



**PRESS
INFORMATION**

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**The MRC Condemns the Recent Disclosure of Confidential
New York Local People Meter Audit Information**

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Nielsen Media Research (Nielsen) has applied to the Media Rating Council (MRC) for accreditation of its New York Local People Meter Service. The MRC believes that a people meter service can represent an improvement in existing local audience measurement.

As described in a May 28, 2004 MRC press release, an audit was recently completed of Nielsen's New York Local People Meter Service. The Accreditation process including actions by Nielsen to address concerns raised in the audit are ongoing.

During the course of MRC audits, ratings services provide significant proprietary information for review by MRC auditors and member companies. All MRC member companies have signed commitments to hold this information and the related discussions strictly confidential. This confidential exchange of information is fundamental to the MRC's ability to work in a constructive manner with a rating service to administer the voluntary accreditation process.

Recently, unknown parties provided confidential MRC documents to the *Los Angeles Times* newspaper in violation of the confidentiality requirements of MRC membership. Such a violation of trust threatens the accreditation process and undermines the ability of the MRC to gather the information it needs and to work cooperatively with the rating services. The MRC condemns the release of this information and we take seriously our responsibility to maintain confidentiality.

The MRC plans to vigorously investigate this matter and adjust its confidentiality procedures as necessary and take appropriate and strong disciplinary action, including possible expulsion from the MRC, against any member company found to violate the trust of the organization.

Nielsen has indicated its intention to address the audit issues raised by the MRC Television Committee proactively and the MRC intends to work in good faith to assess the adequacy of these actions.

Because of the public and governmental attention this audit has received, and requests for information from certain congressional personnel, the MRC has been working with both Nielsen and Ernst & Young to responsibly disclose the results of the New York Local People Meter audit to U.S. Government public officials.

About the MRC

The MRC is a non-profit industry association established in 1964 at the behest of the US Congress. The MRC is comprised 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's *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 40 syndicated research products are audited by the MRC.