



Audit Bureau of Circulations



## Media Buying Agency Uses Rapid Report to Create Effective Media Buys

### Background

Empower MediaMarketing is an independent advertising company that focuses on reaching its client's customers through all media channels. Its services include media planning and buying, a full-service digital agency, media-marketing strategy and consulting, and an extensive consumer research department. The magazine group comprises a significant portion of its billings.

Some of Empower's clients include:

- Michaels Arts and Crafts
- Lane Bryant
- Biltmore
- Mederma
- IHOP Restaurants
- Long John Silver's Restaurants

### Situation

**Michael Anderson**, Empower magazine group director, works with the magazine planning and buying group to handle the entire magazine planning process across all accounts. To remain innovative, Anderson makes it a point to keep abreast of the most recent trends in the industry, which enables him to bring new ideas to his clients and discuss when and how they might be relevant to their business.

### Solution

As a way to remain competitive and to help with designing effective media buys, the magazine group took advantage of ABC's Rapid Report online tool.

### Results

ABC's Rapid Report allows Empower's magazine planning and buying group to have informed dialogue with magazines. Having access to a magazine's performance and ability to present recent and relevant data to their clients demonstrates they are a smarter magazine buyer.



**“The Rapid Report tool is very user-friendly and laid out in an easy-to-follow format. All you need to do is log on, go to the link you want to view, select the magazine and all of the data is there for you.”**

**– Michael Anderson, Magazine Group Director**

*Michael Anderson talks about the importance of Rapid Report in the design and creation of effective media buys and explains how his magazine group uses it for trending and analysis.*

**Q: How did you find out about Rapid Report?**

**A:** I first learned about Rapid Report from information sent to me by ABC. After I became familiar with the service, I began talking to sales representatives from the magazine industry and had discussions with several Meredith titles and Time Inc. publications to get their feedback.

**Q: In what ways are you using the Rapid Report online tool?**

**A:** We have a group of four to five planners who rely on Rapid Report when considering a short list of titles for a plan. First, we inform all of the titles where they currently stand and what we would like to see from them (e.g., rates, programs). As this is happening, the publications are coming back with counter proposals. We then pull all of the Rapid Report data and analyze any types of trending. We look at Rapid Report for two reasons:

1. **Trending**—We use trending to evaluate a magazine's vitality and viability before recommending it to a client as an advertising vehicle. We also look at the numbers. Depending on our client, subscriptions might be important or newsstand sales. In some cases we might look at verified to see the level of detail.
2. **Seasonality**—Several magazine circulation numbers fluctuate by season, which could impact the negotiating process.

Examples of seasonal trending:

- Bush Brothers and Company always advertises its baked beans in the summer issues. In this case we're going to look back at the trend information to see within specific issues if they are light during the summer months. The data from Rapid Report gives us insight into this so that we can have informed dialogue with our publications.
- An example of seasonal advertising is the December issues of magazines that target holiday shoppers. Rapid Report gives us an early look into how these issues are performing on the newsstand. This helps us gauge the reach of ad exposure among our selected targets.

**Q: How easy is the tool to use?**

**A:** The Rapid Report tool is very user-friendly and laid out in an easy-to-follow format. All you need to do is log on, go to the link you want to view, select the magazine and all of the data is there for you. I have found the averages on each specific issue particularly helpful because it gives a nice barometer of the circulation of each issue and allows us to identify trends and other developments with a specific publication.

**Q: Why is it important for other publishers to join Rapid Report?**

**A:** It helps us get into the game and be competitive with other media. If I'm looking at who's trying to be up to speed with everything that's going on in the magazine industry and you're a publisher not doing this, it's possible you're not being as innovative as others in the category.

**Q: Does Rapid Report help you make more effective media buys?**

**A:** In a day and age where every dollar is accountable, the more data I can show to a client the better. Having the ability to show how a magazine is performing and presenting that to our client with recent and relevant data demonstrates that we are a smarter magazine buyer. It also allows us as an industry to be more responsive and show audiences in a timely manner. Our planning team uses ABC information as a negotiating tool with magazines. It helps ensure that we're keeping our clients in a competitive realm of pricing.

**Q: How do you inform your clients about Rapid Report and any important changes to the tool?**

**A:** We send regular updates to our clients about what's going on in the media industry. When Rapid Report was introduced, we sent newsletters to all our clients with information about this new advancement. We also subscribe to ABC's *NewsBulletin*, receive VIP e-mails and other communications from the ABC marketing team as a way to keep informed on the latest enhancements to the tool.



**Audit Bureau of Circulations**

900 N. Meacham Road  
Schaumburg, IL 60173-4968  
T: 847.605.0909 • F: 847.605.0483  
[www.accessabc.com](http://www.accessabc.com)