

SERU: A Shared Electronic Resource Understanding

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*A Recommended Practice of the
National Information Standards Organization*

Prepared by the
NISO SERU Standing Committee

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Foreword

The Shared Electronic Resource Understanding (SERU) Recommended Practice offers a mechanism that can be used as an alternative to a license agreement. The SERU statement expresses commonly shared understandings of the content provider, the subscribing institution and authorized users; the nature of the content; use of materials and inappropriate uses; privacy and confidentiality; online performance and service provision; and archiving and perpetual access. Widespread adoption of the SERU model for many electronic resource transactions offers substantial benefits both to publishers and libraries by removing the overhead of bilateral license negotiation.

When SERU was adopted as a NISO Best Practice in 2008, its focus was on e-journal transactions, and the parties involved were primarily libraries and publishers. Since then, with the many emerging models for acquisition of e-books, both libraries and e-book providers have requested that other types of electronic resources be incorporated into the SERU framework. This updated version of SERU recognizes both the importance of making SERU more flexible for those who want to expand its use beyond e-journals, and the fact that consensus for other types of e-resource transactions are not as well-established as they are for e-journals. In those instances where there is as yet no standard expectation, a shared understanding may still be achieved if expectations are clearly articulated in the purchase order that accompanies SERU.

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The Business Information (BI) Topic Committee had the following members at the time it approved this Recommended Practice:

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