



**BIC Task & Finish Working Groups**

**Price & Availability Project Brief**

Final Version 1.0

Signed off by the BIC Physical Supply Chain Committee

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**Created by: Gabrielle Wallington (Waterstones) and Karina Luke (BIC)**

**BIC Physical Supply Chain Committee Approval:**

<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Date</b>
James Allison	<i>BIC Consultant</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014
Paul Almeroth	<i>Woodland Media</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014
Neil Castle	<i>Turpin Distribution Services Ltd</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014
Simon Davidson	<i>Waterstones</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014
Simon Edwards	<i>BIC Consultant</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014
John Garrould	<i>Bertrams</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014
Matt Griffin	<i>Little Brown</i>	6 <sup>th</sup> May 2014
Matthew Hogg	<i>Macmillan Distribution</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014
Sue Kelly	<i>Publiship</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014
Alison Lewis	<i>Ingram Content Group</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014
Mike Levaggi	<i>HarperCollins Publishers Ltd</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014
Stephen Long	<i>Nielsen</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014
Karina Luke	<i>BIC</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014
Kate McFarlan (Chair)	<i>Clays UK Ltd</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014
Holly Milner	<i>Penguin Random House</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014

**Document History**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>	<b>Document Status</b>	<b>Date published</b>
0.1	Draft Project brief.	Draft – for committee approval	5 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2014
0.2	Revision to draft based on committee feedback	Draft – for committee approval	6 <sup>th</sup> May 2014
0.2.2	Inclusion of EDIFACT in the scope of project	Draft – for committee approval	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2014
1.0	No changes – version made final	Signed off by committee on 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014	9th June 2014

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- 1. PURPOSE**
- 2. BACKGROUND**
- 3. PROJECT DEFINITION**
- 4. OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE**
- 5. CUSTOMERS QUALITY EXPECTATIONS**
- 6. ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA**
- 7. ANY KNOWN RISKS**
- 8. OUTLINE PROJECT PLAN**

## **1. PURPOSE**

To investigate the reasons for the problems with 1) availability and then 2) accuracy of price and currency data from publishers, suppliers and data aggregators and the impact on data recipients. To help all interested parties improve accuracy of information by devising and publishing best practice documentation, this to include Tradacoms List 54 and EDIFACT.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

The group was inaugurated by Alexander Greene of Little, Brown and arose out his concerns about the discrepancies between the availability data on his system, LBS's system and Nielsen's database. The first few meetings were attended by data aggregators, distributors, wholesalers and retailers. It was very quickly acknowledged that it is very complex area, particularly as the data provided to data aggregators is often the product of a number of internal mappings whose origins tend to be obscure and undocumented. It was also acknowledged that many organisations are both providers and recipients of data and that price and availability data, in particular, needs to be contextualised. There was, however, considerable enthusiasm for making some attempt to identify and advise on the issues and it was agreed that some practical suggestions could be made.

## **3. PROJECT DEFINITION**

### **3.1. PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

Given the complex nature of this work, it has been decided to adopt a 2 phase approach as follows:

#### **Phase 1:**

Looking at availability data and practices first and documenting best practice.

#### **Phase 2:**

Addressing price and currency accuracy issues and documenting best practice.

The overall objective of both project phases is:

- To improve the currency and accuracy of book trade price and availability data by reviewing and updating existing best practice documentation or filling in gaps with new documentation.
- To disambiguate commonly-used report codes and clarify their use, in consultation with providers and recipients of the data.
- Make BIC members aware of the need for work on their internal systems and a commitment from senior management to gaining the benefits from further standardisation in this area.

### **3.2. PROJECT SCOPE**

The major deliverables of the project are a set of best practice guidelines with accompanying documentation to contextualise price and availability information and encourage providers and recipients to review their current systems and take a more standardized approach to these data elements. There is the possibility of incorporating some or all of these into existing or future accreditation schemes and this has been discussed by the BIC Product Data

Excellence panel and will be considered further once the documentation has been published and this project has been closed.

Although potentially applicable to digital products, this work will focus on physical product data (bearing digital in mind) and will look at pre-publication date data in addition to on, and post publication date data.

The main dependency is that this is intricate and time-consuming work and the interested parties will have to carve out time to do it among many competing claims. On the plus side, a little attention to this area can reveal long-standing problems and resolving them can be of immediate benefit.

There are interdependencies with all the BIC committees, particularly those that maintain and develop the standards, those that accredit the standards and those that deal with implementation problems. These will be ongoing, as they are likely to use the best practice guidelines and feed back to the P&A Working Group about their usefulness.

The approach will be to break the project down into 2 consecutive project phases as follows:

- 1) Availability data piece, to be completed first and then followed by
- 2) Price and currency data piece (to include BIC Discount Group Codes)

### **3.3. OUTLINE PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND/OR DESIRED OUTCOMES**

1. Documentation quantifying the improvements in data accuracy (value, reliability etc) and maintenance value of data in terms of this project. This will help reveal some tangible and intangible benefits which can be set against the costs of any changes to process and systems.

2. Availability Best Practice Guidelines for all supply chain stakeholders (listed below), these to include (but not be limited to):

- A new, simpler, more up to date version of the Tradacoms list 54 (This list is the basis for most order acknowledgments and most of the price and availability feeds generated by distributors).
- Advice on what the availability codes actually mean in terms of “actions/next steps” for the recipient, as it’s been acknowledged that this is also an area of potential confusion.
- Reviewed and updated (if required) EDIFACT codes.

3. Price and Currency Best Practice Guidelines for all supply chain stakeholders (listed below)

4. Best practice guidelines for distributor changes

#### **Supply Chain Stakeholders:**

- Self-distributing publishers
- Publishers distributed by a third party
- Distributors and their clients

- Data recipients (document published July 2011)
- Data aggregators
- Resellers/wholesalers
- Best practice for ebooks and digital products

The Inclusion of the above in accreditation schemes, (starting with the existing BIC scheme but possibly including a new scheme for suppliers) to be considered for a later date/separate project.

### 3.4. CONSTRAINTS

As above, we are all very busy and IT development time (if required) is at a premium.

### 3.5. INTERFACES

The main interface is likely to be with EDItEUR if additional codes are recommended or the descriptions of existing codes need clarification. Graham Bell is a member of the group and is open to this, with the caveat that changes to ONIX must be suitable for a global audience and have to be approved by the other national groups.

The project may also be of interest to the Digital Supply Chain Committee

## 4. OUTLINE BUSINESS/INDUSTRY CASE

Accurate price and availability data makes every stage of the supply chain more efficient and more cost effective and increases sales. This project is entirely in line with BIC's remit and is a refinement of work done by the accreditation schemes.

## 5. ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA

1. Practicality – it must be possible for interested parties to see an immediate benefit from adopting the Best practice guidelines.
2. Clarity – the guidelines must disambiguate the current report codes used and acknowledge the complexities of their use in different contexts by different parties.

## 6. RISKS

The main risks have already happened, the initial group lost momentum because of lack of time and resources all round. There is still enthusiasm for the project, however, and it should be revived. The risk of doing nothing is that everyone will continue as they are, making it up as they go along, and we won't enjoy the benefits of more clearly defined standards in terms of greater efficiency and improved customer service.

## 7. OUTLINE PROVISIONAL PROJECT PLAN

Activity	Deadline
Revised Project Brief distributed to relevant BIC Committee and BISG etc	9 <sup>th</sup> May 2014
Project Brief signed off by relevant committees	17 <sup>th</sup> June 2014
BIC call for Working Group volunteers from its membership	17 <sup>th</sup> June 2014 – 17 <sup>th</sup> July 2014

First Working Group meeting	Before end -July 2014
Documentation to quantify the improvements (value, reliability) in data accuracy and maintenance in order to reveal tangible and intangible benefits	Before mid-September 2014
<b>PHASE ONE (Availability)</b>	<b>September 2014 – January 2016</b>
Detailed Project Initiation Document for Availability Phase compiled and signed off by Working Group	Before mid-September 2014
Draft Guidelines for “Availability” project phase	March 2015
Test/pilot for “Availability” project phase	March 2015 – May 2015
Availability Guidelines launched, incorporating feedback from pilot (as appropriate)	July 2015
Marketing of Availability deliverables/findings	From July 2015 onwards
Post project review of Availability Guidelines	January 2016
<b>PHASE TWO (Price &amp; Currency)</b>	<b>January 2016 - July 2017</b>
Detailed Project Initiation Documentation for Price & currency Phase compiled and signed off by Working Group	By mid-March 2016
Draft guidelines for Price & Currency project phase	September 2016
Test/pilot for Price & Currency project phase	September 2016 – November 2016
Price and currency guidelines launched incorporating pilot/test feedback as appropriate	January 2017
Marketing of Price & Currency deliverables/findings	From January 2017 onwards
Post project review of Price & Currency guidelines	July 2017

**Existing documentation for review/updating:**

Best Practice Guidelines for Data Recipients – published July 2011

BIC Discount Group Code scheme – published September 2011

Best Practice Guidelines for the use of Tradacoms List 54 codes in P&A feed and order acknowledgements

**8. AUTHORITY RESPONSIBLE**

Executive Director of BIC

**9. PROPOSED TASK & FINISH WORKING GROUP LEADER/PROJECT MANAGER**

Gabrielle Wallington, Bibliographic Manager, Waterstones. This to be approved by the Physical Supply Chain Committee.

## **10. CUSTOMERS AND USERS**

BIC members, including representatives from the original working group. This includes but isn't limited to:

Wiley

Penguin Random House

TBS

EDItEUR

Bowker

WH Smith

HarperCollins

Bertrams

Nielsen

LBS Ltd

BDS

Hachette

Macmillan Distribution

BISG (as an fyi)

Waterstones

## **11. REPORTING**

- i) Progress of deliverables against agreed timeline to be reported monthly by the Project Lead, to the Executive Director of BIC and the Physical Supply Chain Committee, using the Project Status Update template.