



## How National Magazine Used 20/20 Insight to Gather Vendor Scorecard Ratings

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The National Magazine Company Ltd. (NMC) is the UK subsidiary of The Hearst Corporation. It publishes 19 magazine titles in the UK, including Good Housekeeping and Cosmopolitan.

The production processes for the main portfolio and ancillary work – printing and reprographics – are outsourced to around 30 supplier organisations. A team of 30 staff in the Production Department manage the production of the 19 titles, which includes two weekly titles with the rest being published monthly.

Quality of the finished product is critical. Advertisers expect their on-page advertising to be to be reproduced to a high quality, and the whole magazine needs to 'feel right'. Managing the relationship, as well as the contractual requirements, are critical elements in making outsourcing a viable prospect.

Feedback is an important element in making this relationship work. The Group Manufacturing Director introduced the feedback process in 1999. In 2003 the process was streamlined using 20/20 Insight GOLD.

A set of balanced scorecard criteria was used, based around:

- Quality
- Service
- Reliability
- Account handling
- Price
- Investment in new development

All 30 of the production teams were asked to give feedback about their experiences with each of the Vendors with whom they had direct dealings. This feedback included both ratings and qualitative comments, a new feature.

Reports were then produced, providing a very helpful basis for face-to-face discussion with all of the individual Vendors, helping them to identify their strengths and the areas in which they could improve their service.

From NMC's perspective, the important benefit was in driving continuous improvement in a business with tight deadlines, demanding readers and even more demanding advertisers.

From the Vendors' perspective, the feedback conversations identified areas to be worked upon in order to retain their NMC account and put them in a strong position above competitor companies that might wish to tender for NMC's business in its regular competitive tendering processes.