



Audit Bureau of Circulations



A Point of View By

*ABC's Magazine Buyers'
Advisory Committee*

Media Buyer Usage Guidelines for ABC Rapid Report

A Brief List of Best Practice Reminders and Suggestions

After two years and earnest support from the buying community, ABC's online consumer magazine reporting platform, Rapid Report, continues to gain traction. Created by publishers, advertisers and advertising agencies, ABC Rapid Report is a voluntary program that allows publishers to report their top-line circulation data on an issue-by-issue basis within weeks of the on-sale date. Nearly two-thirds of the top 100 consumer magazines are regularly utilizing Rapid Report to share their circulation estimates with buyers. This is great news. Majority participation in Rapid Report will help the advertising and publishing industries recognize the full potential of this tool.

Recently, the ABC board of directors took another step to make Rapid Report a valuable resource by endorsing a set of initial-posting guidelines to govern the timely submission of circulation projections. The guidelines are based on the reporting publication's on-sale date and apply to the initial posting for each issue.

	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Biweekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>	<u>Bimonthly</u>
No Earlier Than:	1 week	2 weeks	3 weeks	6 weeks
No Later Than:	3 weeks	5 weeks	7 weeks	10 weeks

Usage Guidelines for Media Buyers

With the increase in participation and an agreement reached on the initial-posting guidelines, our publishing partners have demonstrated their commitment to providing buyers with timely circulation data. Now, it is the media buying community's turn to exhibit responsible use of the data provided by publishers.

To ensure that all buyers understand the goals of Rapid Report, we—the members of ABC's Magazine Buyers Advisory Committee (MBAC)—offer the following reminders and suggestions for referencing the data.

- Remember that Rapid Report data is a title's initial circulation estimate. It offers us an early glimpse of a magazine's circulation to help gauge key trends.
- Rapid Report does not represent final sales data, so we should not use it to immediately attempt to negotiate circulation rebates. The postings are initial estimates, subject to both updates and audit.
- We must also remember that Rapid Report is a dynamic tool. It allows publishers to provide continuous updates of circulation estimates. If you think about it, Rapid Report actually resembles a perpetually updated Paragraph 1 of ABC's "pink sheet." The opportunity to provide fresh circulation data is one of the benefits that differentiates Rapid Report from other ABC reporting tools.

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- We should use Rapid Report to track the circulation trends of a given title. It is ideal for gauging an issue's current sales status and determining if a magazine's circulation is stable, growing or declining. We can also glean more in-depth circulation information from Rapid Report, such as the title's use of verified and its seasonal newsstand sales fluctuations.
- While it is great for trending and tracking certain titles or issues, Rapid Report shouldn't be used as an opportunity to be critical of a specific issue's circulation performance. Publishers using Rapid Report are displaying an act of goodwill and are fostering the buyer/seller relationship.
- Finally, let's remember that Rapid Report is not a substitute for a Publisher's Statement or Audit Report. Each of these unique reporting tools offers buyers specific data to develop and analyze the various phases of the media planning and buying process.

By using the Rapid Report data responsibly, we send a clear message to magazine publishers that their participation is appreciated and worthwhile. Demonstrating that buyers will use the data knowledgeably also encourages greater industry participation, making Rapid Report even more valuable.

ABC's Magazine Buyers' Advisory Committee

Brenda White, Chair
Vice President, Director
of Print Activation,
Starcom Worldwide

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Senior Vice President,
Director Print Services
Initiative Media

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Mediaedge:cia

Lisa Stearn
Media Director, Print Solutions Group
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Draftfcb

Kelly Foster
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Print Director
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Irene Grieco
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Jackie Seligman
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Ginger Taylor White
Director, Print Services
Carat USA

About ABC

With nearly 4,000 members in North America, ABC is a forum of the world's leading magazine and newspaper publishers, advertisers and advertising agencies. The organization provides credible, verified information essential to the media buying and selling process. ABC maintains the world's foremost online database of audited-circulation information and a growing array of readership, audience and Web site usage data.

To learn more, visit
<http://www.accessabc.com>.



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900 N. Meacham Road
Schaumburg, IL 60173-4968
T: 847.605.0909 • F: 847.605.0483
www.accessabc.com