Responsible advertising industry initiatives – repository

RESPONSIBLE ADVERTISING INITIATIVES

European Advertising Standards Alliance
- **Purpose:** Promote high ethical standards in commercial communications by means of effective self-regulation**.**
- **Initiators:** Advertising self-regulatory bodies in Europe.
- **Foundation/launch:** 1992.
- **Participants/audience:** 14 stakeholders representing the entire advertising value chain (advertisers, agencies, media, and digital platforms) which are all committed to ensuring responsible advertising and, on the other, 27 independent advertising self-regulatory organisations (SROs) which enforce self-regulatory codes at the national level.
- **Description:** EASA is the single authoritative voice on advertising self-regulation in Europe. EASA represents and coordinates collective advertising self-regulatory systems across Europe, and aims to promote and strengthen its ad self-regulatory network. It provides guidance and high operational standards as well as fosters a forward-looking dialogue at the European level to address common challenges and help ensure advertising self-regulation is recognised as a relevant part of the regulatory landscape.
- **Link:** www.easa-alliance.org

International Council for Ad Self-regulation (ICAS)
- **Purpose:** Act as a forum facilitating exchange of information and of best practices around ad self-regulation and working on common solutions to the global challenges faced by the advertising industry, facilitating the establishment of new SROs in emerging markets and empowering them to grow, as well as promoting self-regulation worldwide and highlighting its benefits for consumers, businesses, regulators and society as a whole.
- **Initiator:** European Advertising Standards Alliance members.
- **Foundation/launch:** 2016.
- **Participants/audience:** Advertising self-regulatory bodies and industry associations worldwide.
- **Description:** Umbrella organisation set up to exchange best practices, and strengthen advertising self-regulation globally by committing to enhance cooperation, coherence, and consistency – for the benefit of global consumers and businesses.
- **Link:** https://icas.global/about/history/

Trust programme (Trust Working Group) - UK
- **Purpose:**
  - Reduce advertising bombardment.
  - Reduce excessive advertising frequency and re-targeting.
  - Ensure the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) is 'best in class'.

- o Ensure that data privacy matters.
- o Show that advertising can drive social change.
- **Initiator:** The Advertising Association (AA) along with the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA) and the Incorporated Society of British Advertisers (ISBA).
- **Foundation/launch:** 2018.
- **Participants/audience**: The Trust Working Group has broad senior representation from industry bodies, ranging from broadcasters to publishers. Participants include the ASA and the Advertising Standards Board of Finance (ASBOF).
- **Description:** The Trust programme aims to address the decline in public trust in advertising. The Trust Working Group meets frequently to discuss self- and co-regulatory initiatives.

Link: https://adassoc.org.uk/our-work-category/trust-in-advertising/

ONLINE ADVERTISING INITIATIVES

Global Alliance for Responsible Media (GARM)

- **Purpose:** Address the challenge of harmful content on digital media platforms and its monetisation via advertising.
- **Initiator:** The World Federation of Advertisers (WFA).
- **Foundation/launch:** 2019.
- **Participants/audience:** Cross-industry: the membership of GARM is open to advertisers, ad-tech partners, media agencies, media platforms and industry associations. Members support the GARM operations via an annual membership fee and are expected to appoint representatives to be part of the GARM community. 132 members: brands, ad industry associations, ad-tech companies, platforms.
- **Description:** GARM's role is to act as the forum for the creation of solutions that will improve online safety for both consumers and advertisers. By creating a working forum where all parts of the online advertising system can meet, GARM's ambition is to get the digital media ecosystem working together on the shared priorities that will lead to the removal of harmful content from advertiser-supported social media
GARM works by addressing specific issues and challenges in working groups (see below) formed by member organisations with an individual and organizational interest in the given focus area. Each working group develops an appropriate solution to its challenge, and these solutions are then proposed to and voted by the broader GARM community**.**
    - o **Standards and definitions**: to create an industry-wide common framework of definitions to drive transparency, consistency and control in the placement of ads online.
    - o **Adjacency Standards and Control**: to create consistency in how we define and measure the placement of advertising in digital and social media formats, in a way that is similar to TV, streaming video, print, radio, while recognizing the unique qualities of these new formats.
    This group will develop a format specific framework (informed by consumer and media research) for online advertising which will establish a tool for media

placement controls online. This will bring together GARM-driven platform content categorization and adjacency preferences.

- o **Measurement and Oversight:** to create a simplified, aggregated reporting framework to better understand how the advertising industry is measuring the challenge and responding to harmful content and content that violates its safety policies.

  This reporting framework will help identify best practices and challenges via a series of questions; how safe the platform is for consumers, how safe the platform is for advertisers, how effective the platform is in enforcing its safety policies and how responsive the platform is in addressing errors in content moderation policy enforcement.

- o **Independent Verification Working Group** to improve transparency, accountability and trust in the marketplace by agreeing to and adopting best practices on content safety audits, with a focus on controls, integrations, measurement, and reporting. The end goal is to ensure that each GARM member platform adopts industry-accepted audits commensurate with their operations.

- **Link:** https://wfanet.org/leadership/garm/about-garm

AD FORMAT INITIATIVES

Coalition for Better ads (CBA)

- **Purpose:** Improve consumers' experience with online advertising. The Coalition for Better Ads has leveraged consumer insights and cross-industry expertise to develop and implement new global standards, the Better Ad Standards, for online advertising that address consumer expectations.
- **Initiators:** Leading international trade associations, platforms and companies involved in online media.
- **Foundation/launch:** 2016.
- **Participants/audience:** Advertising associations, IABs, brands, ad-tech companies.
- **Description:** Research and a consumer-centric methodology to identify which are the best ad placement practices for the consumer experience and to set up standards accordingly. The Coalition's Better Ads Standards identify the ad experiences that fall beneath a threshold of consumer acceptability and are most likely to drive consumers to install ad blockers. To date, more than 150,000 consumers have participated in the Coalition's research to develop its set of Better Ads Standards.
- **Link:** https://www.betterads.org/

ONLINE AD DELIVERY INITIATIVES

European Interactive Digital Advertising Alliance (EDAA)

- **Purpose:** Provide the 'AdChoices Icon' and 'Your Online Choices' platform to companies involved in data-driven advertising across Europe. Empower all internet users with greater transparency, choice, and control over their online advertising preferences.

- **Initiators:** European industry coalition representing advertisers, the advertising agency sector, the interactive and direct marketing sector, the advertising technology sector and the media sector. EDAA is governed by EU-level organisations, which make up the value chain of data-driven advertising within Europe, and acts to ensure consistency in the European self-regulatory approach.
- **Foundation/launch:** 2012.
- **Participants/audience:** founding and funding associations: ACT, AER, EACA, egta, EMMA, ENPA, EPC, FEDMA, IAB-Europe, and WFA. Participating companies: intermediary ad-tech providers, publishers, and advertisers (around 120 direct licensees).
- **Description:** The European Interactive Digital Advertising Alliance (EDAA)'s principal purpose is to provide the 'AdChoices Icon' to companies involved in data-driven advertising (or OBA) across Europe. The AdChoices Icon is a consumer-facing, interactive symbol that links consumers to an online portal. (www.youronlinechoices.eu), where consumers can, in a very user-friendly way, find out more about their online ad choices, how online advertising is used to support the sites and services they use, and how they can safeguard their privacy. 120 companies are actively participating in the Programme, using the AdChoices Icon and/or integration on the YourOnlineChoices Platform, which is available in 33 countries and 27 languages, with millions of visitors each year.

Link: https://edaa.eu/

IAB Gold Standard
- **Purpose:** Improve the digital advertising experience, help compliance with the GDPR and ePrivacy law, tackle ad fraud, uphold brand safety, and strengthen supply chain transparency.
- **Initiator:** IAB UK.
- **Foundation/launch:** 2017.
- **Participants/audience:** Around 90 IAB UK members (current list at https://www.iabuk.com/goldstandard/certified-and-registered). While brands can't become Gold Standard certified, a cohort of advertiser supporters have pledged to work with Gold Standard certified digital ad suppliers wherever possible.
- **Description:** The Gold Standard is a certification for buyers and sellers of digital media to improve the digital advertising experience for consumers, help compliance with the GDPR and ePrivacy law, tackle ad fraud, uphold brand safety, and strengthen supply chain transparency. For advertisers, working with buyers and sellers who are Gold Standard certified benefits both their consumers and their business by improving the digital ad experience. The specific aims of the Gold Standard are to:

  o **Reduce ad fraud** by implementing or supporting (as appropriate) IAB Tech Lab's ads.txt, sellers.json and OpenRTB Supply Chain Object.
  o **Uphold brand safety** by obtaining TAG Brand Safety Certification.
  o **Improve the experience** by adhering to The Coalition for Better Ads advertising standards.
  o **Help compliance with the GDPR and ePrivacy law** by adopting IAB Europe's Transparency Consent Framework (TCF).

- o **Strengthen supply chain transparency by** implementing or supporting (as appropriate) IAB Tech Labs' Buyers.json and DemandChain Object, and Open Measurement SDK (OMSDK).

Link: https://www.iabuk.com/goldstandard

Trustworthy Accountability Group (TAG) Brand Safety Certification

- **Purpose:** Fight criminal activity and increasing trust in the digital advertising industry.
- **Initiators:** TAG was created by the American Association of Advertising Agencies (4A's), Association of National Advertisers (ANA), and Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) and works collaboratively with companies throughout the digital ad supply chain.
- **Foundation/launch:** 1992.
- **Participants/audience:** The 700+ member TAG community include the world's largest and most influential brands, agencies, publishers, and ad tech providers: online platforms, adtech companies.
- **Description:** TAG advances its mission of eliminating fraudulent traffic, facilitating the sharing of threat intelligence, and promoting brand safety by connecting industry leaders, analysing threats, and sharing best practices worldwide. TAG is the first and only Information Sharing and Analysis Organization (ISAO) for the digital advertising industry. This U.S. Department of Homeland Security designation means TAG is the primary forum for sharing threat intelligence in the ad industry.
- **Link:** https://www.tagtoday.net/

SOCIETAL ISSUE RELATED INITIATIVES

Ad Net Zero

- **Purpose:** Helping advertising tackle the climate emergency.
- **Initiators:** The Advertising Association (AA), in partnership with the IPA and ISBA.
- **Foundation/launch:** the action plan was launched in the UK in 2020, launched in Ireland (2022), the US (2023) and New Zealand (Ju2023). The global leadership group reviews the international roll-out.
- **Participants/audience**: The leadership group includes WFA and EACA - industry associations, leading brands, digital platforms, agencies.

Description: the advertising industry's drive to decarbonise the production, distribution, and publication of advertising.

- o Reduce emissions from avertising business operations;
- o Reduce emissions from advertising production;
- o Reduce emissions from media planning and buying.;
- o Reduce advertising emissions through awards and from events;
- o Harness advertising's power to support behaviour change.
- **Link:** https://adnetzero.com/

All In Census & Action plan - UK

- **Purpose:** Track Industry's progress towards an inclusive workplace and take action

accordingly.

- **Initiator:** The Advertising Association (AA), conducted by Kantar on its behalf.
- **Foundation/launch:** first census lunched in 2021, second iteration in 2023.
- **Participants/audience**: People working in UK advertising and marketing services, across brands, agencies, media owners and tech companies.
- **Description:** A regular census covering issues such as Gender, Ethnicity, Social Mobility, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Age, Religion, Mental Health and Reporting Discrimination. Matters covered were extended to issues such as stress and anxiety, menopause or hybrid working.

  The abundant data provided the most thorough understanding yet of the industry's make-up and helped form the All In Action plan, a series of nine actions which companies across the industry are urged to implement. The plan covers:
    - Improve the experience & representation of black talent;
    - Improve the experience & representation of disabled;
    - Improve the experience andrepresentation of Talent from working-class backgrounds .

  The second industry census was conducted in spring 2023, generating over 19,000 responses across the UK advertising industry. Companies are assessed on evidence that they have put in place all the Actions. We had over 100 champions we announced in 2022 and the number is growing.

- **Link:** https://adassoc.org.uk/our-work/all-in-2023-census-tracks-industrys-progress-towards-inclusive-workplace/

Global DEI Census
- **Purpose:** Tack at global level the advertising industry's progress towards an inclusive workplace.
- **Initiator:** The World Federation of Advertisers (WFA) & partners: 160 organisations operating at global, regional and local levels; survey conducted by Kantar.
- **Foundation/launch:** 2021.
- **Participants/audience**: advertising and marketing professionals in 90+ markets,
- **Description:** to provide detailed insight into how the global industry is performing on a wide range of metrics and covers all protected characteristics – race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, gender identity or expression, family status or disability – as well as positions, salary and most importantly, lived experiences in the workplace.

  The report also shines a light on whether there's been any meaningful change on DEI compared to previous iterations.
- **Link:**https://wfanet.org/knowledge/diversity-and-inclusion/the-global-dei-census/2023

Planet Pledge
- **Purpose:** Promote and reinforce attitudes and behaviours which will help the world meet the challenges laid out in the UN SDGs.
- **Initiator:** The World Federation of Advertisers (WFA).
- **Foundation:** 2021.
- **Participants/audience**: Leading signatory brands.

- **Description:** The Planet Pledge aims to encourage CMOs to take action in four key areas:
  - o Commit to being a champion for the global Race to Zero campaign both internally within their organisations and to encouraging their marketing supply chain to do the same;
  - o Scale the capability of marketing organisations to lead for climate action by providing tools and guidance for their marketers and agencies;
  - o Harness the power of their marketing communications to drive more sustainable consumer behaviours;
  - o Reinforce a trustworthy marketing environment, where sustainability claims can be easily substantiated so that consumers can trust the marketing messages they are presented with as they seek to align their own consumption with their values.
- **Link:** https://wfanet.org/leadership/planet-pledge/about

Unstereotype Alliance
- **Purpose:** Eradicate harmful stereotypes in all media and advertising content.
- **Initiator:** UN Women, the United Nations entity for Gender Equality. Launched announced by UN Women in partnership with Unilever and industry leaders including WPP, IPG, facebook, Google, Mars, Microsoft, J&J and the WFA.
- **Foundation/launch:** 2017.
- **Participants/audience**: the advertising industry: industry associations, brands,
- **Description:** The Unstereotype Alliance is a thought and action platform that seeks to eradicate harmful stereotypes in all media and advertising content. It brings together partners and seeks to collectively use the advertising industry as a force for good to drive positive change all over the world. The Alliance contributes to empowering people in all their diversity (race, class, age, ability, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, language, education, etc.) to help create an equal world.

  Signatories commit to create unstereotyped branded content by:
  - o Depicting people as empowered actors;
  - o Refraining from objectifying people;
  - o Portraying progressive and multi-dimensional personalities.

  They aim to foster an unstereotyped culture, through:
  - o Driving gender balance in senior leadership and creative roles;
  - o Directly addressing unconscious bias, diversity and inclusion through training as a standard across the industry;
  - o Challenging each other as advertisers and advertising agencies to deliver the best unstereotyped marketing content;

  And they pledge to hold themselves accountable by setting clear goals and measuring change annually.
- **Link:** https://www.unstereotypealliance.org/en

SECTORAL INITIATIVES

EU Pledge
- **Purpose:** The EU Pledge is a voluntary initiative by leading food and beverage companies

to change the way they advertise to children. This is a response from industry leaders to calls made by the EU institutions for the food industry to use commercial communications to support parents in making the right diet and lifestyle choices for their children.

- **Initiators:** leading food and beverage companies coordinated by the World Federation of Advertisers (WFA)
- **Foundation/launch:** 2008.
- **Participants/audience**: 22 leading food and beverage companies.
- **Description:** commitment by signatories:
  - Not to advertise food and beverages to children under 13 years, except for products which fulfil the EU Pledge common nutrition criteria;
  - No marketing or advertising in primary schools, except where specifically requested by, or agreed with, the school administration for educational purposes;
  - To abide by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Code of Advertising and Marketing Communication Practice; and the ICC Framework for Responsible Food and Beverage Marketing Communications in all marketing communications.

The programme is monitored and features an accountability mechanism to handle consumer complaints which is managed by EASA and its network of SROs.

- **Link:** https://eu-pledge.eu/

Digital Guiding Principles: (DGPs)

- **Purpose**: Help ensure that marketing from signatory alcohol companies is only directed at those adults who can lawfully buy their products, through five key safeguards – the Digital Guiding Principles - on their online alcohol marketing channels.
- **Initiators:** The International Alliance for Responsible Drinking (IARD) and the World Federation of Advertisers (WFA).
- **Foundation/launch:** 2014.
- **Participants/audience**: Leading global producers of beer, wine, and spirits.
- **Description:** It sets out 5 mandatory controls on company websites, apps and company social media profiles:
  - Age affirmation mechanism;
  - Transparency / disclosing official brand pages;
  - User Generated Content Policy;
  - Forward Advice Notice ;
  - Responsible Drinking Message .
    The programme is monitored by EASA and its network of SROs.
- **Links:**
  https://www.iard.org/science-resources/detail/Digital-Guiding-Principles-Self-Regulation-of-Mark
  https://www.iard.org/actions/digital-guiding-principles

International Alliance for Responsible Drinking (IARD)

- **Purpose:**
- **Initiator:** leading producers of beer, wine, and spirits in the European Union coordinated by the World Federation of Advertisers (WFA).
- **Foundation/launch:**

- **Participants/audience**:
- **Description:**

International Food and Beverages Alliance (IFBA)
- **Purpose:**
- **Initiator:** leading producers of beer, wine, and spirits in the European Union coordinated by the World Federation of Advertisers (WFA).
- **Foundation/launch:**
- **Participants/audience**:
- **Description:**
- **Link:** https://ifballiance.org/commitments/responsible-marketing

Responsible Marketing Pact (RMP)
- **Purpose:** Reduce minors' exposure to alcohol marketing, limit the appeal of alcohol marketing to minors and strive to ensure the online environment is free from alcohol marketing to minors.
- **Initiator:** leading producers of beer, wine, and spirits in the European Union coordinated by the World Federation of Advertisers (WFA).
- **Foundation/launch:** 2014.
- **Participants/audience**: Biggest alcoholic beverage producers in the European Union.
- **Description:** Commitment pursues the following goals:
    - Placement of ads: only placed in media where the primary audience is adults;
    - Creative execution: exclusion list of over 50 elements to avoid in ads;
    - Digital controls: covers all websites, apps and applicable social media;
    - Influencer marketing: Influencers must comply with the RMP exclusion list and age-gate all brand-related posts. When it is not possible to age-gate posts, influencers must be over 25 and appeal primarily to adults.

    The digital controls and creative execution goals are monitored by EASA and its network of SROs.
- **Link:** https://the-rmp.eu/