



MRC Issues Draft Version of Supplemental Updates to Ad Verification Guidelines; Opens 30-Day Public Comment Period

*Updates Designed to Enhance Brand Safety and Contextual Categorization Requirements
for Current Digital Advertising Environments*

New York, NY (July 10, 2018): The Media Rating Council (MRC) announced today it has issued a draft version of a Supplement to existing Guidelines for Brand Safety Ad Verification. The announcement opens a 30-day public comment period on the Supplement.

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.

The draft Supplement's new provisions establish rules for Brand Safety and Context Classification-related measurement and reporting that, unlike the existing Ad Verification Guidelines, now specifically consider discrete pieces of content for decision-making purposes, rather than including considerations that only extend to the domain, site, or page levels.

This additional granularity requirement equips the guidelines to more fully address Contextual Classification and Brand Safety considerations in an era when User Generated Content exists side-by-side with curated content and advertiser messaging in many of the most important and widely used digital media platforms. In addition, the Supplement touches upon many other issues, including: new guidance on Brand Safety considerations specific to Mobile Application environments; the establishment and definition of the concept of Adjacency as it relates to the proximity of ads to content in a variety of digital environments; and guidance on the appropriate balance of machine learning vs. human intervention in making Context and Brand Safety determinations.

Also, the Supplement creates a process through which a Brand Safety "Floor"—i.e., a consistent set of categories on which advertisers might choose to adopt a "never appropriate" position for their ad buys—can be structured and administered. The 4A's Advertiser Protection Bureau (part of the organization's Advertising Assurance initiative) is currently in the process of developing a proposed framework for such an approach, in parallel with the development of this MRC Supplement.

In addition to the collaboration with the aforementioned trade associations, the MRC has developed this draft with the assistance of an expert working group formed specifically for this project, consisting of representatives from advertisers, agencies, ad verification vendors, digital content platforms, and other organizations.

[Click here to access the public comment draft.](#)

Comments on the draft should be submitted to rpinelli@mediaratingcouncil.org no later than August 9th. MRC will consider the comments it receives during the 30-day public comment period, and will produce a proposed final version of the Supplement for review by the working group. It is expected that the final version of the Supplement will be issued before the end of Q3.

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.mediaringcouncil.org.

Media Contact

Bill Daddi

Daddi Brand Communications

646.370.1341

bill@daddibrand.com