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MRC, NCC Media and a Broad Coalition of Multi-Channel Video Programming Distributors to Issue Guidelines for Creation of Consistent Digital Video Viewership Data

Guidelines Will Establish Consistent Terms, Definitions and Calculations for Digital Video Viewership Data

New York, NY (August 10, 2010) – The Media Rating Council (MRC), NCC Media and a broad coalition of Multi-Channel Video Programming Distributors (MVPDs -- consisting of cable, satellite and telco organizations) today announced their collaboration on developing new guidelines for the creation of consistent digital video viewership data.

For the almost 50 years the MRC has worked with the industry to validate measurement practices for analog TV data, so that viewing estimates reported by research providers are reliable and accurate. The objective of this initiative is to foster consistency and enable accumulation of this data across MVPDs for the industry. As the source of digital viewership data, the focus of the MVPDs is on the fundamental elements of the data, rather than derived audience metrics. Participants are collaborating to develop best practices surrounding terms, definitions and calculations for accumulating digital viewership data. The guidelines will include specific recommendations for data processing procedures, which will cover data-capture, editing and reporting as well as guidance for privacy and security safeguards and appropriate consumer notice and communication.

Once the guidelines are drafted, the MRC will seek input from the broader media industry, including programmers, content providers, advertisers and their agencies, media researchers and consumer advocates, to facilitate the discussion and seek consensus among the participants.

“The MRC is pleased to participate with NCC Media and the MVPDs on this initiative particularly because it will set the foundation for incorporating digital video viewership data into the industry’s toolset for audience measurement,” said George Ivie, Executive Director and CEO of the MRC. “This will enable the responsible leveraging of this valuable, granular data by our industry.”

“Advertising is an important component of the US economy as well as a leading indicator of economic health,” according to Bill Koenigsberg, President, CEO and Founder of Horizon Media, Inc, and National Chairman of the 4A’s Media Policy Committee. He added, “Having accurate audience estimates is critical to making sound advertising decisions. Establishing similar guidelines for set top box data across the MVPD community would provide more accurate, inclusive measurement.”

Finally, the initiative intends to involve other interested organizations, including advertising agencies, marketers, third-party measurement organizations and media-related entities who would like to participate in the guideline setting process. Organizations with such interest can contact MRC at staff@mediaratingcouncil.org. Prior to finalization, comments on the draft guidelines will be solicited from other industry organizations and the public.

About MRC

The MRC is a non-profit Industry association established in 1964 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 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 60 research products are audited by the MRC. Additional information about MRC can be found at www.mediaratingcouncil.org.

About NCC Media

NCC Media is the ad sales, marketing and technology organization that represents MVPDs in every U.S. market. NCC Media meets marketers' needs to target consumer prospects efficiently and effectively in the communities where they live. Jointly owned by three of the nation's largest MVPDs – Comcast Cable, Cox Communications and Time Warner Cable – NCC Media is constantly evolving to maintain its status as the industry's most effective multi-platform sales organization. Consistent innovation and growth makes NCC Media the best partner in building the media plan of tomorrow, and today.

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