BIC DISCOUNT/COMMISSION GROUP CODES

Technical framework and administration

BIC has defined and administers a standard method of communicating publishers' discount group codes as part of an EDI message. A discount group code, which is an attribute of a product, is converted to an actual discount rate by means of a look-up table which is specific to an individual trading agreement. The look-up table is communicated directly between the trading partners by non-EDI means.

The discount group code must have a component which identifies the publisher, or more generally the issuer of the code if a number of publishers are included in a single discount group scheme; and it must have a component which identifies the discount group. To ensure uniqueness, the publisher/issuer component must be assigned by a controlling agency. The discount group component is then at the discretion of the publisher/issuer.

Proposed format

The format for a BIC publishers' discount group code is a fixed-length eight character code in three parts:

Character position 1	Block code: a single letter identifying a block of codes managed by a designated controlling agency. In the present case, A = BIC. The inclusion of this initial character allows for the possibility that the code might be taken up more widely, and that (e.g.) a US agency might emerge.
Character positions 2 to 5	Publisher code: a four-letter code, mnemonic as far as possible, assigned by BIC. This format allows 26^4 or some 450,000 unique codes.
Character positions 6 to 8	Discount group code: a three-character code, which may be numeric, alphabetic or alphanumeric, determined and assigned by the publisher/issuer. If a one or two character code is used, it should be left justified and the remaining character position(s) should be space(s).
Example: AMACM122	Macmillan discount group code 122.

Administration

Publisher/issuer codes are assigned on application to the BIC office. The following information is required for code assignment:

Name of publisher/issuer
Name and contact details of responsible person at the publisher/issuer
Expected scope of application (e.g. "All imprints of XYZ group", "All overseas imprints distributed in UK by ABC".)

BIC maintains on its website a list of publisher/issuer codes as they are assigned. This is held separately from the BIC Tradacoms code lists so that there is no need to treat new publisher/issuer codes as requiring a new BIC code list version number.

Use in EDI messages

There is an existing data element in the Tradacoms Price & Availability Update message (in RPR TERM) which can carry a publishers' discount group code in the correct form. Similar provision is made in the EDIFACT PRICAT message and in ONIX.