

Viewability Certification – Q&A Sheet

1. What is viewability?

In digital media, the term ‘viewability’ is used by some to refer to the time (in seconds) and the area (usually %) that an online advertisement is viewable within a user’s browser. In particular it’s relevant to the online ad display market (for leaderboards, skyscrapers, Multiple Purpose Units etc).

2. Why is it important?

Viewability is a hot topic. The ability to understand the level of viewable ad impressions is important to how the industry trades online media in terms of the measurement, reporting and payment of display advertisements i.e. potentially paying for the number of viewable impressions, rather than served impressions.

3. Why did [JICWEBS](#) agree on viewability testing Principles?

There are products in the market that claim to report on viewable impressions. However, there has been confusion over the differences in results reported by these products and further debate on what an appropriate definition of a viewable impression is. The UK media industry, via JICWEBS and their Viewability Principles, has set out to reduce discrepancies and raise the transparency of a products ability to measure viewable impressions.

4. What does ABC’s Viewability Certification Programme entail?

ABC’s Viewability Certification is based on the [Principles set by JICWEBS](#).

ABC tests all products on a ‘like for like’ basis. This has been achieved by applying automated testing within a ‘walled garden’ environment against seven behaviour scenarios across 4 commonly used combinations of browser and operating systems. The controlled testing performed by ABC delivers this consistency between products while also keeping the level of resource required by the product to a minimum, both on a monetary and personnel level.

Along with a Certificate presenting their results, successfully certified products are included in an Industry Report issued by ABC and an interactive table, both are free to use resources available at www.abc.org.uk/viewability

5. Which Viewability products are included in the November 2015 Industry Report?

The results of 6 products are included in the November 2015 Report. These are products from comScore, DMA Institute, DoubleVerify, Integral Ad Science, Meetrics and Moat.



6. Why doesn't ABC advise which is the best product?

ABC's role is to bring transparency to product capabilities and offer impartial comparative reporting to enable customer choice. The Industry Report enables readers to review the viewability measurement products simply and equally. Products awarded ABC Certification are demonstrating that they support industry agreed standards and are raising trust by way of opening their business to an independent review by ABC.

7. Does ABC's Certification include testing for ad fraud in viewability?

No. The Industry, via JICWEBS, has released a taxonomy and is working on a set of Principles which tackle ad fraud separately to the existing JICWEBS Viewability Principles. While the two can be linked, the aim is to bring clarity to each in their own right before potentially lining them up in the future.

8. Does ABC's Certification include testing for ad blockers?

No. This is because ad blockers generally work by preventing any code related to advertising and viewability from running. This means there's no request for the ad, and therefore there's no ad impression (whether 'served' or 'viewable') to count.

9. Does ABC's Certification include testing across video?

Not yet. Testing currently covers desktop display advertising environments. Working with the industry, the Principles and ABC's testing will continue to evolve and may include testing across video and/or mobile environments in the future.

10. How does this compare to the work being conducted by the Media Ratings Council (MRC)?

The IAB UK sit on JICWEBS and are also contributing to the work conducted in the US by the MRC and IAB US. They have therefore worked with the other JICWEBS constituents and ABC to ensure that the two schemes remain complementary. This has been achieved by aligning as far as possible the principles behind each scheme and ensuring that both are providing something unique and valued for the market they serve.

Complementary to the MRC/IAB requirements and recommendations, ABC testing incorporates four elements into the Certification process. The four elements are:

1. Reporting on percentage of area viewable and time
2. Reporting viewable impressions, including special cases
3. Disclosure of what is measured



4. Measurement and asset render requirements.

Effectively, the elements require the products to take time measurements every 100 milliseconds and the ability to measure both standard and larger formats (i.e. IAB rising star formats) for at least 50% or 30% in-view (respectively) for at least one continuous second.

11. Are viewable impressions the new trading standard?

There's a lot of press both for and against this becoming a trading currency and ultimately it's for the industry to decide. Importantly, for advertisers to increase spend online, they're looking for clarity and reassurance when it comes to reporting viewable impressions. Advertisers, agencies and marketers can use ABC's reporting to better understand viewability products, compare their capabilities and make more informed purchasing decisions.

12. How much is it to get certified by ABC to the JICWEBS Viewability Principles?

This fee is dependent on certain technical aspects (affecting the scope and scale of the task) and starts from approximately £7k per annum.

13. How do I find out more information?

Please visit www.abc.org.uk/viewability or email us at: enquiries@abc.org.uk