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10th November 2025

ABC Brand and Group Reporting Standards - Updates

This document outlines the agreed changes for publishers reporting ABC Brand Reports or Group Reports from periods ending December 2025. You can view the [updated ABC Reporting Standards](#) on our website.

If you have any suggestions or queries about a rule, please contact your ABC Account Manager via enquiries@abc.org.uk, or any member of the ABC team. As an ABC member, you are welcome to raise questions or propose changes to any of the information or rules we publish.

Summary of changes

1. Interpretation and adaptation of ABC Data:

The requirements for using ABC Data or information in Brand and Group Reports have been aligned with the **ABC Publicity Byelaws**.

- You may interpret or adapt ABC data or information provided you clearly explain how it has been used and what it represents.
- When combining data to produce an aggregated total, the constituent data must be of the same type (*for example reach metrics can only be combined with other reach metrics*).

2. Inclusion of ABC Audited Bespoke Data

Data audited by ABC to bespoke requirements (a service already available) can be included in ABC Brand and Group reports.

- This allows verified reporting of products or data where no current industry-agreed ABC Standard exists.
- Such data will be clearly identified, distinguished from ABC standard reporting, and be accompanied by appropriate definitions/methodology.

In all cases, ABC's decision on what can be included, along with any accompanying notes or descriptions required, is final.

For further information or to discuss your requirements, please contact ABC before preparing your next Brand or Group Report.

Detailed changes

1. Interpretation and adaptation of ABC Data

Aligning the use of data in Brand and Group Reports with the Publicity Byelaws allows you to maximise the value of your ABC data and provide greater flexibility to adapt it to suit your messaging.

Transparency and clarity remain essential. We will review instances where data is interpreted or adapted and work with you to ensure accompanying notes provide clarity on what the data represents.

The updated **Brand/Group Report Standards** reflect this change, which is shown by the struck-through and shaded text below

2. ~~Data included on a report usually comprises separate, stand-alone figures. However~~ You may interpret or combine some figures on a Brand/Group Report to show an aggregated total as follows:
 - a. ~~Only the same metric can be aggregated. For example, circulation + circulation, Unique Users + Unique Users.~~ If you interpret or adapt ABC Data or Information, you must make clear how this has been done and what the data or information represents. ABC's decision on what can be included, plus any accompanying notes and/or descriptions required is final.
 - i) If you're combining data to produce an aggregated total, then the constituent data must be of the same type. *For example, reach metrics can only be combined with reach metrics, volume metrics with volume metrics.*

Examples of reach metrics include: Magazine Circulation/Sales, Email Distribution (de-duped), Social Media Followers/Subscribers, Online Unique Users/Subscribers.

Examples of volume metrics include: Social Media Likes/Posts, Online Page Views/AV Plays, Engagement time metrics.

Therefore publication sales could be combined with website subscribers, or publication circulation with website unique users. However, circulation or sales could not be aggregated with website Page Views.

The following sections are not rule changes, but rewording for clarity:

- ~~b. Different data can only be aggregated if it relates to the same period. This means that the report may not always show the latest data for a constituent product. For example: when aggregating the average circulation for a regional newspaper that reports annually (say Jan to Dec 2024) and a national newspaper's circulation that reports monthly, we would report the aggregated circulation on a Group Report by combining the circulations for the period Jan — Dec 2024 for both products. This means the latest monthly national newspaper figures (say January 2025), whilst available separately, will not be required to be aggregated because the same period's data is not also available for the regional title. If you wish to aggregate circulation figures for titles with different reporting frequencies, for example: Combining a title that reports monthly with one which reports annually, the following treatment would apply:~~
 - i) Reporting Period covered by the Brand report is Jan to Dec 25
 - ii) Publication reporting annually: Use the certified figures from the Reporting Period Jan to Dec 25
 - iii) Publication reporting monthly: Use the certified figures from all of the 2025 Reporting Periods
 - iv) If there is a subsequent certified figure for the monthly-reporting title already published this would be disregarded for the purpose of the Brand/Group Report.
- ~~b) If aggregating circulations from separate print and digital publication certificates, you must report the quantity of print and digital copies of a publication that were sold together as a bundle. For clarity we may add statements about duplication being tested for (or not) in relation to an aggregated total.~~
3. If you include magazine or newspaper circulation figures from certificates that include a note of the average number of individuals receiving both print and digital copies of an issue, then that information will also be noted on the Brand/Group Report.

2. Inclusion of ABC Audited Bespoke Data

Publishers can include ABC Audited Bespoke Data on ABC Brand and Group Reports. This option provides greater flexibility to publishers to promote:

- Products or data types without current ABC Standards.
- Specific aspects of existing products not currently covered by standard reporting.

Examples of Bespoke Audited Data:

- Third-party platform data, independent of the publisher and verified by ABC to source.
- Publisher data, verified through an ABC audit of publisher systems and records.

Such data:

- Will appear as stand-alone information on the Brand/Group Report
- Will not appear in standard ABC Reports or comparative tables.
- Will be clearly identified, distinguished from ABC standard reporting, and supported by appropriate definitions/methodology where needed for clarity.

The updated Brand/Group Report Standards reflect this change, which is shown by the struck-through and shaded text below:

1. You may include the following on a report (where relevant to the brand(s)):

a) Extracts of data published on other ABC certificates or Reports. *For example, Magazine/Newspaper circulation, email distribution, web traffic, social media data.*

b) Data verified by an ABC Bespoke Audit:

- i) Data reported outside of ABC Standards will be clearly identified and made distinct from ABC standard reporting, and be accompanied by appropriate definitions/methodology.
- ii) ABC's decision on what can be included, plus any accompanying notes and/or descriptions required is final.

b) The latest published data, relevant to the brand(s), from a recognised Joint Industry Currency (JIC). Note:

- i) We will need written agreement from the JIC allowing us to source data from them for any common client. *This has already been obtained for BARB, JICREG and RAJAR.*
- ii) We will include a qualification that we have not audited the data.
- iii) We will check accuracy of data to the appropriate source.