



## **MRC Issues Draft Version of Cross-Media Audience Measurement Standards For Video; Opens 60-Day Public Comment Period**

*Addresses electronic measurement of video advertising and content audiences, with subsequent phases planned to focus on display and audio*

*Release marks start of final phase of the Making Measurement Make Sense (3MS) Initiative*

New York, NY (March 25, 2019): The Media Rating Council (MRC) announced today it has issued a draft version of its Cross-Media Audience Measurement Standards. The announcement opens a 60-day public comment period on the standards.

The draft standards address measurement of video advertising and content delivered through television, OTT and digital, including both desktop and mobile. They do not include measurements collected through any non-electronic means, such as diary collection and surveys or coincidental studies. These forms may be addressed in subsequent phases.

“The positive outcomes of the industry’s 3MS development program are now being realized, and we’re delighted to have proposed standards that have the potential to provide effective cross-media audience measurement,” said Bob Liodice, CEO of the ANA. “The original objective for 3MS was to develop clear standards-based metrics for interactive advertising that were comparable to traditional media. With this draft, that goal is on the verge of being met. The last leg of this journey is to secure broad industry feedback to guide the development of final standards. It is expected that such standards will be released later this year.”

Some of the provisions in the Phase 1 draft Standards are:

- Viewable Impressions
  - For combined deduplicated cross-media video measurement, a viewability qualification threshold of 100% of pixels on screen for at least two continuous seconds must be utilized for both digital and linear components. Viewable impressions are the minimum required qualifying measurement unit for cross-media advertising Reach, Frequency and GRP.
- Sophisticated Invalid Traffic (SIVT) Filtration
  - Cross-media audience measurement must be based on filtration inclusive of General and Sophisticated Invalid Traffic (GIVT and SIVT, respectively).
- Duration
  - For audience measurement of any kind, including cross-media, average Viewable Duration reporting (based on unduplicated viewable duration) is required, with viewable completion audience metrics highly encouraged in cross-media video measurement. The Standard provides for flexibility in duration reporting based upon criteria such as actual and quartile.

- Consideration of Audio
  - Presence of audio must be considered in determining a Viewable Video Impression (and input into GRP) for cross-media video. Measurement organizations should separately report Viewable video duration that is also audible (non-mute or non-zero) where this can be measured.

An appendix to the Standard outlines a new metric called a "Duration Weighted Viewable Impression," which is weighted on an absolute basis using a 30 second denominator. This is highly encouraged as an additional input into cross-media video exposure metrics (i.e., frequency and GRP metrics). It is planned to become an additional requirement in 2021. Duration weighting should not be applied to content.

*The MRC Cross-Media Audience Measurement Standards* draft was produced in collaboration with an industry working group of more than 175 companies and supported by the founding member associations of the Making Measurement Make Sense (3MS) initiative and by the Video Advertising Bureau.

The draft Standard release marks the start of the final phase of the 3MS program, a cross-industry initiative founded by the American Association of Advertising Agencies (4A's), the Association of National Advertisers (ANA) and the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB). The initiative chose the MRC as an independent industry body to set and implement measurement standards. The goal of 3MS was to advance five principles:

- 1) Moving the industry to a viewable impressions standard and counting real exposures online
- 2) Ensuring that online advertising migrate to a currency based on audience impressions, not gross impressions
- 3) Create a transparent classification system in recognition of the fact that all ad units are not created equal
- 4) Determine interactivity "metrics that matter" for brand marketers so that marketers can better evaluate online's contribution to brand building
- 5) Work to make digital media measurement more comparable and integrated with other media

"As advertisers and agencies look increasingly to omni-channel strategies, the need for consensus behind clear evidence based standards making true cross-media measurement possible is vital," says Louis Jones, EVP, Media and Data for the 4As. "At its origination, the 3MS initiative has had this as our ultimate goal, and it has taken great industry input and cooperation to reach a point where we can begin to see eventual achievement of our final objective."

"The consumer economy is built on advertising and marketing, and advertising and marketing require transparent metrics that are rigorous in their construction and near-universal in their implementation," commented Susan Hogan, SVP Research & Measurement, IAB. "The 3MS process has brought us closer to these goals. IAB urges publishers, platforms, agencies, and brands to provide feedback on these draft standards, and then adopt the consensus standards that result."

The draft standard can be accessed and comments registered through links available at [www.mediatingcouncil.org](http://www.mediatingcouncil.org).

MRC will consider the comments it receives during the 60-day public comment period, which ends May 24<sup>th</sup>. Shortly after that date, MRC will produce a proposed final version of the Standards for review by the working group. It is expected that the final version of the Standards will be issued by early in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2019.

#### **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.mediatingcouncil.org](http://www.mediatingcouncil.org).

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