



MRC Releases Supplement to Ad Verification Guidelines To Strengthen Current Brand Safety Practices

Updates Enhance Requirements For Addressing Brand Safety Concerns Associated with User-Generated Content and Other Aspects of Today's Digital Advertising Environments

New York, NY (September 20, 2018): The Media Rating Council (MRC) today issued the final version of its Supplemental Guidance on Content Level Context and Brand Safety Ad Verification.

The Supplement outlines new requirements for ad verification practices related to brand safety that now include consideration of an ad's proximity in relation to discrete pieces of content, in addition to the requirements of prior Guidelines, which addressed these issues only at the broader domain, site, or URL levels. In this respect, the Supplement positions the Guidelines to be better equipped to address the more complex brand safety issues that have become prevalent in today's online environments, including in-application environments, where advertising often exists alongside both curated and User-Generated Content (UGC).

The updates in this Supplement were developed by MRC in collaboration with the American Association of Advertising Agencies (4A's), the Association of National Advertisers (ANA), and the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB), and serve to modernize the requirements of the *IAB Guidelines for the Conduct of Ad Verification*, which were authored by MRC and issued by IAB in 2012.

In parallel with the release of this Supplement, the 4A's Advertiser Protection Bureau (APB), which was established as part of its Advertising Assurance initiative, has issued its own framework for a brand safety "floor." This defines a set of categories on which advertisers might choose to adopt a "never appropriate" position for their ad buys. The APB's floor is incorporated by reference into the MRC's Supplement and represents one option through which the Supplement's brand safety requirements can be structured and administered by platforms and ad verification services.

"The release of this new Supplement brings critically needed guidance that's focused at the content level to help with the brand safety realities of today's digital ad marketplace," said George W. Ivie, MRC's Executive Director and CEO. "With the ubiquitous presence of UGC on many of the most important digital platforms, and the inherent challenges this presents related to brand safety concerns, the guidance in this Supplement will help advertisers have greater assurances that their ads appear only in those environments they consider appropriate."

The MRC developed this document in an accelerated five-month time period and was assisted by an expert working group consisting of representatives from advertisers, agencies, ad verification vendors, digital content platforms and other organizations, including the aforementioned major trade associations. A preliminary draft was issued for a 30-day public comment period in July

2018. With the Supplement's final release, services and platforms are welcome to apply for MRC accreditation of their content-level brand safety ad verification processes.

[Click here](#) to access the MRC Supplement.

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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