European Viewability Initiative

Q&A related to the press release issued on 10th August 2017

Contents

Background Context and Objectives

1. **What is the background context to this initiative?**
   There have been industry wide calls to improve the quality of digital ad inventory and develop more robust digital measurement techniques. This is considered a vital step towards delivering more 'realistic' brand exposure metrics. More accurate and consistent viewability measurement will also help to establish a more reliable digital 'opportunity-to-see', supporting the need for enhanced comparability with TV and progress towards digital 'gross rating points'.

   At a more granular level, the key reasons for its' development are:
   - to help significantly reduce data discrepancies between different 'viewability' measurement tools
   - to ensure that such challenges are tackled in a harmonized manner across international markets

   All industry stakeholders - including advertisers, agencies, publishers, measurement companies – recognise the need to improve the quality of digital ad inventory. Improving the accuracy and consistency of measuring the viewability of delivered impressions will be a vital step towards identifying realistic brand exposure levels and will help to make digital advertising more directly comparable with TV where 'opportunity for the consumer to view' or 'opportunity to see' an advertisement is the accepted tenet for brand advertising. Digital advertising can be a useful channel to enhance brand exposure metrics as well as to capture audience and contextual data – it does, however, need to ensure the 'viewability' of an ad can be measured accurately and consistently across different measurement companies and markets.

2. **Why is a specific initiative necessary for Europe?**
   There are a couple of points to consider here – first, concerning the European market structure and secondly concerning the technical standards required by the market/s.

   In the first instance, the European advertising market has a strong tradition of local Joint Industry Committees (JICs) who create standards upon which buyers and sellers of media can rely. These standards can then be used in third party auditing of various stakeholders to show that they are operating to industry best practice.

   Whilst European markets display considerable variation, complexity and levels of development many stakeholders come together to enable the discussion and implementation of harmonised standards in order to implement efficiencies for buy and sell-side alike and enable market growth.

   This initiative will, not only, help provide European stakeholders with a strong voice in the development of international digital standards, but also to ensure alignment with specific market requirements (as far as possible). In addition, the structure of the certification framework has been designed to deliver a simple and cost-effective solution to all stakeholders involved.

The initiative will allow measurement companies to gain a Seal which will be recognised by all participating European markets and thus remove the need for further market-by-market certification (which might be deemed necessary under the traditional JIC structure where current certifications exist). Markets with processes or principles in place already will still be able to join and align behind the European Framework and Principles.

Similarly, markets at early stages of development or small in size will also be able to adopt the European Principles and rely on the initiative to accredit relevant companies from their market. In turn, avoiding the need to create costly or time-consuming systems of their own.

The second key point is that many markets across Europe have a tradition of strong publishers whose quality content are a significant driver of commercial opportunity and revenue. This means that robust measurement is a vital component to demonstrate quality in the trading environment.

There is a potential third point which is that the initiative can demonstrate further responsibility on the part of the digital advertising industry in front of regulatory authorities. Increased confidence in digital measurement standards are more likely to lead to a higher-quality, ad-funded media experience for all internet users.

As an overall result businesses trading in digital advertising across the European market will benefit from consistency in viewable impression measurement and more accurate results on which partners can rely.

3. **What are the core objectives of this initiative?**
   At a macro level, this initiative will help feed into the following, important industry objectives:
   1. Raise minimum quality standards in digital advertising measurement for all stakeholders across Europe
   2. Enhance the (internet) user experience in the context of changing user expectations
   3. Measure digital ad exposure which is deemed a key step towards increasing confidence in digital ad trading
   4. Improve confidence in the digital ad environment

   In addition to the above, the primary technical objective is to:
   - help significantly reduce data discrepancies between different 'viewability' measurement tools

4. **What are the key benefits for all industry stakeholders across Europe?**
   The key, four benefits are outlined below:
   1. **Significant reduction in viewability measurement discrepancies:**
      • by ensuring the technical approach used to measure viewable impressions is consistent across all viewability tools based upon a standard, robust set of Principles - driving comparable results.

2. **Move towards a fully viewable digital advertising environment:**
   - helping to support the quality proposition of viewable digital advertising inventory and significantly reducing payment for non-viewable impressions.

3. **Improved transparency and value for all stakeholders** (i.e. advertisers, agencies, publishers, measurement companies):
   - designed to have a positive impact upon the whole industry - irrespective of business model, size or type of company.

4. **Harmonised multi-national approach:**
   - giving confidence to all multi-national businesses that data is comparable across the European region and avoiding the need for disparate, costly national initiatives.

5. **What are the key benefits for national markets?**

The Certification Framework has been designed to create and facilitate a consistent solution across all European markets - irrespective of the existing status quo. This initiative provides a solution for those markets that do not already have a set of Viewability Measurement Principles or a Certification Framework in place, ensuring that measurement companies in all local markets are measuring to a consistent set of Principles. It also removes the need for costly and time-consuming market-by-market certification.

6. **What are the key timelines related to this initiative?**

Phase 1 (2016-17)
   - Established the organisational structure to shape the overall direction of the initiative.
   - Created a set of European Principles designed to help reduce measurement discrepancies (and ensure results are comparable) between viewability measurement tools across the whole region.
   - Developed a European Viewability Certification Framework to ensure the companies owning the viewability tools are meeting the agreed set of standards outlined within the European Principles. This will be underpinned by a consistent and independent audit process.

Phase 2 (2018+)
   - Evolve the Principles to include mobile.
   - Devise a separate audit process to ensure that other companies (i.e. publishers, intermediaries, trading desks etc.) are integrating the measurement tools with the correct procedures and standards. This will be added to the overall Certification Framework once the Principles have been developed.
   - Evolve existing industry guidelines to define a viewable impression based upon space and time.

European Viewability Measurement Principles

The European Viewability Measurement Principles can be downloaded here.

1. **What are the European Viewability Measurement Principles ('Principles') and why have they been created?**
   These Principles outline the basis on which the technical measurement of ad impressions should be conducted to determine viewability – the intention being to reduce data discrepancies between the different viewability measurement tools across Europe. The Principles are set out in the form of six modules, each including multiple sub-points. The intention is to use the Principles as the basis for a detailed audit to evaluate certify that measurement companies' tools are measuring viewable impressions in a consistent way.

   IAB Europe, EACA and WFA hope that these principles will prove useful in other regions where no solution currently exists.

2. **What are the six modules in the Principles?**
   1. Environments
   2. Measured Items
   3. Measurement
   4. Transparency & Reporting
   5. User Experience
   6. Non-Human Traffic

3. **What is the scope of the Principles?**
   The first version of the Principles applies to viewability tools that measure the opportunity to see in-page display and in-stream video ad content in an online desktop browser-based environment (this includes PCs and Laptops, not mobile). Mobile advertising will be covered in the next iteration of these Principles. Most likely to be released early in 2018.

4. **Who has driven the creation of these European Principles?**
   IAB Europe (Interactive Advertising Bureau Europe), EACA (European Association of Communications Agencies) and the WFA (World Federation of Advertisers) were the founding organisations - collaborating together to make this happen.

5. **Who has been consulted during the development of the Principles?**
   Extensive consultation has been conducted with a broad range of industry stakeholder groups, e.g. publishers, media agencies, advertisers, measurement companies, ad technology providers, national and international trade bodies and cross-industry organisations – including IAB Europe's Brand Advertising Committee and Measurement Organisations Forum, EACA's Media Agencies Council and WFA's Media Transparency Group. Notable contributions have been provided by the Media Ratings Council (MRC) in the US; BVDW, AGOF and OWM in Germany; JICWEBS in the UK; Digital Ad Trust in France and key trade bodies in various other European markets.

   This highly collaborative process will ensure the Principles meet the needs of markets with varied characteristics or stages of digital development, whilst incorporating best practice from (and ensuring in sync with) related initiatives around the globe.

European Viewability Steering Group

1. Who are the members of the European Viewability Steering Group ('EVSG')?

The EVSG comprises of representatives from IAB Europe, EACA, WFA and several national markets with developed viewability initiatives. The EVSG members are listed below.

IAB Europe:
- Karim Attia, Chair Brand Advertising Committee, IAB Europe
- Alison Fennah, Executive Business Advisor, IAB Europe
- Suzanne McElligott, Board Member, IAB Europe and CEO, IAB Ireland
- Tim Jones, Chair Research Committee, IAB Europe and International Research and Consumer Insight Lead, Oath

EACA:
- Jon Chase, Chair Media Agencies Council, EACA
- Dan Watson, Digital Director, Carat Global
- Bethan Crockett, Digital Risk Director, GroupM

WFA:
- Rob Dreblow, Global Head of Marketing Services, WFA
- Sital Banerjee, Global Head of Media, Philips
- Gerhard Louw, International Media Management & Digital Transformation, Deutsche Telekom

UK – JICWEBS (IPA, IAB UK, ISBA, AOP):
- Nigel Gwilliam, Head of Media & Emerging Tech, IPA
- Jon Mew, CEO, IAB UK

Germany - BVDW and AGOF:
- Bjorn Kaspring, Executive Chairman, AGOF
- Thomas Duhr, Vice President, BVDW

France - Digital Ad Trust (ARPP, Geste, IAB France, SRI, UDA, UDECAM):
- Jean-Baptiste Rouet, UDECAM
- Valérie Chavanne, Vice-President, IAB France
- Hélène Chartier, Director General, SRI

Italy - UPA, IAB Italy and Assocom:
- Anthony Cardamone, Assocom and IAB Italy
- Alberto Vivaldelli, Digital Manager, UPA

European Viewability Certification Framework

1. **What is the European Viewability Certification Framework ('Certification Framework') and how does it work?**

   Under the European Viewability Certification Framework, the Measurement Principles will be used as the basis for evaluating the technical approach undertaken by the viewability measurement companies. Approved auditors will evaluate the measurement companies according to the Principles and an evaluation report will be produced to help inform the potential issuing of a European Seal of Accreditation (referred to as a 'Seal'). The Seal will be recognised by all participating European markets and will remove the need for further market-by-market accreditation.

   The Framework will be managed at a European level by the designated European Authority and at a national level by the chosen representative body (or bodies) within each market, known as the National Authority. In some cases this is likely to be the local JIC (Joint Industry Committee) or its' national equivalent.

   The function of the European Authority is to manage the overall execution of the Certification Framework including managing the auditors, reviewing the audits and liaising with the National Authorities. The National Authorities will also be involved in helping to liaise with auditors in their market and issue the Seal.

   The organisational structure and workflow model on page 9 provides a topline summary of the core responsibilities for each organization or body involved in the process of the Certification Framework.

2. **What is the Measurement Company Forum?**

   This brings together viewability measurement companies operating in Europe to enable open discussions regarding the development of measurement technologies and facilitate the development of up-to-date, common best practices and standards.

   The Forum will convene once per quarter via conference call to discuss developments in initiatives such as viewability, fraud and metrics. The current members of the forum are: comScore, DMA Institute, Integral Ad Science, Meetrics and Moat. Other measurement companies have contributed via the general consultation process.

3. **What is the Publisher / Media Owner Forum?**

   The Publisher Forum will bring together national publisher associations (e.g. AOP in the UK and Geste in France) in conjunction with pan-European publishers to enable cross-border discussions and facilitate the development of up-to-date, common best practices and standards. The Forum may include a suitable representative from a European publisher organisation (e.g. EPC).

   The Forum will convene at least twice each year (most likely via conference call) to discuss developments in initiatives such as viewability, fraud and metrics.

Organisational structure and workflow model

European Viewability Steering Group (EVSG)

- Identifies core industry priorities and objectives
- Sets the strategic direction
- Responsible for the European Viewability Measurement Principles

Publisher / Media Owner Forum

- Review and provide input to future developments of the initiative

Measurement Company Forum

- Review and provide input to the development of measurement principles

European Authority (EA)

- Responsible for the management of the Certification Framework
- Collaborates closely with the National Authorities
- Management of Auditors
- Reviews and approves issuing of Certification Seals
- Central management of all related funding/finances

National Authorities

- Collaborate with the EA and, where appropriate, the appointed auditors to ensure the Certification Framework is administered effectively within the national market

Independent Auditors

- Liaise with EA, national authorities and Measurement Companies
- Create testing environment
- Prove tests are effective
- Undertake audits
- Provide detailed Report

Measurement Companies

- Liaise with EA, national authority and auditor to ensure the audits are conducted efficiently and effectively
- Subject to passing the audit, will receive and pay for Certification Seal

9

European Authority

1. **What is the European Authority?**
   The European Authority is the operational body that will drive, manage and execute the effective and ongoing administration of the Certification Framework. As per the workflow model its core tasks include:
   - Reviewing the audits with input from the Technical Committee
   - Liaising with the Local Authorities
   - Reviewing and signing off any new Seals to be issued

2. **Who is involved in the European Authority?**
   It is comprised of appropriate representatives from two of the three International organisations in the EVSG– namely, IAB Europe and the European Association of Communications Agencies (EACA). For the purposes of clarity, the WFA will not play an active role in this body.

Auditor RFP

1. **What is the process for appointing auditors?**
   The RFP process will seek to identify and appoint one or more auditors, interested auditors should contact the names listed at the end of this Press Release.

Potential future developments of the initiative in phase 2?

1. **What is a Viewable Impression Guideline or Standard?**
   This relates to the minimum acceptable metric concerning the proportion of a digital ad impression that is in-view, along with the length of continuous time it is in-view.

   Important to note that the European Viewability Measurement Principles are not intended as a Guideline or Standard.

2. **Will further elements of ad delivery and quality be addressed?**
   The EVSG could be a useful platform to discuss, develop or contribute towards solutions for other digital advertising priorities within the European market. Such considerations would need to be in line with the shared goals and demands of all markets across Europe, again mindful of their varied characteristics and priorities.

Appendix 1 – Further information about national market initiatives

Below are links / text to find out more about local initiatives related to viewability. The markets covered are those currently represented on the European Viewability Steering Group.

UK - JICWEBS
Find out more at: http://jicwebs.org/current-priorities/viewability-agreed-principles

Germany – Digital Marketing Quality Group
http://www.bvdw.org/themen/digital-marketing-quality.html

Italy - Libro Bianco Sulla Communicazione Digitale (White Paper on Digital Communication)
http://www.iab.it/iab-news/assocom-fcp-fedoweb-fieg-iab-netcomm-unicom-e-upa-presentano-il-libro-bianco-sulla-comunicazione-digitale/

France - Digital Ad Trust
The quality seal for web sites, Digital Ad trust, has been initiated by SRI (online sales houses) and UDECAM (media agencies) to set up concrete quality markers on digital advertising. Leading French digital & advertising associations, Geste (online publishers), UDA (advertisers), ARPP (self-regulation body) and IAB France, and has joined in the initiative and collaborated in writing the reference guidelines of the project.

This pragmatic and local action follows other international initiatives on setting new quality standards for online advertising. Digital Ad trust aims to address consumers' expectations in terms of surfing experience and privacy, to better qualify and monetise the value of publishers content, UX and brand value, and to match with advertisers' higher quality requirements on digital media.

Digital Ad Trust is led by a Decision Committee, composed of the presidents of the above trade associations. This committee is in charge of defining the markers, selecting certification partners, and toll out the whole project.

Primary contact details

For further information regarding this initiative, please see below contact details:

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