



AUDIT BUREAU OF CIRCULATIONS

CASE STUDY

Universal Magazines – Australian Road Rider ABA AdLift Advertiser Communications Project

Company Profile

Universal Publishing is Australia's largest niche publisher, with 40 magazines and 14 web products targeted at specific lifestyles and interests. The company is differentiated from mass consumer titles by a tightly targeted and highly engaged readership, which offers advertisers strong ROI and next to no wastage on their campaign expenditure.

Continual investment in the value delivered to readers has seen the company win 19 coveted Bell Awards from Publishers Australia over the past nine years.

Background

Covering the world of motorbikes is a particular strength for Universal and for over 11 years *Australian Road Rider* has catered to the interests of road class motorbike enthusiasts.

It is a heavily contested category with approximately 20 titles competing for readers and advertising expenditure but the unofficial numbers for *Australian Road Rider* have grown strongly.

A significant surge in newsstand sales and subscriptions began just over three years ago. In response to this increased demand, Universal moved the magazine from a quarterly to a bi-monthly publishing cycle and invested further in bold new design, editorial resources, marketing and additional retail merchandising.

Sales continued to climb. The company was confident an official audit would confirm that *Australian Road Rider* was the premier title in its category.

Audit Attraction

"We knew we had strong numbers for *Australian Road Rider* and wanted our advertisers to compare apples with apples when planning media spends across other audited titles,"

says Ms. Janice Williams, Associate Publisher of Universal Magazines. "We attract national advertisers that are educated about audits. They understand the value of the process and the resultant figures, so we were confident the audit would really highlight the strength of the magazine as an advertising vehicle."

The initial audit conducted by the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) proved that *Australian Road Rider* had indeed secured the lead in its category. The July 08 period confirmed the magazine enjoys nearly 22,000 readers, of which 25% are subscribers.

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The ABC's of Value

Since the *Australian Road Rider* commenced official ABC auditing, advertising revenue has lifted significantly. The results help to highlight that producing ROI for advertisers is not limited to publications with huge readership figures. There is real value in delivering a tightly targeted, highly engaged audience especially when those numbers can be verified through the premier audit body.



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Janice Williams

“We took a massive leap in advertising revenue in our second year of auditing and this has been sustained,” says Ms. Williams. “There are a number of factors that have contributed to this success but certainly the circulation audit concludes all our efforts to ensure *Australian Road Rider* and Universal Magazines stand for quality.”

The continued success of *Australian Road Rider* has sparked the development of a successful franchise that now includes a dedicated website, a spin off title focused specifically on Cruisers and Trikes along with an annual buyers’ directory.

“...initiatives such as the AdLift campaign has delivered value to us as an ABA member...”

ABA’s AdLift is a free service. Universal simply provided the ABA with a database of contacts for their advertisers and a letter was produced by the ABA and issued to *Australian Road Rider* advertisers. Members pay a small fee of \$1 per contact, to cover stationery, postage and production costs.

Investing in audited titles is a prudent choice at a time when advertising budgets are being heavily scrutinised and media agencies are being held to close account. With *Australian Road Rider* now being an audited title it is easy for advertisers to perform basic due diligence on circulation figures. The results are transparent to the whole market and advertisers are better able to calculate their ROI.

“ROI is the Holy Grail for publishers when it comes to what we deliver to advertisers. The level of continued support and repeat advertising we receive is a clear indication our advertisers are happy,” says Ms. Williams. “Access to initiatives such as the AdLift campaign has delivered value to us as an ABC member and it supports our position as a leading publisher of quality magazines.”

Momentum for Members

As a member of the Audit Bureaux of Australia (ABA), Universal Magazines is able to access a number of valuable services. This includes engaging in joined marketing initiatives to advertisers that promote awareness of Universal as a publisher of ABC audited titles.

Find out more about ABC at
www.auditbureau.org.au
Call us on +61 2 9954 9800 or email to
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