

A Guide to the Basic Requirements of Consumer Magazines Certification



Setting the standard

Introduction

This guide illustrates the basic points you will need to consider when applying for ABC certification of a Consumer Magazine. Please contact your ABC Account Manager for further guides on specific ABC categories.

ABC Audit Periods

There are two mandatory audit periods:

- 6 monthly, January to June and July to December
- 12 monthly, January to December.

In addition when a title initially joins ABC you can opt to have a

- 3-month audit
- launch issue audit for newly launched publications

Records required for an ABC audit

Certain documentation will need to be retained in order for us to conduct an audit, this includes:

Copy of magazine

We will need to see a copy of each issue of the magazine distributed in the audit period

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The source records must identify and prove: the subscriber's name and address, payment of the subscription. The amount paid determines whether the subscription will be claimed as full rate or reduced rate.

iii) Multiple Copy Subscriptions

Subscriptions where two or more copies of a publication are intended for a particular individual. Again, source records must be capable of identifying: the subscriber's name and address, the recipient's name and address, Proof of payment of the subscription

iv) Bulk Sales

There are two categories covering bulk sales, which are copies purchased by a third party but usually distributed free of charge to the final recipient. No contra deals are allowed.

a) Regular Bulk Sales defined as those made on a regular basis, examples are *sales* to airlines and hotels. The publisher must receive a minimum of 1p per copy from the purchaser.

b) Issue Specific Bulk Sales defined as those made on an irregular basis, or as one-off sales, examples are sales to a conference or exhibition. The publisher must receive a minimum of 20% of the cover price. Records required in either category include: Contractual agreements, Invoices and proof of payment, Distribution evidence

v) Society/Association Circulation

Circulation can only be claimed in this category if the publication is the official magazine of that Society/Association and all copies are individually addressed to recipients who can be shown to be paid up members. Records required include: the members name and address, proof of payment of the membership

vi) Controlled Free Circulation

Free, individually wrapped and mailed copies that are sent to recipients who can be shown to meet your 'Terms of Control'. Terms of Control state the criteria, which you use to decide if an individual qualifies for a free copy. Source documentation will be either requested (e.g. from a request card or telephone request) or non-requested (e.g. from a directory or bought list).

vii) Non Controlled Free Circulation

Free, individually wrapped and mailed copies where the individual is interested in the field covered by the publication.

viii) Monitored Free Distribution

Free copies supplied in bulk to distribution points on an ever issue basis to be left for free pick-up by the final recipient or handed out individually.

Proof of the receipt of copies at all final distribution points is paramount.

All Monitored Free Distribution must be pre-approved in advance of claiming the copies.

The Costs

There are three elements to the cost of membership for each title:

1. A 'one-off' Registration Fee
2. An annual subscription, based on circulation size
3. A fee for conducting each audit

How To Get More Information

The Consumer Magazine Reporting Standards are available from the ABC website www.abc.org.uk. If you need to discuss any aspect of ABC please contact an ABC Account Manager (01442 870800)

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.