

Deciphering Print Ad Rates in Medical Media

A Microlearning Module from the Association of Medical Media

(ADAPTED FROM VIDEO TRANSCRIPT)

Why are there so many different prices in an advertising rate card for a printed journal? How do I know which rate applies to my client's ad campaign?

Here we'll give you the key to deciphering these print advertising rates and show you how to calculate the actual rate for a few campaigns.

Frequency	1x	6x	12x	24x	52x	104x	156x	208x	260x	286x	364x	468x
Full Page	\$13,980	\$13,141	\$12,353	\$11,612	\$10,915	\$10,260	\$9,644	\$9,066	\$8,522	\$8,010	\$7,530	\$7,078
Half	\$9,010	\$8,469	\$7,961	\$7,484	\$7,035	\$6,612	\$6,216	\$5,843	\$5,492	\$5,163	\$4,853	\$4,562
Quarter	\$4,910	\$4,615	\$4,338	\$4,078	\$3,833	\$3,603	\$3,387	\$3,184	\$2,993	\$2,813	\$2,645	\$2,486
Eighth	\$2,820	\$2,651	\$2,492	\$2,342	\$2,202	\$2,070	\$1,945	\$1,829	\$1,719	\$1,616	\$1,519	\$1,428

Color Charge Per Page or Fraction		Premium Positions (charge on b/w space)	
2nd color (matched or metallic)	\$1,300	2nd Cover (Inside Front Cover)	50%
3- or 4-color	\$3,900	3rd Cover (Inside Back Cover)	10%
5-color	\$4,320	4th Cover (Back Cover)	70%
Bleed	No extra charge		

First, let's look at the basic structure of the rate card for a printed journal. The first thing you'll see is a table listing all the basic rates in a grid format. In a moment, we'll explain how to use this table to determine the ad rate for your campaign.

Next, you'll see the extra charges that are applied for the color in the advertisement.

And finally, you'll find the premium surcharge for placing your ad in a highly visible special position within the printed publication, like on one of the covers.

Every print advertising quote starts by establishing how many ad pages you'll be running for this campaign during the year. Publishers typically provide "frequency discounts," which means that the more you advertise, the less you pay for each ad.

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Let's start with a very simple example. This campaign consists of a two-page spread that you plan to run in six issues. That's two pages per ad, times six issues, so your total earned frequency is 12x (for "twelve times").

So, for each page of your ad, you pay the rate shown in the 12x column on the rate card before adding the charges for color or premium positions.

Two-Page Spread in Six Issues

No. of pages per ad: 2

No of issues: 6

2 x 6 = 12

Earned frequency: 12x

12x
\$12,353

Now, let's mix it up a little bit, with another campaign. Let's say this ad campaign will run the two-page spread in only three issues but will also run a half-page ad in six issues. **When it comes to the frequency you earn, fractional ads count the same as full page ads.**

So first, you multiply the two-page ads times three issues, for a subtotal of six. Next, you take the half-page ads, each running in six issues, and you have another six. Add those two results together, and you have a total earned frequency for this campaign of 12x.

So, you pay the rate shown in the 12x column for each of the ads, before adding color and optional position charges for each ad.

Two-Page Spread in Three Issues PLUS ½-Page Ad in Six Issues

Two-page ads in 3 issues: 2 x 3 = 6

Half-page ad in 6 issues: 1 x 6 = 6

Earned frequency: 12x

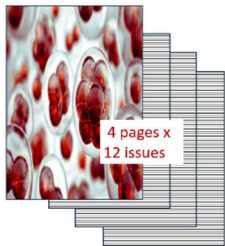
12x
\$12,353
\$7,961

Let's take a moment to talk about a subject that perplexes all of us sometimes—both publishers and agency media professionals. *What if I don't know how many times this ad will run? What if my client can't commit yet to a budget for the year? What if they plan to run the ad in twelve issues, but then pull the plug after six?*

There was a time when publishers only offered these discounted frequency rates in exchange for a signed advertising contract for the year. Nowadays, it's not uncommon for publishers to extend these discounts based solely on the word of the planner, and then adjust those rates at the end of the year with an invoice or refund for the difference.

These year-end adjustments can be messy, so be sure you know how your organization wants to handle this before you establish your frequency.

Okay, so let's do one final example for a campaign that's more realistic for what we see in professional medical media. We'll also go ahead and add in some color and premium charges.



This is a four-page ad. The first page is four-color, and the next three pages are black and white pages containing prescriber information. You want to position this ad to start on the inside front cover of the publication.

First, calculate your frequency. The ad is scheduled to run 12 times, for a total frequency of 48. (4x12=48.) **But wait!** This publisher doesn't offer a 48x rate. They offer a 24x rate, but the next price break comes at 52x. So, in this scenario, you'll pay the rate shown in the 24x column.

24x	52x
\$11,612	\$10,915

Now, take your earned rate at the 24x frequency (that you just calculated), and multiply that rate by four (for each page of the four-page ad).

Next, because only one page of the ad is in color, you add in that color charge for only one page.

Finally, for purposes of this exercise, let's calculate that "premium position charge" only for that first page that actually appears on the inside front cover.¹

Add your page rates, color charges, and premium position charges, and that's your "gross cost" per ad.

But wait! You are probably entitled to an agency discount. So, apply that 15% discount to the gross cost, and there's the net charge you will be billed for each placement of this 4-page ad.

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Full Page	\$13,980	\$13,141	\$12,353	\$11,612	\$10,915	\$10,260	\$9,644	\$9,066	\$8,522	\$8,010	\$7,530	\$7,078
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Color Charge Per Page or Fraction

2nd color (matched or metallic)	\$1,300	• \$11,612 x 4 pages = \$46,448
3- or 4-color	\$3,900	• \$3,900 x 1 page = \$3,900
5-color	\$4,320	
Bleed	No extra charge	

Premium Positions (charge on h/w space)

2nd Cover (Inside Front Cover)	50%	• \$11,612 x 50% = \$5,806
3rd Cover (Inside Back Cover)	10%	• Gross Cost Per Ad = \$56,154
4th Cover (Back Cover)	70%	

Agency Commissions: Paid as a 15% agency discount on advertising space charges

• **Less 15% Commission = \$47,731**

TOTAL NET (BILLED) COST PER AD

Every publisher's rate card is slightly different, and many offer a host of additional discounts or premium offers to which you may be entitled. Your publisher's rep is there to help.

For now, I hope we've helped to solve some of the mysteries of the printed advertising rate card, and you can now feel confident that you understand the basics.

Follow us on LinkedIn for more helpful microlearning modules. Or visit AMMonline.org.

¹ Keep in mind though, that most publishers will also charge a premium for the second, third, or fourth page of the ad because they are all appearing at the very front of the book.