

# A Guide to Consumer Magazine Multipacks (effective 01.06.11)



Scaling standard

Revised reporting standards effective for issues distributed from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2011 (i.e. from the period July to December 2011 for those reporting on a 6 month basis and for issues distributed in the second half of the year for those reporting on a 12 month basis).

## What is a multipack ?

A multipack describes where a publication is packaged or banded together as a unit with other issues or publications. However, for ABC reporting purposes **a publication is defined as being sold as part of a multipack only if two or more publications in that pack are included in an ABC circulation claim.** Note that there are therefore different requirements depending whether or not more than one publication in a package is claimed.

## If only one publication in a package is claimed

- If only one publication that is sold as part of a package is to be included in an ABC circulation claim ('the lead title') then the sale of the pack will be treated for ABC purposes as the sale of just that publication and the multipack requirements will not apply.
- In this scenario it must be clear from the pack itself which publication is the lead title (i.e. the one which can be included in an ABC claim). This could be achieved by:
  - The promotion identifying the lead title as the publication that is purchased and that the other publications in the pack are free.  
*For example: 'Buy X get Y free', where X would be the lead title; or*
  - The lead title's greater prominence.  
*For example the publication whose front page is visible at the front of the pack.*
- The lead title sold as part of a package cannot be included in an ABC newstrade claim if it is a back issue or it is promoted as free.

*Example (where only one publication in a pack is claimed for ABC purposes):*

1. *ABC News (cover price £1) and ABC Celebrity (cover price £2) are packaged together, sold for £1 and promoted as 'Buy ABC News and get ABC Celebrity free'. In this case ABC News can be claimed (at the pack price of £1) because ABC Celebrity has been promoted as free.*
2. *ABC News (cover price £1) and ABC Celebrity (cover price £2) are packaged together, sold for £1 and promoted as '2 for 1'. If ABC Celebrity has its cover facing out of the front of the pack and the front cover of ABC News is not visible from the outside of the pack then only ABC Celebrity can be included in an ABC circulation claim and for ABC purposes each copy of the pack sold will count as a copy of ABC Celebrity sold for £1.*

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Setting the standard

## Where two or more publications in a multipack are included in an ABC circulation claim:

- The external packaging/band of the multipack must carry a price as well as a unique barcode (that is different from the barcode carried on any of the constituent publications). This is to ensure sales of multipacks are separately and clearly identified on newstrade reports and documentation. The multipack barcode and price must not be printed on any of the constituent publications to avoid sales of individual publications being incorrectly recorded as multipack sales.
- The price of the multipack must be at least the sum of:
  - The Basic Cover Price of the highest priced magazine that is to be included in an ABC circulation claim; **plus**
  - 20% of the Basic Cover Price of the other magazine(s) included in the pack that are also to be included in an ABC circulation claim.

Note: If the publisher has removed the normal cover price from a publication (to prevent resale for example) or reduced the cover price for that issue the Basic Cover Price must still be applied for this purpose.
- For ABC rate classification purposes the multipack price must be allocated to each magazine included in an ABC circulation claim on a pro-rata basis using their individual Basic Cover Prices.

Note: If a magazine in the pack is at all promoted as 'free' then it cannot be claimed as a sold copy for ABC purposes.
- Back issues included in a multipack cannot be included in an ABC circulation claim
- The issues that include copies sold as a part of a multipack must be reported, identifying the other publication(s) included in the multipack (only those that are themselves included in an ABC circulation claim) and the percentage of each issue's total newstrade and single copy sales figure that is sold as part of a multipack. This information will be included on the ABC certificate.

### *Examples (where more than one magazine in a package is claimed for ABC purposes):*

- If ABC News (cover price £1) and ABC Celebrity (cover price £2) are packaged together, then for each to be eligible on the ABC claim the package must be sold for at least £2.20 with the package having its own unique barcode. Copies of each magazine sold in the package can be claimed as newstrade/single copy sales, with ABC News being treated as sold at 73p and ABC Celebrity as £1.47 (package price pro-rated 1/3 and 2/3 respectively).*
- If ABC Celebrity was multipacked with a back issue of ABC News for £2.20, then the copies of ABC News could not be claimed as sales for ABC purposes (because multipacked back issues are disallowed) and the copies of ABC Celebrity could be claimed as sales for the price of £2.20*
- If ABC Celebrity was multipacked with an issue of ABC News for a pack price of £2.20, and ABC News is being promoted as being free, then: the copies of ABC News could not be claimed as sales for ABC purposes because they are promoted as free and the copies of ABC Celebrity could be claimed as sales for the price of £2.20.*

### **How To Get More Information**

The Consumer Magazine Reporting Standards are available from the ABC website [www.abc.org.uk](http://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.*