. The sales team appreciates the fact that the reports are broken down by institution, so they can concentrate on those organizations for which they have responsibility. SurfAid also provides statistics by article name and title or journal rather than by URL only, a feature important to NPG's editorial staff. The marketing team uses the Data Analysis tools to measure the success of their campaigns and other promotions. They are able to see top institutions per journal and can use this

information to build up advertising. "Some of the staff prefer easily accessible automated reports (over 60 in total), while others prefer the flexibility of the ad-hoc reporting tools," says Jamie. "The sales, marketing and editorial teams have been very impressed with the information they can get out of the system."

statistics available in SurfAid helps us understand the impact that HINARI is having."

NPG was particularly impressed with the short start-up time needed to implement SurfAid. The MPS Technologies support team, along with IBM, ensured a smooth transition. "It happened very quickly," said Jamie. "We

"This new service allows us to routinely supply librarians with COUNTER-compliant statistics. NPG has supported COUNTER from its inception and is pleased to find a pair of vendors so committed to the growth of this important standard."

—Howard Ratner

Chief Technology Officer and Executive Vice-President

High value benefits

A popular feature for both groups of users is the "Top Articles" list, which indicates which articles and journals are the most popular. Since NPG is an international company and since many of their customers have multiple locations, the geo-data provided by SurfAid is important. "I had a request just this morning to see the usage statistics in Africa," said Jamie. "We are involved in an international partnership called HINARI [Health InterNetwork Access to Research Initiative], that provides free or very low cost access to the major biomedical journals in developing countries. The

had a couple of months to pull everything together, and they were quick to respond." NPG learned an important lesson from their experience with two prior solutions: "Publishing reporting is very different from traditional Web site reporting. We wanted someone who knew the ins and outs of COUNTER. We found that with MPS Technologies and SurfAid Analytics."

To learn more about the Nature Publishing Group, please visit www.nature.com.



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