



MRC Releases Final Version of Standards on Outcomes Measurement and Data Quality

*Adoption will result in greater consistency and quality in the measurement of relationships
between advertising and business outcomes*

New York, NY (September 21, 2022): The Media Rating Council (MRC) today released its Outcomes and Data Quality Standards as final. The document is the end result of a project led by MRC that included a working group representing over 100 organizations from across the advertising and media industries, with the endorsement of the Association of National Advertisers (ANA), the 4As, and the Association of Canadian Advertisers (ACA).

The Standards address various Outcomes measures and approaches, including attribution and Multi-Touch Attribution, Market Mix Modeling, and experiments, as well as the underlying data quality associated with these methods.

The release follows [a public comment period on a draft version](#) of the document that occurred over the Summer. Feedback from comments received was considered, and, in certain instances, incorporated, although the substance of the final version does not differ significantly from the earlier draft.

Key provisions include:

- Outcomes analyzed, associated or attributed to media and advertising activities should be relevant, logical and aligned with user goals, while supported by consistent definitions and approaches;
- Intent must be directly observable or inferred based on behavior using empirically supported approaches
- Interactions with ads and content must be clearly defined and empirically supported
- A base of viewable impressions is required as an option for attribution of Outcomes; SIVT filtration is also required
- The source and nature of datasets must be generally disclosed to users along with details of collection parameters, editing and cleaning applied as well as known biases or limitations associated to it
- Care must be taken to properly disclose the methodology for measuring and reporting ROI and ROAS and inferences associated with them
- These Standards encourage Cross-Media coverage for measurement of ad and media exposure, but do not require all measures of Outcomes to include Cross-Media measurement
- Viewability should not be used to imply presence of a user or that an ad has been viewed/seen

- Outcomes measurement providers should consider Advertising Exposure or contact by the consumer as well as their Attention or impact for any audience if causality is to be assessed
- Single-touch attribution use cases are generally limited to a specific campaign objective/product type
- The process and support for determining which exposures are attributed and the weights or values assigned to them must be robust and demonstrable for audit purposes of MTA methodologies
- The results of RCT exercises and non-experimental methodologies must be treated as estimates and must adhere to statistical and sample-based requirements of the MRC Minimum Standards

“These standards represent the realization of a new and critical phase of a long-term effort by MRC, in cooperation with other industry trade associations, to enhance advertising measurement,” noted MRC Executive Director and CEO George W. Ivie. “This initiative began more than a decade ago with projects designed to standardize measures of ad delivery, and has now progressed to the measurement of business outcomes that are associated with ad exposure.”

“With marketers increasingly looking to outcomes as the primary determinant of ad spend effectiveness, it is critical that the industry has a clear set of standards against which providers of attribution measurement can be assessed,” said ANA Group EVP Bill Tucker. “Of particular importance, these Standards were developed in conjunction with marketers, ensuring that they represent and address our needs. ANA members have called for the development of outcome standards as an industry priority, and we are pleased to have supported and participated in this significant endeavor.”

“With commercial performance and outcome-based compensation models becoming more mainstream, the creation of these Standards offers a roadmap for the requirements around data collection for advertisers and marketers,” says Ashwini Karandikar, EVP, Media, Tech and Data, the 4As.. “This framework is an important baseline because it enables independent, validated data to be more consistently measured and connected to outcomes.”

“With the issuance of these final Standards, the ad industry now has detailed provisions against which outcome based measurement can be vetted against,” says Judy Davey, Vice President, Media Policy and Marketing Capabilities, the ACA. “We encourage all providers of attribution to seek accreditation against the MRC Standards, as this will be a key factor in helping to advance the use of outcome based measurement and enable innovation. The ACA is delighted to provide our endorsement to these Standards.”

The Standards can be found at www.mediaratingcouncil.org. Those who wish to learn more about the MRC accreditation process can contact MRC at staff@mediaratingcouncil.org.

About MRC

The Media Rating Council is a non-profit industry association established in 1963 comprised of leading television, radio, print and digital media companies, as well as advertisers, advertising agencies and trade associations, whose goal is to ensure measurement services that are valid, reliable and effective. Measurement services desiring MRC accreditation are required to disclose to their customers all methodological aspects of their service; comply with the

MRC Minimum Standards for Media Rating Research as well as other applicable industry measurement guidelines; and submit to MRC-designed audits to authenticate and illuminate their procedures. In addition, the MRC membership actively pursues research issues they consider priorities in an effort to improve the quality of research in the marketplace. Currently approximately 110 research products are audited by the MRC. Additional information about MRC can be found at www.mediaratingcouncil.org.

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