



July 2017

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ABC Consumer Magazines Reporting Standards (UK)

Changes have been agreed to the ABC Consumer Magazine Reporting Standards. We have updated the latest Reporting Standards to incorporate these changes and you can now view or download these from our Standards website www.abcstandards.org.uk.

Have a suggestion or a query about a rule?

As an ABC member you can ask us to look at any aspect of the information we publish or the rules behind them. If you have any suggestions or comments please contact your ABC Account Manager, Charlotte Brown (charlotte.brown@abc.org.uk), Jo Bland (jo.bland@abc.org.uk), any member of the ABC team or the [ABC Consumer Magazines Reporting Standards Group](#).

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Media owners may opt, with ABC's agreement, to include additional analyses on their ABC certificate. *For example: additional information about a publication's circulation that demonstrates particular value to a buyer because of the nature of the purchase and/or potential audience.*

2. Controlled Circulation

We may agree to waive the requirement for a mailing list and duplication testing against other individual circulation for copies distributed using an auditable distribution process that is operated by a third party/partner operation.

Setting the standard



Audit Bureau of Circulations Ltd (by guarantee) Registered in England Number 259647
Registered Office, 211 High Street, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire HP4 1AD VAT No. 804 8760 20

1. Optional Analyses

With ABC's agreement, media owners' may include additional optional analyses on their ABC Certificate.

For example the media owner may wish to include additional information about their circulation that demonstrates particular value to the buyer because of the nature of the purchase and/or potential audience.

ABC would review the information and confirm if it can be audited and reported or not, together with any additional costs.

Effective from June 2017 Reporting Period.

Amendment

Add shaded text

REPORTED DATA [extract]

5. Optional analyses

- a) You may request to report additional analyses, derived from (or closely connected with) data reported on the certificate, subject to the following:
 - i) The data to be reported on the certificate is, in our opinion:
 - o Auditable
 - o Clear (terms defined or explained as appropriate)
 - o Related to the product being certified
 - o Albeit reporting different information, is in keeping with the requirements for data and evidence in relation to the current Reporting Standards. *For example: If the breakout is an analysis of subscription bundles, we would expect the evidence levels to be in line with that already in place for subscriptions.*
 - ii) We will review the request and confirm whether we agree it can be reported, how it will be reported and any requirements in relation to the audit timing or process.

Note: There may be additional costs associated with the preparation of the certificate and audit of the additional data.

2. Controlled Circulation

Controlled Circulation is defined as “Copies sent free to a defined group of individuals” and has the following principles:

1. Single copy per issue, distributed to an individual
2. Individual falls within defined criteria (Terms of Control)
3. Individual’s details supported by third party evidence that is less than three years old
4. Copies reported either as Requested or Non-Requested Controlled circulation

There is a requirement to retain, for audit, a mailing list of the individuals to whom controlled copies are circulated and that these should be tested for duplications against other mailed copies.

It is recognised that media owners are utilising new routes to market where copies are distributed to a defined and targeted group of individuals, but where those individuals’ details are not available to the media owner/auditor. *For example a media owner may use a distribution process operated by a third party or partner operation, such as an online retailer, who delivers the publication together with the online purchases.*

If we are able to review the distribution process and satisfy ourselves the principles of Controlled Circulation are met, then we may agree to waive the requirement to provide the recipients’ name and address.

If you are interested in claiming copies using this exemption please contact us. Please note this would involve additional work by ABC for which there would be a charge.

Effective from June 2017 Reporting Period.

Rule amendment –

Shading denotes new text:

Controlled Circulation

1. Single copy per issue, distributed to an individual

- a) You must be able to demonstrate the copy is distributed to the individual.
 - i) Each copy should be addressed or accompanied by instructions which enable the distributor to deliver to the individual.
- b) You must retain a list of individual recipients for one designated issue each reporting period (the Audit Issue – see General Principles and Record Keeping section). In addition you must be able to recreate a list of any issue in the reporting period on request.
 - i) We may agree to waive this requirement where you use a bespoke distribution process involving a new route to market that is operated by a third party or partner operation under the following conditions:
 - o You are not able to provide a mailing list because the third party/partner operation responsible for the data will not/cannot provide it for the purposes of the audit.

- You do not provide to the third party/partner operation details of specific individuals that should receive a copy of the publication under their process.
- We are able to review the third party/partner's operation and distribution system and satisfy ourselves that the copies meet the definition and principles of Controlled Circulation and that there is not likely to be a significant level of duplication of a particular issue to individuals through this distribution process. [Note: individuals distributed to under this process need not be tested for duplications against copies distributed outside of the process].
- You notify us that you are claiming copies that utilise these requirements in order that we can plan appropriate verification work.

c) You cannot claim distribution of back issues.

2. Individual falls within defined criteria (Terms of Control)

a) The publisher sets the Terms of Control, complying with the following:

- i) The wording must be clear and relate to individuals not companies
- ii) Phrases or words that are subjective and/or difficult to explicitly prove are not permitted.
- iii) There must be at least one qualifying demographic which is neither:
 - a geographic criteria at a country level or higher (*for example individuals in the UK*); or
 - an interest in the field (*for example individuals with an interest in technology*).
- iv) It must be possible for individuals not to meet the criteria.

b) You must not publish either the Terms of Control or an approximation of these in the publication or on any documents or promotional material targeted at the reader where the effect might be to lead them to provide inaccurate data about themselves in order to meet the Terms of Control.

3. Individual's details supported by third party evidence that is less than three years old

a) At the date you distribute a copy you must have third-party evidence* that:

- i) supports the individual's name, job title/function (as appropriate) and address details.
- ii) proves explicitly that the individual meets the Terms of Control.
- iii) is less than three years old. Please refer to the guidance for dating evidence.

*b) A related party (as defined in the General Principles section) is NOT a third party. Therefore evidence provided by a related party is not acceptable for ABC purposes except in the following circumstances where at least one of the following applies:

- i) ABC has audited and verified the data at audit to be compliant with all the requirements necessary for the circulation claim in question *For example: ABC has already audited the data from included on an attendance list as part of an event audit or has carried out a satisfactory review of a bespoke distribution process (see section 1b (i) above)*
- ii) You have purchased the data from the related party and:
 - You have paid a purchase invoice (money must have changed hands - an inter-company accounting transaction is not sufficient).
 - The data purchased is sold as part of an established data rental/sale business. The onus is on you to provide suitable proof of this fact. Examples of suitable proof include promotional material and data rental/sale invoices.

4. Copies reported either as requested or non-requested

The following additional requirements apply to copies claimed in these categories:

Individually requested

- a) The copy must be addressed to the individual by name.
- b) You must have third-party evidence that the individual has, within the last three years, made a clear request to receive the publication before you send it to them.
- c) The date of the request must be recorded so that it can be analysed by age.

Company requested

- d) The copy must be addressed to the individual, either by name or job title/function.
- e) At the date you distribute the copy you must have third-party evidence that another employee or colleague from the individual's company or organisation has, within the last three years, made a clear request to receive the publication on the individual's behalf.
- f) The date of the request must be recorded so that it can be analysed by age.

Non-requested (either by name or by job title/function)

- g) The copy must be addressed to the individual, either by name or job title/function, depending on the circulation category in which it is claimed.
 - h) For by job title/function copies you may add a stylized/generic job title/job function to the address of an organisation for which you have third party evidence of the organisation's name and address providing:
 - i) The job title/ job function could reasonably be expected to relate to an individual in that organisation.
 - ii) Multiple or similar job titles/ job functions at the same organisation are not used in a way that might result in copies being distributed to the same individual.
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