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ABC Business Magazines Reporting Standards (UK)

A change has been agreed to the ABC Business Magazine Reporting Standards. We have updated the latest Reporting Standards – 2015 Version 3 – to incorporate this change and you can now view or download these from our website www.abcstandards.org.uk.

Digital Editions – print only subscriptions not available

According to ABC reporting Standards both print and digital edition (DE) subscriptions reported must be compared to a print Basic Annual Rate (BAR) to determine the correct rate banding. Print and Digital Editions Subscriptions reported at full rate are therefore purchased at a single price.

A number of ABC Standards rely on the existence of a print BAR to establish how digital edition copies should be claimed and the evidence required.

Where print only subscriptions are not available and a print BAR does not exist, we need a solution as to how to band digital edition subscriptions and print/Digital Edition subscription bundles.

On the assumption that a cover price for the print magazine is still available and subscriptions are often sold at a discount off the cover price, it has been agreed that, for ABC purposes, an “alternative BAR” figure, which is set at 75% of the annualised print cover price, be used in lieu of the Print BAR.

Amendment

Shaded text below shows new text added and struck-through text has been removed:

SINGLE COPY SUBSCRIPTION SALES [extract]

5. Standard subscription rates must be published

- a) The ‘Basic Annual Rate’ (BAR) is the standard 1 year subscription rate for the publication, in contrast to a special price only available to a limited class, or under limited conditions.

Setting the standard



- b) There can only be 1 BAR per country/wider geographical region.
- c) If print subscriptions are not available separately then there is no need to publish a BAR.

6. Reported by rate, comparing price paid by subscriber with standard rate

- a) You must claim a subscription in the appropriate rate band by comparing the price paid for the subscription with the relevant Basic Annual Rate at the time of sale (pro-rate if less than 1 year). Note - ignore for ABC purposes:
 - i) Bank charges or exchange rate differences
 - ii) The value (or perceived value) of any gifts, or other incentives (including bundled publications or media products that are not claimed for ABC purposes). However cash reimbursements to the consumer must be taken into account.

...

- f) If you do not publish a relevant BAR then those copies must be claimed in the lowest rate band.
 - i) An exception is where no BAR is published because print subscriptions are not available separately. In this case you must determine rate band classification by using an "alternative BAR", which is set at 75% of the annualised print single copy cover price.

For example: If print only subscriptions are not available but the print copy cover price of a weekly publication is £2, then the "alternative BAR" used in lieu of the BAR is 52 weeks x £2 x 75% = £78.

REPORTING

You will report the following, which will be shown on the ABC Certificate (note: the term Full Rate will replace Basic Annual Rate for reporting purposes):

1. Audit Issue total single copy subscriptions for UK and Other Countries analysed into the following rate bands:
 - a) At Full Rate
 - b) Below Full Rate but not less than 50%;
 - c) Less than 50% of Full Rate but not less than 20%;
 - d) Less than 20% of Full Rate but not less than 10%;
 - e) Less than 10% of Full Rate.
2. The Full Rate published in/at the time of the Audit Issue for the UK and Other Countries.
 - a) If there is more than one Full Rate for Other Countries then you must report a range, from the lowest to the highest.
 - b) If no Full Rate is published during the Reporting Period because print subscriptions are not available separately (and you are claiming print and/or Digital Edition Subscriptions), then you must report the "alternative BAR" as defined in section 6f above.

Setting the standard



DIGITAL EDITIONS [extract]

6. Reported by rate, comparing price paid with the print copy price

- a) Paid digital edition copies must be claimed in the appropriate rate band by comparing the price paid with the UK print copy Basic Cover Price (single copy sales) and the UK print copy Basic Annual Rate (subscriptions). Note:
- i) If there is no UK print Basic Annual Rate (BAR) because print subscriptions are not available separately then you must use the alternative BAR (see Single Copy Subscriptions section 6f)
 - ii) You can ignore the value (or perceived value) of any gifts, or other incentives (including bundled publications or media products that are not claimed for ABC purposes). However cash reimbursements to the consumer must be taken into account (excluding limited low chance lottery style promotions).

If you would like the ABC Business Media Reporting Standards Group to review any current reporting standard or if you would like more information about how the above changes affect you, please contact your ABC Account Manager alden.arnold@abc.org.uk.