



September 2018

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ABC Business Magazines Reporting Standards (UK)

Changes have been agreed to the ABC Business 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 Andy Flint (andy.flint@abc.org.uk).

Contents

1. Membership Copies: Copies may now be reported in this category where they are circulated to a society member as a benefit of their membership.
2. Sample Free Distribution: Amendments to the requirements for pre-approval by ABC and claiming of back issues
3. Digital Editions: Requests for the publication do not need to specify Digital Edition format
4. Group certificates: These are no longer available

Setting the standard



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1. Membership Copies

In some cases the current requirement that a publication must be confirmed as an 'official publication' of the Society (and that this is published on the ABC certificate) can cause issues because:

- The society may be unwilling to confirm official status as to do so may convey an incorrect impression that the magazine is the official mouthpiece of the society
- The publisher may consider the description casts doubt on their editorial independence

The Membership Copies category is not intended to represent simply copies sent to a society's members (these can be reported as controlled circulation). However the relationship of the magazine to the society provides a distinction in the relevance of the title to the society's membership.

It has therefore been agreed that a publication circulated to a society member as a benefit of their membership can be an alternative where a publication's official society status is not confirmed. If you claim copies on this basis you will need to be able to demonstrate this at audit.

The statement on the certificate would therefore either be:

1. This is [the/an] official publication of XYZ Society and copies are circulated as a member benefit
- Or
2. Copies circulated as a member benefit of XYZ Society

Amendment

Shading demotes new text added

Membership Copies [extract]

REQUIREMENTS

1. The publication is an official publication of the Society

- a) You must be able to provide evidence that the publication is:
 - i) An official publication of the Society; or
 - ii) Circulated as a member benefit of the Society

REPORTING

1. You will report Membership Copies as follows, which will be broken out on the ABC Certificate:

- a) By geographical type:
 - i) United Kingdom
 - ii) Other Countries

b) By total circulation for the Audit Issue.

2. The Society/Societies name(s) will also be reported on the ABC Certificate, identifying whether the publication is an official publication and/or is circulated as a member benefit of the Society.

2. Sample Free Distribution – pre-approval

As part of the recent reporting changes the category 'Sample Free Distribution' replaced 'Other Bulk Distribution' for irregular or one-off targeted distribution. This is typically used in the Business sector for reporting copies delivered to Business Events where they are made available to attendees.

Other than including them in the total average and Audit Issue circulation there was no intention to add any additional requirements to the reporting of these copies under Sample Free Distribution.

The following changes to the Sample Free Distribution category keep key points of reporting the business event copies as they were under the previous 'Other Bulk Distribution' rules:

- You will not need to gain ABC's advance agreement to claim these copies where they are:
 - Delivered to a trade event/seminar
 - Claimed 'gross' (i.e. the supply quantity)
 - Delivered to the trade event/seminar location by a third-party company whose business is distribution
- Back issues can be claimed and the distribution date of the sample distributions will be reported on the certificate. Back issues to be limited to 6 months old.

Amendment

Shading demotes new text added

Sample Free Distribution [extract]

1. Distribution uses an existing ABC Free Distribution category, without the need for a regular and consistent basis

- a) The requirements of the relevant Business Magazine Free Distribution category apply, with the exception that distribution may be of a single issue.
 - i) The Free Distribution categories eligible for reporting as Sample Free Distribution are:
 - Monitored Free Distribution
- b) Requirements relating to distribution across issues being on a regular and consistent basis and changes from previous issues are ignored.
- c) Under Sample Free Distribution you can claim distribution of back issues up to 6 months from the back issue's distribution date. *For example: May issue distributed on 1st May can be distributed at a show under Sample Free Distribution up until 31st October.*

2. Prior notification of distribution details to ABC

You must obtain ABC's agreement in advance of the distribution for sample copies under the Monitored Free Distribution method, having provided full details of timings, delivery locations etc. This is to enable audit work to be conducted at the appropriate time, including real time testing where appropriate.

Note: You will not need to gain ABC's advance agreement where the Sample Free copies:

- Are delivered to a trade event
- Are claimed 'gross' (i.e. the supply quantity)
- Are delivered to the trade event location by a third-party company whose business is distribution. *Note: This evidence should identify the title, issue and quantity*

REPORTING

You will report Sample Free Distribution as follows, which will be broken out on the certificate:

1. Audit Issue by geographical type:
 - a) United Kingdom

b) Other Countries

2. For each issue claimed an analysis as follows:

- a) Distribution type. *E.g. Net distribution – by hand, Net distribution – other, Gross*
- b) A statement describing how and where the copies are distributed (covering both the geographical location and type of distribution point).
- c) The number of copies
- d) Distribution date (*for example first day of exhibition*)

We will add the average number of copies across the period to this analysis.

Illustration of data required for Sample Free Distribution - Monitored Free Distribution

| Issue | Distribution date | Description | Number of copies |
|--------------|---|--|-------------------------|
| March 2018 | 12/3/18 | Gross Distribution - Accounting Conference, London O2 | 500 |
| June 2018 | 20/6/18 | Gross Distribution - Auditing Conference, Birmingham NEC | 750 |
| August 2018 | 2/8/18 | Gross Distribution – Accounting Conference, Glasgow, IET | 500 |
| | Sample Free Distribution average over the 12 issues in the period | | 146 |

3. Digital Editions - requests

Up to now the standards have stipulated purchases or requests for Digital Edition copies must be specifically for the digital edition and not generically for the magazine.

A number of publishers have raised the restrictive nature of this requirement, particularly in relation to the wording on forms inviting recipients to request the magazine. It also creates issues around the flexibility to decide the format in which they deliver the magazine, particularly if they wish to maintain or extend their reach, but printing and distribution copies make this prohibitively expensive.

The reality is requested free copies are likely to represent an engaged recipient because they have chosen to ask to receive it. The risk of 'unwanted' copies is low for a digital edition because of the ease with which recipients can now opt out. In relation to paid copies the publisher will need to meet the expectations of the purchaser and we see less need to change the format supplied. However we see no reason for the ABC standards to dictate this decision.

Therefore a request for the publication will now not need to specify a Digital Edition format in order for copies to be claimed.

Amendment

Shading overleaf denotes new text and strike-through deleted text

Digital Editions [extract]

3. Digital Edition copies are opted in

- a) The individual must have either specifically purchased the Digital Edition publication, or requested to receive/view it, with the exception of:
- b) ~~Free Digital Edition copies do not need a specific request from the individual in the following circumstances:~~
 - i) ~~If they are Copies claimed as Membership Copies, Controlled Colleague-Requested and Controlled non-requested categories of circulation~~
 - ii) ~~If they are Corporate Digital Edition Subscription copies, where the individual is sent an email alert informing them that the issue is available for view/download.~~
 - iii) ~~If you are converting an existing recipient of a free requested print copy to a Digital Edition copy in accordance with the following:~~
 - ~~— You notify the recipient in advance of your intention to change the supply of their copy to a digital edition, and provide the recipient with the opportunity to opt out of receiving the digital edition before it is served.~~
 - ~~— You have not received an opt-out from the individual.~~
 - ~~— You retain copies of the notifications of change and any opt-outs received for audit.~~
 - ~~— The date of the original request (not the notification of change to digital) will remain the date of the request for ABC purposes.~~
 - ~~— You identify on the mailing list supplied for audit (e.g. via a code) those individuals who have been converted from a print to a digital requested copy together with the date of the conversion.~~

4. Group Certificates

Group Certificates combine the circulations for two or more titles, allowing a publisher to present potential reach for advertising placed in those publications.

These are common amongst regional newspapers where the publications usually cover different geographical areas and the audiences are therefore different. However in the Business Magazine market there is more likely to be a cross-over in audiences with the result that the combined figure can cause confusion.

There are no publishers reporting an ABC Group Certificate in the Business Magazine sector and this option is now removed.

Amendment

Strike-through denotes deleted text

Reported Data [extract]

5. ~~You may choose to report a Group Certificate~~

- a) ~~You may choose to report an optional Group Certificate that combines the circulations from 2 or more publications' Certificates providing:~~
 - ~~i) Each Certificate relates to the same Reporting Standards~~
 - ~~ii) Each Certificate is for the same Reporting Period~~

Note:

- ~~— You may include publications with different publishing frequencies~~
- ~~— ABC will produce Group Certificates from the data submitted for the constituent publications.~~