



June 2019

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## ABC Consumer Magazines Reporting Standards (UK)

This document details changes agreed to the ABC Consumer Magazine Reporting Standards, Digital Publications and Brand Reports. The latest Reporting Standards incorporate these changes and you can now view or download these from our [website](#).

### 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](mailto:charlotte.brown@abc.org.uk)), any member of the ABC team or the ABC Consumer Magazines Reporting Standards Group

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An exception to the 'no back issue' rule, which allows copies to be claimed that fall within the relevant on-sale period for the current issue in the particular territory.

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It's clarified that to be considered regular, a distribution must be on an every issue basis.

#### 3. Digital Publications – bundled copies

Where digital copies are sold bundled with another ABC claimed product, and they are claimed on an ABC Digital Publication certificate (which is separate to the print certificate), they must be reported in the 'bundle' category.

#### 4. ABC Brand Reports and Group Reports

- A distinction is made between ABC reports that bring together ABC audited products for a single brand (Brand Report) or for a number of different brands (Group Report).
- Data from different ABC certificates can be aggregated under certain circumstances (key being it's the same metric for the same reporting period).

trust in media

## **1. Monitored Free Distribution (MFD) – overseas copies** **[Effective immediately]**

Monitored/Sample Free Distribution copies can only be claimed for the current issue. Therefore as soon as the subsequent issue is on-sale/distributed, Monitored/Sample Free copies of the previous issue cannot be included in ABC figures.

However it has been identified that these requirements are inhibiting opportunities for free distribution overseas (specifically the US). Sea-freighting copies to the distribution location means that although the copies are distributed when the issue is still current (i.e. on-sale) in the territory in question, the next issue has been published in the UK, rendering the copies ineligible for ABC figures.

It has therefore been agreed that there should be an exception to the ‘no back issue’ rules for Monitored/Sample Free Distribution to allow copies that fall within the relevant on-sale period for the current issue for overseas territories.

### **Amendment**

New text added as denoted by shading

## **Monitored Free Distribution [extract]**

### **3. Copies are made available at the known distribution points for pick up or receipt by consumers**

...

- c) You cannot claim distribution of back issues, with the exception of copies distributed overseas, where copies may be claimed providing they are distributed within the relevant on-sale period for the current issue for the territory concerned.

## **2. Monitored Free Distribution – regular and consistent (clarification)** **[Effective immediately]**

It's clarified that to be considered regular, a distribution must be on an every issue basis. Copies that are not regular can be claimed in the Sample Free Distribution category.

### **Amendment**

New text added as denoted by shading

## **Monitored Free Distribution [extract]**

### **2. Distribution follows a regular and consistent pattern to known distribution points**

...

- b) Distribution points used must be regular in type for every issue (subject to notified and allowable changes).
- If there are changes to the type of distribution points used (whether a new type is added or an existing type is dropped) then you must inform ABC.
  - We will consider the nature and extent of the changes in the distribution and decide if any further action is required. *For example being required to notify advertisers of the changes or the issuing of a new Certificate.*
  - For the avoidance of doubt, a particular distribution must be on an every issue basis to be considered regular for this category (meaning, for example, that distribution every other issue is not regular).

### **3. Digital Publications – bundled copies** **[Effective immediately]**

Where digital copies are sold bundled with another ABC claimed product, and they are claimed on an ABC Digital Publication certificate (which is separate to the print certificate), they must be reported in the 'bundle' category.

#### **Amendment**

New text added as denoted by shading

### **C3 Circulation requirements [extract]**

...

4. If the Digital Publication is sold as part of a package of goods and/or services then the price reporting for ABC purposes will be determined as follows:
  - a) If the package includes another product registered with ABC then the copy must be reported as a 'bundle copy'
  - b) If the package does not include another product registered with ABC then the price will be indicated by the offer. If the price for the Digital Publication is not clear and conspicuous then it will be reported as a 'bundle copy'.

### **4. ABC Brand Reports and Group Reports** **[Effective immediately]**

A distinction is now made between ABC reports that bring together ABC audited products for a single brand (Brand Report) or for a number of different brands (Group Report).

In addition data from different ABC certificates can be aggregated under certain circumstances (key being it's the same metric for the same reporting period).

#### **Amendment**

As well as an introduction covering what data can be included and relevant reporting periods, the following section has been added relating to aggregating data.

### **Introduction [extract]**

2. Data included on a report usually comprises separate, stand-alone figures. However you may combine some figures to show an aggregated total as follows:
  - a) Only the same metric can be aggregated. *For example, circulation + circulation, Unique Browsers + Unique Browsers*
  - 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.
  - c) 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 2019) 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 2019 for both products. This means the latest monthly national newspaper figures (say July 2019), whilst available separately, will not be required to be aggregated because the same period's data is not also available for the regional title.*