



NPF 2026

FORGING BOLD HORIZONS

The Art of Periodicals Advertising

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ADVERTISING IN PERIODICALS- WHAT IS IT?

Advertising: All material for the publication of which a valuable consideration is paid, accepted, or promised, that calls attention to something to get people to buy it, sell it, seek it, or support it.

- Paid advertisements – Direct payment
- Exchange of some kind of consideration for advertising space
- Replacement or “Make Good” Ads
- The promise of future ads is treated as consideration (Quid Pro Quo)
- Reading matter or other material for the publication of which advertising rate is charged
 - Information inserted paid by another publisher to insert
 - Advertising in editorial format
 - Hangar for advertising insert

*Reading material ***paid for*** or ***by advertisers*** must be identified as advertising: “Advertising” or “Advertising Section”

- Federal Statute & Postal standard

ADVERTISING IN PERIODICALS- WHAT IS IT?

Articles, items and notices in the form of reading matter inserted by custom or understanding that textural matter is to be inserted for the advertiser or the advertiser's products in the publication in which a display advertisement appears.

EXAMPLES

- Blurb on cover of publication directing reader to advertising section
- 1-800 number to contact advertiser (As part of agreement)
- Single product review on page opposite that same product's advertisement

ADVERTISING IN PERIODICALS- WHAT IS IT?

A newspaper's or publication's advertisement of its own products, services, or issues, or any other business of the publisher, whether in display advertisements or reading matter.

EXAMPLES

- Offering alternate version of publication
- Seminars or training sessions with a registration form
- Any periodical publication's bound subscription material (excluding reply form/card)
- Publisher's letter for notification for change in service
- Sweepstakes or contests

ADVERTISING- POSSIBLY

Incidental First-Class Loose Enclosures

- Bill for publication
 - Statement of account for past purchases
 - Personal message/greeting
- Is charged as advertising,*** unless publication does not contain any advertising.

Classified ads, obituaries, funeral notices or advertiser indexes are generally advertising.

- Advertising indexes
- QR Code to order advertised product

NOTE: Items included purely by publisher editorial decision for reader/community service, without charge, agreement, pre-knowledge, etc. with/by advertiser only can be non-advertising

EDITORIAL CONTENT

EDITORIAL: *Includes any non-advertising content*

- Articles written for the publication by editorial staff or freelance writers
- Control of edit content must be in the hands of the *publisher*
- Product reviews when products selected without consideration/influence by the publisher
- Public Service Announcements
- Loose enclosures made up of subscription materials for your publications. Must have reply mechanism.
- Subscription cards for **any** authorized or pending Periodicals publication
- Address correction card or form

All count as neutral with the issue and are only added to the weight of the issue. Not advertising.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Promotions of programs, activities, or services of Federal, state, local governments, & Nonprofit organizations.
- Matters generally regarded in the public interest
- No consideration received
- Doesn't promote business interests of publisher

NOTE: Corporate Logos = “Branding”, “Branding” = Advertising

ADVERTISING- REQUIREMENTS

- General (Paid) - Can't exceed 75% in more than half the issues in a 12-month period.
- Requester - Can't exceed 75% in any issue or edition.
- Nonprofit
 - 10% and under counts as 0% advertising
 - Above 10% is charged at actual amount of ad in pub
- Institutions & Societies- no outside advertising - only pub's own
- Supplement- cannot exceed 75% advertising

ADVERTISING- MARKED COPY

Filing Marked Copy

- The publisher must file a copy (marked by the publisher) of each issue, so the advertising content may be verified, with the Postmaster of either the original entry office or an additional entry office.
- If more than one edition for an issue, submit the main or most prominent edition of the issue and must have all other editions available for review upon request by the USPS.
- On the first page of each marked copy, the publisher must show the total units and percentage of space devoted to advertising and nonadvertising in the copy.
- Advertising matter printed on envelopes and wrappers must be included in the measurement. The computed percentage of advertising must be rounded off to two decimal places.

ADVERTISING- HOW TO MEASURE

The percentage of advertising shown on the postage statement must be based on the marked copy of the corresponding issue or edition provided as required.

Advertising percentages also may be calculated through the Periodicals Accuracy, Grading, and Evaluation (PAGE) Program.

Must show on front/cover page the units of adv/non adv, percentages & method used

Measuring methods:

- total pages
- square inches
- column inches

MARKED COPY- OPTIONAL PROGRAMS

PAGE- Periodicals Accuracy, Grading and Evaluation

Alternate Marked Copy program-option to submit marked copies at the time of the Statement of Ownership review; eliminates requirement to provide marked copies with every mailing

- eDoc
- EPS

Must enroll in program and keep marked copies of each issue for review when requested by USPS.

USPS will ask the publisher for randomly selected marked copies of each publication mailed after joining the AMC Program to verify advertising percentages.

*Publishers are not required to submit marked copies if they are certified by the USPS to use the Periodicals Accuracy, Grading, and Evaluation (PAGE) Program or participate in the Alternate Marked Copy process.

ADVERTISING- RECORD RETENTION

DMM 207.8.0 Record-Keeping Standards for Publishers

The publisher must keep records that can support the information required on the application for Periodicals mailing privileges (or any other form) and to confirm eligibility for entry of the publication at the requested Periodicals price. The records must show that the publication is distributed to a legitimate list of requesters (if applicable) or is not designed primarily for free circulation or circulation at nominal prices. If the publication is authorized to carry general advertising, the publisher must keep a list of legitimate subscribers. A publication of an institution or society that is authorized to carry general advertising may keep a list of subscribers or proof of a resolution to distribute to members, similar to that described in 5.0.

8.1.2 Information Required

Records must be available so that the USPS can determine:

- Number of copies printed.
- Manner of distribution and disposition of all copies.
- The existence of a list of legitimate subscribers who have paid more than a nominal subscription price for publications authorized to carry general advertising (other than requester publications).
- The existence of a legitimate list of requesters for requester publications.

8.1.3 Retention

The publisher must keep records for each issue of a publication for a minimum of 3 years from its issue date, except for circulation records for general or requester publications for which a USPS-authorized audit bureau verifies USPS circulation. In addition, the publisher must retain records for paid subscribers for a minimum of 12 months following the issue date. A publisher whose records are verified by an authorized audit bureau is not required to keep source records of requests and subscriptions longer than required by the audit bureau, provided that the authorized audit bureau retains records related to such requests and subscriptions for a minimum of 3 years following each issue date.

8.1.4 Types of Records

Print orders and invoices showing the total number of copies printed.
Individual and bulk orders for subscriptions and nonsubscriber copies.
Newsstand and vending machine sales and returns.
Stubs or copies of receipts issued.
Sales records and returns for over-the-counter sales.
Cash books, bank deposit receipts, or similar records.
Records of copies of the publication destroyed.

RESOURCES

- [207 Periodicals | Postal Explorer](#)
- [USPS Verification of Periodicals Advertising Percentage – Alternate Marked Copy Program | PostalPro](#)