

# What is BIC Basic?

BIC Basic is a set of standards for bibliographic data provision developed and promoted by Book Industry Communication, with the support and endorsement of the whole UK book industry, with the objective of improving the accuracy and timeliness of product information available to the book trade, notably at the point of sale.

## What does BIC Basic consist of?

BIC Basic consists of three elements:

- A statement of the basic data elements of a product record, whether for physical or digital products, which publishers and bibliographic agencies should be able to provide, accurately and on time, to UK retail booksellers and other supply chain intermediaries.
- A set of guidelines and recommendations for the provision of product data.
- A timetable for publishers for the electronic supply of product data to data aggregators.

## Why is BIC Basic important?

The complexity of the book trade supply chain has always made it difficult to deliver timely and accurate information regarding price and availability to the point of sale, and this difficulty has been aggravated by the fact that publishers and distributors have not always given the provision of product information the priority it clearly deserves. BIC Basic helps to standardise procedures throughout the supply chain and in doing so increases the potential for up-to-date product information to aid purchase decisions by booksellers and consumers.

The book trade needs faster, better information, and BIC Basic is a key contribution.

## What is the scope of BIC Basic?

The BIC Basic data elements cover the main product types which are sold through the UK book supply chain: books; e-books; audio books; mixed media packs; maps; and promotional or point of sale material or trade packs relating to any of these.

## What kind of information is included in the BIC Basic standards?

BIC Basic includes three groups of related data elements:

- Bibliographic data elements, which constitute the basic description of the product and which are liable to change during the period between first

announcement and publication but will not change materially after publication.

- Transactional data elements, which detail the UK supply source, availability and price and are subject to change at any time.
- Product rights data elements, which identify the status of UK sales rights and additionally any overseas territories where the product may or may not be sold.

### **Are ALL the data elements necessary?**

Yes, all the BIC Basic data elements are essential to comply with the standards. However, not all elements are classed as ‘mandatory’, i.e. as elements which must be present in all valid product records: some are classed as ‘conditional’, and may or may not be necessary to create a valid record.

### **Do I need to provide more than just BIC Basic information?**

BIC Basic is a minimum guideline; and it will provide the framework for a good product record. However, it will undoubtedly be to your benefit to create and send to data aggregators and others a more detailed and richer product record. You should consider doing this using ONIX, the internationally accepted product information standard (<http://www.bic.org.uk/5/ONIX-for-Books/>) either by implementing it in your own systems or by investing in one of the many ONIX-compliant publishing systems available in the market.

### **Do I need to change my systems in order to comply with BIC Basic?**

Only you can answer this question, but it is important to bear in mind that BIC Basic is both a standard for information content and for the storing and communicating of this content in electronic form. The first and most important priority, for all publishers, is to ensure that you can deliver to the bibliographic agencies and others - in a mutually agreed electronic form - the content required by the BIC Basic standards, at such time as to ensure accurate representation of your products in the retail supply chain.

The second priority, of particular importance for larger publishers, is to make sure that you (or in some cases your distributor) will be able to supply and update changes in price and availability throughout the life cycle of your products.

### **How can I show my commitment to BIC Basic standards?**

You can demonstrate your compliance with the BIC Basic standards by applying for accreditation within the BIC Product Data Excellence Awards scheme. To find out more, go to <http://www.bic.org.uk/9/Product-Data-Accreditation/>.