22 April 2021

ABC Reporting Standards changes

This document details changes that have been agreed for a number of products available to members in the Consumer sector. You can view the updated ABC Reporting Standards on our [website](#).

Have a suggestion or a query about a rule?

As an ABC member you can ask us to look at any aspect of the information we publish or the rules behind them. If you have any suggestions or comments please contact your ABC Account Manager, Charlotte Brown (charlotte.brown@abc.org.uk) or any member of the ABC team.

Contents

1. **Website/App Activity**

We've overhauled the Standards to provide a more flexible and cost-effective method of reporting Web and App activity. This includes a change in the mandatory metric, the ability to report multiple websites on a single certificate and a greater focus at audit on the analytics solution used to report data.

2. **Email Newsletters**

The Email Standards have also undergone a review, placing a greater focus on the email platform used to report data and introducing the ability to report multiple email newsletters on the same certificate. The mandatory metric remains Average Distribution per Mailing, but the requirement to report figures for each individual mailing in the period becomes optional.

3. **Digital Events**

These new Standards allow you the opportunity to report attendance and other related data for online events, such as webinars, seminars and other virtual events.

Please see below for additional information on these changes.

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1. Website/App Activity

The Standards have been rewritten for clarity and simplicity. The key changes are:

a. The mandatory metric becomes Average Monthly Unique Users (replacing Average Daily Unique Browsers) in order to align with terminology and time period in common use in the sector.

b. You may choose to report 'Registered Unique Users' or 'Paid Unique Users' in place of 'Unique Users' if this suits your business model.

c. The need to necessarily audit to log file level is removed where a straightforward claim and the analytics tool allows.

   o In this case our audit will focus on the analytics tool's configuration and implementation.

   o A more complex claim or set up will require additional audit work as we assess appropriate. *For example multiple domains/websites or more complex metrics (such as paid users, page impressions) will require additional evidence such as log file data.*

   o The aim is to audit to the appropriate level while still delivering a robust approach. This will be discussed with you upon enquiry.

d. You may include two or more websites/apps on a single certificate (these can be from different brands). They will be listed individually with a figure for each. *For example*:

Website/App	Average Monthly Unique Users
Anytownpost.co.uk	8,000
Othertowngazette.co.uk	6,000
Anothercity.co.uk	12,000

If you wish, and are technically able, you may opt to report a de-duplicated Unique User total across the reported Websites/Apps. *For example*

Website/App	Traffic Sources	Average Monthly Unique Users
Anytown	Anytown.co.uk jobs.anytown.co.uk	20,000

Aggregated totals across a number of websites/apps may be reported via a separate Brand Report or Group Report.

The new Website/App Activity Standards, together with the separate appendices for less commonly-used metric definitions can be found here.

2.   Email Newsletters

These Standards have also been rewritten for clarity and simplicity. The key changes are:

a.   The Standards are renamed 'Email Newsletters', replacing 'Email Distribution'

b.   There is no change in the fact that for each email newsletter you must report the average distribution per mailing and number of mailings in the period. *For example: If a newsletter that has three mailings in the period of 10,000, 11,000 and 15,000 net emails respectively, the reported average distribution reported would be 12,000.* However reporting the figure for each individual mailing during the period (previously mandatory) now becomes optional.

c.   The provision of logged records in some instances will not be required, where the audit can satisfactorily be conducted by examination of the configuration and implementation of the email distribution system used.

d.   You may include two or more newsletters on a single certificate (these can be from different brands). They will be listed individually with a figure for each.

Aggregated totals across a number of Email Newsletters may be reported via a separate Brand Report or Group Report.

The new Email newsletter Standards can be found [here](#).

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3.   Digital Events

These new Standards have been developed to allow the reporting of various online events such as webinars, seminars and other virtual events.

Key points:

a.   The mandatory metric is attendance, which can include viewing the 'live' event or a 'time-shifted' recording of the event up to 3 months later.

b.   As organiser you must control access to the event in a manner that records attendance and with sufficient detail to enable duplicates to be removed.

c.   Our audit approach is to understand how your system/software solution measures and records attendees' activity and review its configuration/implementation in order to establish that it will provide the relevant information for your claim in accordance with these standards. You should therefore contact us as early as possible to discuss requirements, such as access to dashboards and additional records as necessary to verify the claim.

d.   You may report additional analyses or breakouts – please discuss these with us on registration.

e.   You may include two or more Digital Events on a single certificate. They will be listed individually with a figure for each.

Aggregated totals across a number of Digital Events may be reported via a separate Brand Report or Group Report.

The new Digital Events Standards can be found [here](#).