

A BRIEF GUIDE TO DIGITAL EDITIONS – REGIONAL PUBLICATIONS

What is a digital edition?

A digital edition is **a replica** of the print publication distributed electronically as a unit. It must include the same editorial and ROP advertisements – classified ads need not be included. Adverts may be enhanced or adapted to take advantage of the format of the digital version.

A digital edition is not a website although access to the digital edition may be through web links.

Digital editions of a publication may be included on an ABC certificate, providing the publisher's system has been pre-approved by ABC, **but they are not included in the Average Net Circulation figure**. Providing all rule requirements are met they are reported separately on an additional table in the certificate.

All digital editions claimed must be '**opted-in**' copies. The individual subscriber must have personally requested the digital edition as a paid-for or free subscription. Postal and email addresses must be collected for all digital copies claimed.

The digital and print editions must be distributed on or about a **common distribution date**.

Basic audit requirements

ABC will monitor the distribution on an ongoing basis throughout the audit period testing for the following:

- **Entitlement (paid copies)**
The subscriber is entitled to the publication through payment of a subscription
- **Availability**
The correct publication and issue is available to download or view at the correct time
- **Notification (free copies)**
The subscriber is notified of the availability of the publication.

Regional Publications Reporting Standards Sections M6 and M7 give detailed information of the audit requirements.

The intention to claim digital copies must be **registered with ABC in advance** as the audit process is 'live' and ongoing during the audit period. This means that rather than being audited retrospectively (as for print copies), **the digital distribution audit occurs as it happens**.

Other requirements include:

A Total Distribution List (TDL) for every issue in the audit period. The TDL will be a combined list of all paid and free subscribers of the print and digital edition. Addressees must be coded to indicate the type of subscription and whether it is for the print or digital edition. If an individual subscribes to both print and digital editions this can be claimed only once – as a recipient of the print version.

The TDL must be de-duplicated by the publisher and be net of hard bounce backs.

As parts of the audit process are conducted on a 'current' basis during the audit period, ABC will require free access to both the print and digital editions for testing.



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Publicity / Use of data

Once certified, the ABC figure for a digital edition must always be accompanied by the latest Average Net Circulation certified for the print edition: i.e.

ABC Average Net Circulation (print)

July-Dec 2007, 24,555

ABC Average Digital Copies, 2,328

Categories

Digital editions can only be claimed in the following categories in the digital editions table:

- **Current Issue Single Copy Sales**
a single copy of the publication purchased directly as a digital edition
- **Single Copy Subscription Sales**
a paid for subscription to the publication as a digital edition
- **Corporate/Gift Subscriptions**
a paid for subscription to the digital edition taken out by a business on behalf of its employees (corporate), or by one individual on behalf of another (gift). The final recipient must opt in to receive/view the digital edition
- **Free Requested Copies**
a free, requested subscription to the digital edition taken out by an individual where the date of request is less than three years

Cost

The audit fee for **paid for digital editions** is a standard charge of **£255 per certificate** payable at the point of registration with ABC. Thereafter each subsequent audit is payable at the standard charge of £255. All prices indicated are net of VAT at the standard rate.

Any supplementary audit work required will be charged after agreement with the publisher at an hourly rate of £65 (plus VAT).

The next step

If you would like more information please contact your Account Manager or lorraine.anderson@abc.org.uk to arrange a registration meeting.

Industry agreed measurement



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