



Audit Bureau of Circulations



How ABC's Preprint Projection Center Saves JCPenney Valuable Time and Resources At No Cost to Newspapers

Situation

JCPenney is one of America's largest retailers, operating more than 1,100 stores in the United States and Puerto Rico. To reach its target audiences in the communities it serves, JCPenney regularly advertises in more than 1,400 newspapers.

Issue

Every week, millions of JCPenney preprint advertisements are distributed in newspapers across the country. These preprints are a vital component of JCPenney's media plan and it is critical that each insert reaches its intended destination.

JCPenney used to spend hours each month contacting newspapers to obtain updated preprint quantities by day of week, home delivery, single copy and for seasonal adjustments. When received, much of the information was in hard-copy or PDF form—requiring manual data entry into JCPenney's system.

Solution

JCPenney saw the potential for a central database that would allow advertisers to locate relevant circulation information for hundreds of newspapers that would benefit both advertisers and newspapers. JCPenney collaborated with ABC, other national advertisers and advertising agencies, and newspapers to create the Preprint Projection Center—a free online service for newspapers.

Results

With nearly 300 newspapers now participating in the program, the Preprint Projection Center is quickly becoming a valuable resource and a huge time saver for media buyers and newspapers. JCPenney uses the PPC as the source for its planning and evaluating process, investigating future and historical trends in its target markets across the country.

JCPenney

“The Preprint Projection Center is a great resource for advertisers. It is a huge time saver for us because we are no longer contacting these newspapers every month. Now we can go right to the PPC and get the information we need.”

– Adam Sembrat, Marketing Media Analysis Manager, JCPenney



ABC's Preprint Project Center is a secure, centralized database where U.S. and Canadian newspapers can upload any information related to their circulation projections for use by preprint advertisers, including quantities, zones and dates. The PPC also includes information about newspapers' bonus days and frequency upgrades/forced conversions.

"The Preprint Projection Center is a great resource for advertisers," explained **Adam Sembrat**, marketing media analysis manager at JCPenney. "It is a huge time saver for us because we are no longer contacting these newspapers every month. Now we can go right to the PPC and get the information we need."

Advertisers aren't the only ones that benefit from the PPC. Participating newspapers also save valuable time and resources, and some, like the *Merced Sun-Star*, have received an increased buy from national advertisers based on their PPC data.

"The benefit to the newspaper is that it is a much quicker way to communicate to many advertisers all at once through a centralized source—ABC," said **Sembrat**. "Now your sales teams aren't spending their time on clerical work. Instead, they can focus on the advertisers' needs, build better client relationships, increase business, and be our eyes and ears in the market."

Today, nearly 300 newspapers are uploading circulation data into the Preprint Projection Center. **Sembrat** applauds those newspapers already participating and encourages newspapers on the fence to join now, even if they are not a large metropolitan paper.

"In every conversation we have with newspapers, we talk to them about the ABC products and services," said **Sembrat**. "Audience-FAX, IVS and the Preprint Projection Center all contain valuable information for us and should be no-brainers for newspaper participation."

Sembrat continued, "I hear the talk in the industry about PPC and ABC's other newspaper products: do newspapers need to get on board first or do advertisers need to demand it first? We do everything we can to make our newspaper partners aware of the ABC products and get them involved. The more that advertiser's hold newspapers accountable, the greater newspaper participation in these programs, including the PPC."

Sembrat also has some guidance for newspapers already participating in PPC. He recommends newspapers update their information regularly. If there is additional information that

can't be shared easily in the spreadsheet, **Sembrat** suggests newspapers use the comment box. He also reminds newspapers to include a contact person and an e-mail address so that advertisers can easily contact them with any questions.

"Some newspapers have done the right thing and signed up for PPC but then have done nothing else. They need to maintain it every 30 to 60 days," explained **Sembrat**. "There are some great newspapers out there uploading some really sophisticated spreadsheets into the PPC and I commend them."

"Some newspapers have done the right thing and signed up for PPC but then have done nothing else. They need to maintain it every 30 to 60 days," explained **Sembrat**. "There are some great newspapers out there uploading some really sophisticated spreadsheets into the PPC and I commend them."

Sembrat really pushes newspapers to upload the information in Excel®. It is much easier to manipulate and it doesn't require rekeying. He also encourages newspapers to maintain historical information in the PPC. Some newspapers have almost two years worth of history. **Sembrat** explains that this is really helpful information, especially for newspapers that experience seasonal fluctuations.

Finally, **Sembrat** encourages newspapers to get creative.

"If newspapers have a PDF file of their distribution or zones map, include it," he said. "And include the circulation for all products, not just the primary newspaper. We want easy access to information about TMCs, community newspapers, etc."

"With the challenge of growing paid circulation, do newspapers have other products we can consider to reach our consumers?" asked **Sembrat**. "Then share it and place that information in the PPC too."



Audit Bureau of Circulations

For more information about the Preprint Projection Center, members are encouraged to contact ABC's **Bridget Fleagle**, manager, marketing and sales, at (847) 879-8321 or **Kristina Meinig**, manager, marketing and sales, (847) 879-8412.