

MEDIA RATING COUNCIL (MRC) ISSUES FINAL VERSION OF INVALID TRAFFIC DETECTION AND FILTRATION GUIDELINES ADDENDUM

All MRC-Accredited Organizations Must Comply with New Guidelines Aimed at Minimizing Invalid Traffic, Including Fraudulent Activity

NEW YORK – Oct. 27, 2015 – The [Media Rating Council](#) today issued the final Invalid Traffic (IVT) Detection and Filtration Guidelines, Version 1.0. The IVT Guidelines seek to modernize industry measurement standards for the filtration and disclosure of invalid traffic to better address the risks that exist in today’s digital media environment.

A draft version of the Guidelines was originally released on July 1 for a 30-day public comment period, and this final version reflects feedback received both from comments received during that period, and from additional input from the large Invalid Traffic working group, which also included the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB), the Mobile Marketing Association (MMA), and the Trustworthy Accountability Group (TAG).

The IVT Detection and Filtration Guidelines will serve as an addendum to all digital measurement guidelines and standards. As such, all vendors seeking first-time accreditation or continuation of accreditation for any digital measurement processes will be assessed against the IVT Guidelines, in addition to any other applicable digital measurement guidelines.

“By expanding the existing requirements for the detection and filtration of invalid digital traffic, we’re strengthening the processes required of digital measurers to better address scenarios that could compromise the integrity of the digital media environment and digital campaigns,” said George W. Ivie, Executive Director and CEO, MRC. “This is an incredibly important project necessary for the overall health of the measurement ecosystem and a major step toward reducing the risks that invalid and fraudulent traffic will be included in measured counts, and the costs associated with that. We’re pleased to adopt these guidelines, which include invaluable input from experts across industry interests and organizations.”

Key components of the Guidelines include:

- **Overall objectives:** Rationale for existence and implementation of Guidelines including ensuring that measurers have processes in place to continually detect and assess new invalid traffic scenarios as they emerge in the online environment.
- **Definitions of Invalid Traffic:** IVT is separated in two categories:
 - General Invalid Traffic (GIVT): Includes traffic identified through routine and list-based means of filtration—such as bots, spiders, other crawlers; non-browser user agent headers; and pre-fetch or browser pre-rendered traffic.
 - Sophisticated Invalid Traffic (SIVT): Includes traffic identified through advanced analytics, multipoint corroboration, human intervention—such as hijacked devices, ad tags, or creative; adware; malware; misappropriated content.
- **New Requirements:**
 - **Internal Controls:** Descriptions of required enhanced internal controls including employee behavior policies, escalation procedures for challenging traffic removal decisions, and the application of a partner qualification process that recognizes the responsibility of measurers extending to certain aspects of the behavior of its business partners.

- **Organizational Functions:** Details around required measurer organizational functions ranging from a mandatory data analysis function, to IVT-related communication responsibilities, to the establishment a Traffic Quality Office within the organization.
- **Additional Required Tasks:** Thorough advance traffic/campaign and historical analysis, as well as analysis of production data that includes front-end and back-end analytical techniques, are required for compliance with the Guidelines.

To view the final IVT Guidelines, please visit [here](#).

About the Media Rating Council (MRC)

The MRC is a non-profit industry association established in 1963 composed of leading television, radio, print and Internet 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 and other standards MRC produces; 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.

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