

A Guide To Multiple Copy Sales—Regional Publications



Setting the standard

Definition

A multiple copy sale is a sale of two or more copies to a third party, which normally results in the copies being given away free to the end recipient. They are reported as either Regular Multiple Copy sales or Issue Specific Multiple Copy sales.

Capping of Target Market

All multiple copy sales have to provide a target market e.g. in a hotel, the number of rooms, on an aircraft the number of seats. This target market is then capped giving a percentage of that target market that can be claimed as ABC sales. The agreed capping can be found in the ABC Reporting Standards Appendix 2. If you wish to claim a multiple copy sale for which there is no agreed capping you can contact us with the details of the target market etc. so that a cap can be considered by the Regional Publications Standards Group.

Regular Multiple Copy Sales

- These are copies sold on a regular basis and are supplied on a contractual basis.
- A daily newspaper has to sell copies in 100 issues in a 12 month period for copies to be claimed as regular multiple copy sales.
- The 12 month period starts from the date of the first issue sold under the contract.
- Weekly titles have to sell 12 issues in a 12 month period.
- A minimum of 1p or 1 eurocent per copy needs to be obtained to qualify for inclusion in ABC circulation figures.
- Sales cannot differ by more than 20% or 50 copies from the average quantity supplied during the contract period.

Issue Specific Copy Sales

- These are multiple copy sales, which occur on a 'one-off' basis or on a non regular basis as defined above.
- A minimum of 10p or 15 eurocents per copy must be obtained to qualify for inclusion in your circulation figures.
- Again a target market must be proved and a cap applied for every sale.
- You have to obtain proof of delivery to the purchaser

ABC Reporting Requirements

You need to report multiple copy sales as either regular and issue specific sales.

Audit Trails

Below is the audit trail required for all bulk sales that you will need to follow.

- An order or pro-forma from the purchaser (or countersigned by the purchaser) stating
 1. Number of copies to be purchased and the price per copy
 2. Issue/s of newspaper to be purchased

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3. Method of distribution and its price
4. Type of advertisement, strapline, wraparound and its price, which must be at a commercial rate

- An invoice to the purchaser stating
 1. Number of copies sold and their price
 2. Issue/s of newspaper purchased and cover price
 3. Type of advertisement and its price
 4. Distribution price
- Distribution evidence
 1. A delivery note signed by the purchaser to confirm receipt.
 2. If the copies are distributed on behalf of the purchaser, distribution evidence must be provided at audit.

All distribution documentation has to include the following:

1. Number of copies distributed
2. Issue/s of newspaper distributed
3. Delivery address or description of distribution (if distributed individually)

Bona Fide – Arms Length Requirement

Multiple copy sales are only allowed to be included in an ABC figure if you can prove that they have been sold as a bona fide or “arms length” transactions and that they have been invoiced and paid for separately to any other goods or services. **Under no circumstances can a supply of newspapers be part of a contra deal. Advertising revenue cannot be used to subsidise newspaper sales. Where newspapers are sold as part of a package with advertising, any advertising, editorial, advertorial and other promotional content or items included in the deal must be sold at a commercial rate. Any reciprocal payments must be taken into account to ensure the minimum terms requirement is met.**

Rate Band Classifications

Multiple copy sales are reported in rate bands on your ereturn. It is important to ensure that if these are sold at reduced rates (as they almost always are) that you report them in the correct banding on your ereturn.

ABC Reporting of Multiple Copy Sales

Multiple Copy sales are included in your headline ABC figure but are reported separately in the Concurrent Release and on your ABC certificate.

Information on ABC

If you would like more information about ABC its standards and procedures please contact your account manager.

This outline is intended as a brief user-friendly guide to the topic. It is not intended as a replacement for, or interpretation of the relevant ABC Reporting Standards. In all cases where this guide and the reporting standards differ, the reporting standards will prevail.