

Tackling advertisers' challenges online: the essential standards

iab.^{UK}

IAB UK & IAB Tech Lab

Understanding existing standards in the digital ad industry

At IAB UK, our [vision for effective regulation](#) is that the right standards and tools are in place - with buy-in across the digital advertising supply chain - so that businesses can identify responsible partners and uphold best practices. The [IAB Gold Standard](#) sits at the heart of this framework of industry-led regulation.

To support this, we have worked with IAB Tech Lab to map how existing industry standards are addressed by current industry standards. Here you will find a breakdown of key issues that advertisers are facing online – from scam ads to ad misplacement – and the standards that you should implement to help mitigate them.

Scam advertising

These tools help to minimise the appearance of scam ads and protect consumers from scams perpetrated via exploitation of legitimate advertising services

DemandChain Object & Buyers.json

These [IAB Tech Lab tools](#) help publishers and SSPs to accurately identify an advertiser.

DemandChain Object provides end-to-end transparency of all entities involved in delivering an ad. This is achieved by embedding information incrementally in the bid response.

Buyers.json is used to select the advertisers a publisher/SSP would like to appear on their site and block inappropriate advertisers.

Ad Product Taxonomy

This is a [taxonomy](#) that advertisers can use to label the product and content that is being advertised in the creative. Publishers can use these labels to prevent ads that are unsuitable for their audiences being delivered on their pages.

Transparency Center

'Specification Adoption Tracker' is a tool available in Tech Lab's [Transparency Center](#). It is used to identify companies that are adopting the latest industry standards, compliance programmes and/or best practices.

Additionally, the Transparency Center houses "Business Data" about organisations within the industry, such as the different vendor IDs platforms have across different systems. This can be used as a source of truth for legitimate players in the industry.

Ad misplacement

These tools help to avoid legitimate adverts being placed in/next to illegal content (e.g. on sites engaged in piracy, terrorism), and funding those hosting that content.

Supply Chain Validation (Ads.txt, Sellers.json, SupplyChain Object)

A suite of IAB Tech Lab standards used to bring more transparency to all the vendors that have been involved in an ad transaction. Using these transparency standards, advertisers can help to ensure that the ads that they are delivering are going through legitimate supply paths and are therefore more likely to be being delivered to the intended site.

Spiders & Bots List

Using the Spiders & Bots list for blocking helps to block all known, legitimate non-human traffic on the internet (GIVT), helping to reduce and minimise the websites that ads are being served on.

Content Taxonomy

A taxonomy that can be used by publishers to describe the content and context of the site the ad will be being served in. It can be used to actively target known types of sites and content.

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Open-Source Initiative

Zefr has contributed to the Open Source Initiative and provided the industry with a video content benchmarking tool that helps publishers more accurately categorise their video content against the GARM standards

Other Available Resources

Verification tools used to filter Sophisticated Invalid Traffic include [PIPCU Infringing website list](#) and [TAG Brand Safety](#)

Targeting away from specific audiences (e.g. children)

These tools enable advertisers to effectively apply audience restrictions to their ad campaigns (typically to comply with rules that prohibit targeting of specific audience groups/or require advertisers to actively avoid those audiences) e.g. age restricted audiences

Seller Defined Audiences

Seller Defined Audiences has been developed by IAB Tech Lab to enable publishers to sell the first-party data that they hold on consumers, without a reliance on cookies - known audience demographics and vulnerable groups can be excluded from targeting within this.

Data Transparency Label

The Data Transparency Label brings transparency to the metadata about the data that is being bought or sold – such as the age of the data, source, consent mechanisms, etc.

Content Taxonomy 3.0

Publishers can use this to flag when they have sensitive data on a page. Additionally, advertisers can use the contextual understanding of a page to avoid content that is targeted towards an unintended audience.

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Audience Taxonomy

Common nomenclature to describe audience segments. The [Audience Taxonomy](#) standardises these segments to improve consistency across the industry. The Audience Taxonomy also provides a mechanism to make segmentation approaches clearer by introducing Tier 1 level labelling that designates whether the segment describes attribution that are demographic, interest-based, or purchase-intent based.

TCF/Global Privacy Platform

IAB Europe's [Transparency & Consent Framework](#) and Tech Lab's [Global Privacy Platform](#) are used to capture consumer privacy preferences when it comes to personal data. Personal data needs to be responsibly used to understand the audience attributes.

Transparency Center

'Specification Adoption Tracker' is a tool available in the [Transparency Center](#) that can be used to identify companies that are adopting the latest industry standards, compliance programmes and/or best practices.

Supply chain transparency

Tools that help to ensure supply/value chains are limited to known, legitimate service providers

Supply Chain Validation (Ads.txt, Sellers.json, SupplyChain Object)

A [suite of IAB Tech Lab standards](#) used to bring more transparency to the vendors that have been involved in an ad transaction. Using these transparency standards, advertisers can choose to only work with supply paths they know include legitimate players.

Transparency Center

IAB Tech Lab's [Transparency Center](#) can be used to identify companies and potential partners that are adopting good practice within the industry.