



### **What is an ABC circulation audit?**

An ABC circulation audit is an in-depth examination of a publisher's circulation records and record-keeping systems to verify the accuracy of their Publisher's Statement claims. An audit provides advertisers, advertising agencies and publishers with comparable, credible, verified information that they use to plan and make print media purchases. ABC plays an essential, indispensable role in the print media buying and selling process.

### **What are ABC Publisher's Statements?**

The ABC Publisher's Statement represents the publisher's circulation claims, not yet audited by ABC. These are issued every six months, for periods ending March 31 and September 30 for newspapers, and June 30 and December 31 for consumer magazines. Business publications can submit their statements in any of the four quarters.

### **What are ABC Audit Reports?**

The ABC Audit Report is similar but not identical to a Publisher's Statement. All differences between a Publisher's Statement's claims and the auditor's findings are noted in the ABC Audit Report. Typically, ABC conducts an annual audit of the claims in the Publisher's Statement to ABC standards. This results in the publication of an Audit Report. ABC Audit Reports are released for every ABC publication member. They either confirm that the Publisher's Statement contained no material misstatements or they identify and quantify discoveries made during the audit process.

### **What does the ABC audit process entail?**

For paid publications, the ABC audit verifies that the publication was ordered, paid for at a qualifying rate and distributed to the appropriate purchaser. For non-paid publications, the audit determines that a qualified recipient received the publication. In both instances, circulation is measured for compliance with all ABC bylaws, rules, guidelines and policies.

ABC's audit process begins with the auditor interviewing circulation personnel to gain an understanding of their operations, including internal controls surrounding circulation practices. ABC auditors then confirm a publication's circulation claims by analyzing documents such as circulation ledgers, subscriber account details and retailer/carrier/distributor account details (including debits, credits and payments). Every audit is highly customized to each publication's unique environment.

### **How are ABC Bylaws and Rules determined?**

ABC is a member-driven organization comprised of publishers, advertisers and advertising agencies.

Its governance consists of:

- A tripartite board of directors who vote on ABC rule, policy, and operational changes [18 publisher and 20 advertising/advertising agency directors represent their respective constituencies]
- Several advisory committees and constituent subcommittees that offer recommendations to the board of directors

ABC staff executes the mandates voted on by the board of directors, and communicates board decisions to the membership and the public.

### **Does ABC only audit circulation?**

In addition to circulation audits, ABC also offers its members other print media audit services. Publisher members often choose ABC to audit their readership and subscriber research studies, and their website activity.