



## MPA Rule Change Executive Summary – 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016

The rules that define membership of the MPA have not been reviewed for some years. In fact, it is possible they have not been reviewed since incorporation in 1982.

Triggered by the MPA Board view that the ABC auditing requirement had evolved to become just one of a range of legitimate options for measuring magazine readership, reach and engagement in this contemporary media era, a broader review of membership criteria was undertaken.

The ambition of the board was to align membership criteria more accurately to the current world of publishing as well as provide (as best we can) a structure that would allow a certain amount of future proofing. In addition, the intent is also to reflect the advocacy/outward focus of the MPA in contrast to its historical trade association/inward focus.

While there has been a tidy up of language and a few tweaks around the margins to allow for a slightly revised membership structure, the two fundamental changes are.

1. Remove the requirement to have ABC audited circulation to be a member (please note the MPA still fully endorses ABC auditing).
2. A change in the definition of a magazine to include all formats of publishing and remove the requirement that a magazine is a “periodical”.

Our position is that the way “magazines” build communities of interest is a function of the type of media we create and the deep relationship we have with these communities, as distinct from the platform we choose to publish on. Whilst we all agree that print has incredible strengths, we do not wish to be defined by print or be limited to how we, our advertisers and our readers perceive magazine media.

Some may be concerned about the removal of the ABC requirement as this has long been seen as a way of demonstrating credibility of audience measurement and the maintaining of standards. To mitigate this, we have strengthened a member’s requirements to abide by all the relevant Acts of Parliament that protect both customers and clients under the MPA Code of Ethics and introduced a mechanism that allows any member to challenge another’s audience claims should they believe they are false. The fact that print does not define a magazine under the new definition also has the effect of rendering ABC circulation redundant as a membership criteria.

In summary, we believe we have struck a balance that allows for a broader view of magazines while retaining the unique value we provide to our commercial partners and audiences. This strengthens MPA’s advocacy role in the market and makes us more relevant to more publishers.