INDEPENDENT MEDIA AUDITS

Audit Readiness Checklist

Organize the records, definitions, and access your team may need before an independent print, circulation, or digital media audit.

START WITH SCOPE AND SOURCE EVIDENCE

1. PLANNING AND SCOPE

- ☐ **Define the business objective**
  Identify what you need to validate, understand, or improve.
- ☐ **List the channels in scope**
  Print, circulation, digital editions, web, email, social, video, podcasts, blogs, or reader research.
- ☐ **Confirm the reporting period**
  Align start dates, end dates, cutoffs, and time zones across sources.
- ☐ **Document current audience claims**
  Save the exact metrics and statements used in media kits, sales materials, and reports.

2. PRINT AND CIRCULATION RECORDS

- ☐ **Print orders and printer statements**
  Include issue-level print runs, dates, and relevant adjustments.
- ☐ **Distribution and fulfillment reports**
  Organize subscriptions, single-copy sales, controlled distribution, and channel totals.
- ☐ **Returns and unsold copy records**
  Include credits, adjustments, and treatment in reported circulation.
- ☐ **Circulation category definitions**
  Document paid, qualified, complimentary, or other categories used in reporting.

> **Keep source records intact**
> Preserve original exports and documents. Work from copies when reconciling or annotating information so the source evidence remains available.

CHECKLIST CONTINUED

Evidence, Access & Internal Review

Requirements vary by audit scope. Use this page to identify available information and resolve gaps before fieldwork begins.

3. DIGITAL CHANNEL EVIDENCE

- ☐ **Analytics exports**
  Web, app, edition, and campaign reports.
- ☐ **Email platform reports**
  Lists, delivery, opens, clicks, and suppressions.
- ☐ **Social platform reports**
  Audience, reach, engagement, and period data.
- ☐ **Audio and video reports**
  Views, downloads, listens, and platform definitions.
- ☐ **Digital edition reports**
  Delivery, readership, and edition activity.
- ☐ **Source system context**
  Account IDs, property names, and relevant filters.

4. DEFINITIONS, ACCESS, AND QUALITY

- ☐ **Create a metric glossary**
  Record definitions for users, readers, reach, views, downloads, circulation, and other reported measures.
- ☐ **Prepare appropriate access**
  Use read-only access where suitable. Never include passwords in this checklist or a general inquiry.
- ☐ **Identify known reporting issues**
  Note tracking changes, missing records, migrations, duplicates, or unusual activity.
- ☐ **Assign evidence owners**
  Identify who can provide each source and explain how it was produced.

5. INTERNAL REVIEW NOTES

QUESTION OR EVIDENCE GAP	OWNER	TARGET RESOLUTION

Ready for a tailored scope?

Bring this checklist and your current reporting to a planning conversation. Skyworxz will help identify the relevant evidence and practical next steps.