

# A Guide to Retaining a Consumer Magazine Mailing List



Setting the standard

## Introduction

If the individually mailed element is more than 1% of the total circulation (including Single Copy Subscriptions, Controlled and Non Controlled circulation, and Society Circulation), we will need to be sent a duplicate copy of a specific issues mailing list, referred to as the Audit Issue. This guide will help you understand how to retain the mailing list in the correct format ready for the audit. If you have any further questions please contact your ABC Account Manager who will be pleased to help.

## Which mailing list should I keep for ABC audit purposes?

The Audit Issue for a

- June-end audit period, is the issue distributed nearest the end of March
- December-end audit period, is the issue distributed nearest to the end of September.
- 3 month audits, is the issue distributed nearest to the first day of the last month in the audit period.

## Should I merge separate mailing lists together?

The list should be specific to a single publication. Ideally the mailing list provided will be a fully merged list of all claimed circulation categories of individually mailed copies.

Where it is not possible to provide a fully merged mailing list, separate lists may be provided but it is essential that all lists provided have the same sortation.

## In what format should I keep my mailing list?

We prefer that the list is retained and forwarded to us in an **electronic format**. The addressees on the mailing list will need to be: **coded** – to indicate the circulation type and **source coded** to provide an audit trail to source documentation (e.g. request documents, leaflets etc.)

You should ensure that the list includes the following separate fields:

- Address details including postcode.
- Surname and company name.
- Coding to indicate:-
  - Circulation type
  - Source Type (Controlled and Non controlled circulation only)
- Date of request/source (Controlled circulation only)
- Rate and payment date for subscriptions
- A unique reader reference code so that original source documentation can be accessed.

## Do I need to conduct a duplication test?

A duplication test is required for all titles where the individually mailed element exceeds 1% of the Average Net Circulation.

You are advised to de-duplicate mailing lists regularly. Duplications are particularly likely to occur where mailing lists from more than one source have been merged to build a list.

## What is a duplication?

Two or more occurrences of the same name, or company name (where the addressee is not identified by name or job title) or address unless it can be shown that these are really for different addressees. It is also necessary to check for cases where a company name has changed or a company has moved.

A simple criterion to help decide if a name is a duplication is to ask:- 'Is the addressee a different pair of eyes?'

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## How do I test for duplicates?

The audit issue mailing list will be used to test for duplications. If there is more than one list that constitutes the whole mailing list of the audit issue, testing for duplication will need to be performed between the lists.

It is impractical to test every addressee. The Reporting Standards detail three different types of tests to following dependent on mailing list size. The test will give an indication of the likely level of duplications in a mailing list once the list has been sorted as detailed above.

## How is the duplication level reported on the certificate?

The ABC certificate shows the number of copies sold or distributed to addressees. Of those copies distributed to addressees, some may be duplicate copies mailed to the same addressee. Therefore the level of duplication on the mailing list is useful information to the user of ABC figures as it gives an indication of the quality of the mailing list.

- The amount of duplication on the individually addressed circulation will be stated on the ABC eReturn.
- The figure stated is a whole number, decimal places being rounded down to a whole number.  
e.g. Tests show 9.7% enter 9.00%. Tests show 12.20%, enter 12.00%.
- The circulation to be certified must NOT be reduced to take account of the level of duplication.

## How can I submit my electronic mailing list to ABC?

Lists can be sent into us in PC format disks, CD ROMs or Zip files. Alternatively files can be emailed (password protected) to [mailinglists@abc.org.uk](mailto:mailinglists@abc.org.uk)

Please clearly state your magazine name, issue and who to contact if we have any questions. It is recommended at this stage you also send over your ABC Issue by Issue worksheet.

## 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.*