



Joint Industry Committee for Web Standards

**JICWEBS**

**DTSG**

**UK Good Practice Principles for the Trading  
of Digital Display Advertising**

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# 1. UK Good Practice Principles

## 1.1 Introduction

The UK<sup>1</sup> Good Practice Principles ('the Principles') have been drafted by a cross-industry group called the Digital Trading Standards Group (DTSG)<sup>2</sup> for review and adoption by [www.jicwebs.org](http://www.jicwebs.org). The intention of the Principles is to significantly reduce the risk of the misplacement of display advertising on digital media properties, uphold brand safety and protect the integrity of digital advertising. The work of the DTSG also reflects a common goal: that digital display advertising should not support inappropriate or illegal content or services.

The Principles cover commitments for all businesses involved in the buying, selling or facilitating of display advertising (see definitions in Appendix 1). These Principles, however, do not apply to Facilitators providing standalone ad serving services. The Principles aspire to evolve the objectives of the UK Internet Advertising Sales House (IASH) code in line with current and future technology and trading methods.

## 1.2 What is digital advertising trading?

Digital display advertising – adverts that are displayed on digital media properties or other connected applications - commands a large share of media spend and helps to fund content, services and applications at little or no cost to consumers. Digital ad trading is the term given to the buying and selling of display media. The way in which digital display media is bought and sold has dramatically changed over the last 10 years and, as the market matures, so does the way in which this media is traded.

A video explaining how online display advertising works and the different businesses in the trading ecosystem is available at:

[www.iabuk.net/video/the-evolution-of-online-display-advertising](http://www.iabuk.net/video/the-evolution-of-online-display-advertising)

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<sup>1</sup>Business with the UK presence, targeting UK audience/users.

<sup>2</sup> The DTSG is made up of representatives of the following parts of the digital display trading ecosystem: advertisers, agencies, agency trading desks (ATDs), demand side platforms (DSPs), advertising networks, sales houses, advertising exchanges, supply side platforms (SSPs) and publishers. See Appendix 1.

### 1.3 The Principles

1. The Buyers and Sellers of digital display advertising shall ensure that the transaction is one pursuant to either (a) a Primary Agreement or (b) the specific terms and policies within an agreed or signed contract. An example of a Primary Agreement can be found at [www.jicwebs.org](http://www.jicwebs.org). See *Note A*.
2. A Primary Agreement, or the specific terms and policies within an agreed or signed contract, should include the Buyers and Sellers' intention as to where the advertising should (or should not) appear. See *Note A*.

The Buyers and Sellers should select from one or both of the following means to minimise ad misplacement:

- A. Independently-certified (to JICWEBS standards) Content Verification (CV) tool (criteria agreed between the Buyer and Seller pre-delivery); or
- B. Appropriate / Inappropriate Schedules (criteria agreed between the Buyer and Seller pre-delivery).

*See Notes B and C.*

3. Sellers should confirm the specific provisions applied to minimise the risk of ad misplacement, irrespective of whether inventory is sourced directly or indirectly. In the absence of specific provisions, then as a minimum, a statement of reasonable endeavours is required.
4. Sellers should be able to explain the process(es) that form the basis of specific provisions and/or the reasonable endeavours.
5. Both Buyers and Sellers should understand any contractual consequences should they fail to monitor this process and respond appropriately to ad misplacement via take down.
6. Following a commitment to these Principles, each Signatory will have their ad misplacement minimisation policies independently verified by a JICWEBS-approved provider within six months and thereafter every year. Further details of this process are set out in the compliance and enforcement paper accompanying these Principles.

Notes:

- A. Principles 1 and 2 can be incorporated into agreed or signed contract terms and policies as long as they cover the substantive points regarding the methods for minimising 'ad misplacement'. An example of a Primary Agreement can be found at [www.jicwebs.org](http://www.jicwebs.org).
- B. A Facilitator will abide by any such criteria selected by the Buyer and / or Seller in the user interface provided by that Facilitator.
- C. No suggested criteria or scheduling, nor any form of "inappropriate" destinations will be drawn up, maintained or approved by the DTSG or JICWEBS in relation to these Principles. The designation of such information is a matter solely for the Buyer to determine. Sources used may be referenced in a Primary Agreement or other industry information as required by the Buyers but with a clear disclaimer that such sources and information are not the responsibility of the DTSG or JICWEBS.

## **2. Compliance and Enforcement**

Following a commitment to the Principles, each Signatory will have their ad misplacement minimisation policies independently verified by a JICWEBS\*-approved provider (“Verification Provider”) within six months and thereafter every year.

This paper, accompanying the Principles, sets out how this process will work and the requirements for (i) selecting a Verification Provider and (ii) the review of a Signatory’s policies by a Verification Provider. The DTSG may evolve the detail and depth required from independent verification, as the Principles themselves evolve, and according to the DTSG Terms of Reference.

### **2.1 Selection of Verification Provider**

A Signatory must choose and use a Verification Provider\*\* that is a registered auditor and member of either The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland (ICAS), The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland (ICAI) or The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA). In exceptional circumstances a Signatory may apply to JICWEBS to use a provider who is not a member of one of the above bodies, setting out the exceptional circumstances for consideration.

These exceptional circumstances will be in addition to the following criteria:

- A. Be independent of and / or not owned by any Signatory, DTSG business or relevant individual Trade Association; and
- B. Maintain business operations in the UK.

JICWEBS will consider the application of Verification Providers in a timely manner and will not unreasonably withhold its approval thereof. All providers will be subject to annual review by JICWEBS and will submit compliance certificates and copies of relevant supporting material to JICWEBS, which will act as a central depository for this process.

JICWEBS will publicly disclose all its certification requirements and its review decisions regarding Verification Providers submitted for approval.

## 2.2 Independent Policy Verification Process

The Verification Provider will check the Signatory's compliance with the Principles. The Signatory must provide the Verification Provider with relevant information regarding the ad misplacement policies in force, and supplement such information by email or telephone correspondence as required.

Relevant written information may include:

- A. Contract terms and policies relating to the transactions of ads;
- B. A statement of reasonable endeavours applied to minimise the risk of ad misplacement,
- C. Internal policies, procedures and controls relating to the placement of ads, such as the:
  - i. details regarding the use of CV tools and appropriate / inappropriate schedules;
  - ii. names and training of personnel with enforcement responsibility; and
  - iii. enforcement process.

The Verification Provider must provide the Signatory, , with a written report of its findings and, if it determines that the Signatory's policies are compliant with the Principles, a Verification Submission form should be sent to JICWEBS to consider if a certificate and seal will be issued.

Please note: Independent Verification is limited solely to whether the Signatory has implemented policies for minimising ad misplacement in compliance with the Principles. It does not extend to testing the effectiveness of any processes, procedures or controls for ad misplacement. The compliance certificate issued by the Verification Provider only covers the Signatory's policies for minimising ad misplacement.

\* JICWEBS is the UK's Joint Industry Committee for Web Standards and is made up of the following trade bodies: Association of Online Publishers (AOP), Internet Advertising Bureau (IAB), Newspaper Society, Newspapers Publishers Association, ISBA – the voice of advertisers and the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA).

\*\* This will include ABC.

## 2.3 Reporting

### 2.3.1 Verification submission

A standard verification form, available from JICWEBS, should be completed and jointly submitted by the Signatory and Verification Provider to JICWEBS.

Against each principle this form should include a description of how the signatory has complied with the principle during the period of review. This should include sufficient information, from documented policies and processes, so that the reader can have a clear understanding of the policy and processes. As a minimum this should be in the form of a summary and/or extracts from relevant documents along with easily accessible links to the documents themselves.

The information on the verification submission will be replicated on the certificate.

### 2.3.2 Certificates and Seals

Certificates and seals will be issued by JICWEBS and published on [www.jicwebs.org](http://www.jicwebs.org)

The seal is comprised of

- a. JICWEBS DTSG Brand Safety logo
- b. Logo of verification provider (optional)
- c. Month and year that seal is valid to.

The certificate is comprised of;

- a. The seal
- b. Signatory's name and address,
- c. Signatory's logo (optional)
- d. Business/Brand verified
- e. Service provided
- f. Month of verification
- g. Compliance findings against the GPPs (as reported on the verification submission)
- h. Verification Provider's name and address
- i. Statement of the Verification Provider



## **2.4 Timing**

### **2.4.1 First seal**

A signatory should have their first seal issued within six months of being registered. *For example, registration accepted in May 2015 - the first seal should be issued by JICWEBS by end of November 2015.*

### **2.4.2 Subsequent seals**

The subsequent seal must be issued before the end of the 'valid to' month and year on the current seal.

If a subsequent submission is made early then the new seal can be valid to 12 months from the current seal date, provided that the month of verification is within the timeframe set out in 2.4.4. *For example - current seal valid to July 2015, verification work is done in March 2015, submission is made in April 2015 – then new seal would be valid to July 2016.*

### **2.4.3 Verification submission**

A joint submission by the Signatory and Verification Provider must be made to JICWEBS in consideration of a seal being issued. This should be at least two weeks before the end of the month in which the seal is to be issued.

If it is likely that the submission will not be made in time then the signatory should formally request JICWEBS to consider a later submission date. The signatory should explain the reason for the delay and suggest a revised submission date. JICWEBS will then inform the signatory of its decision.

### **2.4.4 Verification work**

The month in which the verification work is completed should be no earlier than four months before the month in which the seal is issued. *For example - the verification work is completed in March 2015 then the seal must be issued no later than July 2015.*

### **2.4.5 Signatory listing**

JICWEBS will maintain a list of signatories to the JICWEB DTSG GPPs. To be listed, a company must be currently registered with JICWEBS. In addition companies must have a current seal or be within the 6 month period before their first seal is to be issued.

Companies who have been granted a delayed submission date will be de-listed once the normal expected seal issue date has passed. They will be re-listed once a current seal is issued by JICWEBS.

## Appendix 1: Definitions

*Display advertising:* Display advertising is the display of visual files including images, Flash and video (“Display Ads”) provided by Buyers to Sellers on a digital media property (or other connected application) when an internet user visits the digital media property. Display Ads come in varying formats.

*Seller:* A Seller is a business that **sells** or is responsible for the placing of display advertising on digital media properties (or other connected application) (e.g. advertising network).

*Facilitator:* A Facilitator is a business that provides a technology platform with the primary purpose of brokering, for compensation, the **placement** of display advertisements between Buyers and Sellers (e.g. advertising exchange). Facilitators provide the tools and controls to enable Buyers and Sellers to help protect brand safety in line with DTSG requirements.

*Buyer:* A Buyer is a business that **buys** display advertising from a Seller (advertiser or agency).

*Primary Agreement:* A Primary Agreement is a set of terms agreed between the Buyer and Seller.

*Content Verification (CV) Tool:* A CV tool is a technology product or service that may block or report the serving of a display advertisement onto destinations that have been defined as inappropriate to the advertising campaign by the Buyer.

*Inappropriate / Appropriate Schedules:* These Schedules may include/exclude sites, URLs or applications that are deemed either appropriate or inappropriate by Buyers and Sellers. Buyers’ and Sellers’ agreement to the criteria for these Schedules, whether communicated through the user interface or some other channel, should be pursuant to a Primary Agreement or terms and/or policies.

*For definitions of all business models involved in the digital trading process see: [www.iabuk.net/resources/jargon-buster](http://www.iabuk.net/resources/jargon-buster).*

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