



Online Audience Measurement and Ad Effectiveness Metrics and KPIs **An IAB Europe Blueprint**



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Introduction

IAB Europe Mission

IAB Europe is the voice of digital business and the leading European-level industry association for the interactive advertising ecosystem.

One of IAB Europe's key objectives is to drive brand advertising into digital by developing and facilitating the uptake of business standards across Europe within its Brand Advertising Committee. The IAB Europe Brand Advertising Committee was formed to provide Brand Advertisers with a reliable and trusted Brand Advertising Framework for the converging digital and traditional media environment.

This Framework includes the establishment of recommendations for audience metrics and brand advertising KPIs across Europe as well as ad formats, audience segments and quality, which are compatible with other initiatives around the globe and sets the focus clearly on *online brand advertising*. The Brand Advertising Committee is a multi-stakeholder group with global, regional and local input.

Blueprint Objective

The objective of this blueprint is to outline the IAB Europe Brand Advertising Committee's goals and recommended actions for online audience and ad effectiveness metrics and KPIs to attract further brand advertising investment into digital channels across Europe. We believe that better audience and effectiveness metrics play a crucial part to establish confidence in online media and demonstrate its efficacy for brand building.

Our Goals

We acknowledge that the current role and strength of digital channels stills varies across the richness and diversity of European markets and individual countries may wish to develop their own solutions, addressing specific local conditions and characteristics. But we also believe strongly that in a globalised economy establishing common standards and metrics that are compatible across markets will ultimately benefit all stakeholders. As such the goals of this blueprint are:

- a. To **guide** the development of audience measurement across the increasing number of digital platforms
- b. To **promote** compatible and standardised sets of metrics applicable to all major media channels
- c. To **encourage** closer cooperation between separate audience and brand KPI measurement initiatives in individual markets to provide a more holistic, media neutral data set for advertisers, planning and buying agencies, and media owners and vendors of advertising inventory

The Needs of Stakeholders

We acknowledge that key stakeholders, notably advertisers, agencies, and publishers may have different needs to achieve their business objectives. We therefore surveyed¹ over 700 key business managers across Europe and held numerous in-depth discussions with selected senior executives to understand what they feel will benefit the growth of online brand advertising.

- Click-through measurements for direct response campaigns have long been a key component that helped the growth of online advertising and enabled advertisers to establish the effectiveness and marketing ROI of their campaigns. These metrics are of limited use to plan, execute, and evaluate longer-term brand building campaigns, which need reliable information on audience reach, frequency of exposure and achieved GRP levels.
- Single media schedules are a thing of the past and today advertisers need to use an array of media channels to connect with their target groups and create consumer touch points. Audience data therefore needs to be more consistent across all channels to make reliable comparisons between channels as well as to evaluate the net results achieved across all channels used.
- Definitions used for key metrics, such as *exposure* or *impressions* need to be tightened to avoid eroding advertisers' confidence in the data. Measuring the viewability of served impressions will be a vital step towards delivering realistic exposure levels. Specific efforts should be made to overcome any technical difficulties measuring the viewability of display or video ads.
- Brand advertising managers need a better understanding of how online channels work and how they can achieve specific campaign objectives. Audience metrics should therefore be combined whenever feasible with data on achieved brand KPIs, such as awareness, brand affinity, and purchase intent with the aim, for example, to measure and describe the fuller customer journey across the media landscape.

¹ IAB Europe Metrics and KPIs survey – key results: <http://www.iabeurope.eu/research-and-papers/iab-europe-reports-priorities-digital-measurement-and-need-c>

A Call for Action

(not necessarily in any particular order)

Deliverable metrics

- Online audience measurement should integrate with and enhance other established metrics, such as net reach, frequency and GRP levels
- Online audience metrics should be reported individually by PC/Laptops, Tablets, Smartphone devices and Connected TVs both for web or in-app
- Audience metrics should be combined whenever feasible with data identifying the impact on achieved brand KPIs, such as awareness, brand affinity, and purchase intent with the aim, for example, to measure and describe the fuller customer journey across the media landscape
- Results should primarily be compatible with other domestic media currencies, and secondly with online audience surveys across markets
 - For example, target definitions should be compatible by demographic and/or lifestyle segments and have consistent survey universe definitions (and weighting) across media channels
- Exposure measurement should take into account the viewability of display or video ads to deliver realistic opportunity to see (OTS) outcomes

Goals for measurement of online audience and ad effectiveness Metrics and KPIs

- Granular media and consumer data that is collected should be updated frequently
- Online audience surveys should be structured, as much as possible, in such a way that the data can be integrated with other media currencies, notably television and print
- Published information must be based on reliable data with large enough samples to produce statistically robust results
- Stakeholders should encourage further development and understanding of hybrid measurement combining panel-based data with site census data
- Industry-wide measurement initiatives should be encouraged – whether in the form of traditional Joint Industry Committees (JICs) or any other multi-stakeholder agreement
- Data collection and other technical issues should be transparent and shared with all subscribers

- Independent verification of results or third party audits are advantageous to help establish confidence in the data
- Online advertising is increasingly being used by brand advertisers to achieve brand communication objectives; however education and support are still needed to ensure full understanding of the potential of the medium and new developments and innovations. IAB Europe's [Library of Ad Effectiveness Case Studies](#)² showcases some of the latest examples of effectiveness of digital advertising for branding campaigns, alone and in combination with other media.
- In the light of ongoing convergence online measurement initiatives are encouraged to reach out to the organisers and suppliers of other media currencies that are relevant in their local markets
- IAB Europe recognises that all stakeholders, including research and technology suppliers, shall participate in cross-industry discussions in order to facilitate the development of standards and common best practices across Europe's borders. Therefore IAB Europe is establishing a Measurement Organisations Forum and a Supplier Forum to provide a platform for these discussions in Europe. This should enable efficiency levels to improve, which in turn can facilitate markets of many sizes to successfully adopt innovation and best practices that otherwise might risk being exclusive to larger territories.

This Blueprint has been developed by the IAB Europe Brand Advertising Committee.

² IAB Europe Library of Ad Effectiveness Case Studies - <http://www.iabeurope.eu/research-and-papers/iab-europe-library-ad-effectiveness-case-studies>

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