

## Case study: Department of Health



The Department of Health (DH) works to improve the health and wellbeing of people in England. It is committed to improving the quality and convenience of care provided by the NHS and social services. Its work includes setting national standards, shaping the direction of health and social care services and promoting healthier living.

A key piece of legislation from the DH is the Mental Health Act 2007, which updated the 1983 Act, bringing it in line with the way that mental health services are, and should be, delivered. In 2008 DH produced the *Mental Health Act 1983 Code of Practice, 2008 Revision*, to provide up-to-date information and guidance on implementing the Act for those caring for people who have been admitted to hospitals and care homes with mental health problems.

TSO worked with DH and the Central Office of Information (COI) to publish the *Mental Health Act 1983 Code of Practice, 2008 Revision* and the complimentary *Reference Guide to the Mental Health Act 1983*.

### The challenge

DH needed to ensure that the *Mental Health Act 1983 Code of Practice, 2008 Revision* would be easily accessible to all users who need to consult it in their work. The Code of Practice is available to download online for free. It also needed to be available for purchase in hard copy for customers who use it in situations where they don't have access to the electronic version. To keep the price of the publication low, DH needed a publisher that could keep costs down while producing a high-quality publication that would withstand constant use.

It was essential to make the information included in the Code of Practice available to users as quickly as possible. However, publication could not go ahead until it had laid in Parliament for 40 days. DH needed to find a publisher with the experience to make the Code of Practice available to customers without delay once the 40 days had lapsed.

### The solution

Prior to publication TSO conducted a market sizing study, enabling us to identify the potential demand and informing the number of copies produced. We were able to print the Code of Practice in bulk, benefiting from economies of scale while also ensuring we did not print excess stock which would incur storage costs. Reducing production costs in this way enabled DH to set a low cover price maximising the accessibility of the publication.

DH had gone out for consultation on the Code of Practice and received a number of comments on the size of the document. The 1999 edition was A5 and users were used to carrying it around easily. The significant changes in the 2008 edition more than doubled the length of the publication. To ensure the publication remained accessible for those who need to refer to in the course of their work, TSO produced it in a bespoke size, between A5 and A4, making it portable while keeping the number of pages to a minimum.

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TSO's risk publishing model enabled DH to make the hard copy edition available without having to pay for its production. TSO covers the costs involved in printing, publishing and distributing the title, recouping the costs through sales via its specialist sales channels.

The experience of TSO's Parliamentary Press in producing publications to tight deadlines was also vital as once the Code's period of laying in Parliament was complete we were able to act quickly to make the publication available to customers.

The *Mental Health Act 1983 Code of Practice, 2008 Revision* was promoted to the target audience through direct mail, email and search marketing. Due to the high level of anticipated demand Blackwells, one of TSO's UK agents, also ran a marketing campaign for the publication. Customers could order copies through any of TSO's channels to market, including telephone, fax, post, specialist booksellers or through TSO's own online

bookshop [tsoshop.co.uk](http://tsoshop.co.uk). TSO has also published a complimentary title: *Reference Guide to the Mental Health Act 1983*.

The *Mental Health Act 1983 Code of Practice, 2008 Revision* will remain on TSO's publication list until a new edition becomes available. During this period DH will not need to be involved in activities such as arranging reprints or holding stock as TSO will manage it for them.

### Service mix

- Print
- Warehousing and fulfillment
- Order-taking and customer service
- Marketing
- Routes to market
- Risk publishing

### Next steps

We are currently working on developing the technology to take advantage of electronic opportunities for publishing Codes of Practice.

### Results

- 18,000 copies sold from the end of August to December 2008
- Became the number two academic bestseller for Blackwells in November 2008
- Title has already reprinted.

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