



Audit Bureau of Circulations



Gannett Trains *The News Journal* as Lead Test Paper for all its IVS Audits

Situation

Gannett opened its newsroom doors in 1906 and since has expanded to become the largest newspaper publisher in the U.S., with a combined daily paid circulation of approximately 7.2 million for U.S. daily newspapers. In the U.S., Gannett publishes 85 daily newspapers, including USA TODAY, and nearly 1,000 non-daily publications.

Issue

Gannett was looking for a way to be more customer-centric and establish an overall stronger working relationship with their pre print advertisers in their insert distribution process.

Solution

Gannett made the decision to enroll its top newspapers in IVS as a way to provide accuracy and dedication to its insert distribution process. *The News Journal*, located in Wilmington, Delaware, was the first paper to take part in the program and thus became the lead audit test paper for the other Gannett newspapers.

Results

Buyers are very satisfied with newspapers that have taken the responsibility to enroll in IVS and are equally impressed with the high ratings they have received. Gannett's advertising department plans on utilizing IVS results to clarify their story to advertisers restating their commitment to quality and accuracy to their distribution process.



“IVS is a very customer-centric concept. It shows the customer the overall accuracy and dedication you have to getting their product to the proper place when they want it and how they want it.”

**— Rob Althaus, Vice President of Circulation,
Gannett Co., Inc.**

“An important step in this process that was very helpful was the good work that NAA did in quantifying the best practices of newspapers,” said Althaus. “IVS has been a real measurement tool of how the best practices that were put together at least a year prior can be put into practice. This is beneficial to all newspapers across the country. Ideally, IVS becomes the measurement tool that shows that standards are being complied with and that newspapers take this very seriously.”

Realizing that accuracy of insert delivery is critical to its customer’s satisfaction, Gannett enrolled 22 of its largest newspapers in IVS as a way of showing advertisers that they are getting the most for their ad dollars and that their pre-print ads are reaching the right people.

Althaus noted that the success of the audit involved the collaboration of all departments from the clerical input through the truck loading. “Everybody had a vested interest [in the audit] and when they all saw how the process all tied together it was kind of enlightening to the whole group. I think they took a lot of pride in making sure it was done right.”

“It’s important that all departments are aware of the upcoming audit,” said **Michael Kane**, vice president of circulation, *The News Journal*. “Eight weeks before the actual audit we started alerting everyone on what was going to happen and then started our own in-house testing.”

IVS is a quantitative review and audit of a newspaper’s advertising insert distribution process on a specific date. Each report includes a “Total Insert Proficiency” calculation that reflects the newspaper’s insert distribution performance. This is represented as an overall success percentage indicating the volume of inserts reaching the intended newspaper recipients.

Typical proficiency rates for completed IVS audits range from 97.2 percent to 99.9 percent. *The News Journal* received a rating of 99.8 percent and plans to use this in its future advertising campaigns.

“We really take a lot of pride in the results we deliver to the advertisers, said **Kane**. “The ABC stamp validates that. We never had anything to validate our process and accuracy. These figures showed that we indeed deliver an exceptional number.”

Kane recalled receiving low scores for some samplings, but looked at this as a learning experience and vehicle to improve. “This allows us to trace back to the machines, operator or training issue he said. “IVS is a continual educational and learning process for us.”

Kane summed up his experience with the ABC auditing team as “cooperative to our needs and very sensitive to our operation.”



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InsertVerification

For more information on IVS, contact ABC’s **Kristina Meinig**, manager, sales and marketing at (847) 879-8412 or at meinig@accessabc.com.

IVS Audit Timeline

- Key corporate members from Gannett spent a day at ABC reviewing the audit process.
- Gannett worked on developing the testing procedure for two to three months then met with Wilmington to review the results.
- *The News Journal* worked out all the details with its production process including reports required, bagging and tagging, logistics with the production department, finance and circulation personnel.
- Employees were informed and a notice was posted at the warehouse as a reminder of the upcoming audit.
- Based on the gathered information, a verification model was developed.
- *The News Journal* became the test paper to train other Gannett papers.

Checks and Balances:

How many people are involved in the production process?

- Home-delivery manager
- Single-copy manager
- Sales manager
- Operations manager
- Warehouse drivers
- District managers
- Finance
- Advertising
- Production (vice president, mailroom supervisor, distribution center manager)
- Machine operators