Reasons to Audit your Online Property

abc

Background

"**Engaging with digital is a way of life**. Whether it's via tablet, mobile or laptop we are all never far away from accessing the Internet. In our 24-hour world the opportunity to dip in and out of content on the go, desk side or at home has proved irresistible. But the attraction of digital – its' dynamic nature and myriad of access points, raises challenges when it comes to demonstrating performance.

Digital is often touted as the most measureable and therefore accountable medium. Whilst digital is certainly infinitely countable it can also seem infinitely complex. Fortunately the key building blocks are available to make measurement **transparent**, **accurate** and **comparable**."

Richard Foan, Group Executive Director, Communication & Innovation, ABC

The internet is a primary platform for advertising as more consumers use online to access content. Rights holders, investors, advertisers, media owners all need robust, reliable ways to measure performance. This is where ABC comes in.

ABC was created by the UK and Ireland media industry to ensure independent development of a set of industry-agreed standards for measuring media performance to underpin ad trading.

These best practices (standards) are what ABC audit too, so that the audit certificate we provide you gives you the trust, comparability and assurance you need to measure performance and benchmark yourself against best practice for trading online advertising.

Why online businesses need trusted data

There are two key reasons:

1. To support effective internal management decision-making - think of it as an MOT;
2. To deliver confidence to external customers (advertisers, agencies and investors).
3. To build business and revenue.

ABC Web Audits confirm web data is clean and trusted

- A Publishers web data can come from a number of sources: different analytics companies / different analytic tools.
- Much of the accuracy of data relies on the implementation of the various tools used.
- The industry has set agreed standards designed to ensure data is valid and reporting is comparable: clear metric definitions, exclusion of invalid traffic e.g. Robots and Spiders (known and unknown), internal traffic, pushed traffic (sub-siting), invisible (bounce-through) pages etc.

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- We undertake deep data interrogation, conducted by experts highly experienced in identifying non-human traffic. We work with IAB US to manage The International IAB/ABC Spiders & Robots List.
- Only ABC checks that data is prepared and reported in accordance with the industry-agreed standards.
- Whether an ABC figure or not, the audit helps ensure the analytics data used day to day is cleaner underpinning better decision-making.
- ABC web audits play a vital role in delivering trusted data.

We help you understand your data better.

1. Clear, industry agreed definitions and a consistent audit process allows us to help media owner staff check the implementation and configuration of their web analytics and confirm their reporting against a common standard.
2. Not all reports are what they say they are (see above). Many web analytic tools provide standard reports but the labels and algorithms used for these reports often deliver results that are different to what is expected.
3. In itself the ABC audit is a valuable resource – preventing costly mistakes.
4. ABC audits can surface activity that is detrimental to the publisher or isolate errors in reporting that are misleading.
5. Understanding of web data enables publishers to question suppliers- not just accept any report they are presented with.
6. Web audits help publishers identify weaknesses in their systems.
7. ABC web audits give clear reassurance of quality to Management.
8. ABC figures enhance the credibility of online figures to all stakeholders.

Six examples of re-adjustments as a result of our ABC Web Audits;

1. A leading consumer website claimed approximately **10% of the actual certified number of Automated Page Impressions for 2 consecutive months.**
2. A major ISP required a **10% downward adjustment to Unique Browsers** because cookies were not de-duplicated correctly across domains.
3. A leading consumer website **over-reported metrics on its job site by 100%** due to invalid traffic (sub-siting).
4. A leading niche consumer website required a **9% downward adjustment to Unique Browsers** because cookies were not de-duplicated correctly across domains.
5. A leading consumer website required their monthly **Unique Browsers** to be **adjusted significantly downwards every month for 5 consecutive months** because their analytics tool was mis-configured.
6. A leading consumer website required daily and monthly **Unique Browsers** to be **adjusted downwards significantly every month for 6 consecutive months** because their claims were generated from the wrong set of reports.

Our web traffic audit delivers the detail but you can take immediate steps to eliminate non-human traffic from your current web analytics measurement and reporting by subscribing to The International IAB/ABC Spiders & Robots List.

Spiders & Robots List.

We have adjusted monthly reported Unique Browser figures by up to **60%** due to robotic activity.

Add to that, according to comScore research:

- **51% of internet "users" are non-human i.e. robots and spiders**
- **3-10% of ad impressions reach non-humans**

Meaning brands advertising and communicating online could be wasting significant budget!

- Internet advertising is a key component in today's media strategy, with billions spent on advertising, there is a growing emphasis for accurate web traffic analytics.

- Audited websites which apply The International IAB/ABC Spiders & Robots List help ensure significant amounts of non-human traffic are removed from their analytics, providing reliable, trusted and comparable figures.

- Implementation of The International IAB/ABC Spiders & Robots List is a key step in eliminating non-human traffic being counted in web analytics.   This comprehensive list filters out significant amounts of non-human activity affecting Page/Ad Impression site traffic counts, providing transparent and accurate metrics relating to Page and Ad impressions.

- Media agencies and Advertisers benefit from credible and transparent online activity data, such as Page/Ad impression numbers verifying that the website attracts their intended consumer audience, helping them make purchasing decisions.

- Publishers/Media Owners benefit by reporting trusted figures reflecting actual consumer interaction and increasing confidence to media agencies & advertisers.   This win-win situation provides a level of confidence in the entire ad buying cycle.

Peace of mind: The International IAB/ABC Spiders & Robots List is updated monthly to ensure the latest spiders and robots are included.

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Summary

Being ABC audited and utilising the ABC *Stamp of Trust* delivers:

- Accountability

- A digital "MOT / health check"

- Confidence

- Trust

A final word from Richard Brooke, Media Operations and Strategy Director (Europe) at Unilever

"As one of the largest UK advertisers it is vital that there is full transparency and accountability for the performance of media that we use so we can demonstrate that we are delivering a quantifiable ROI."

Feel free to contact us if you would like to discuss any aspect of our online auditing service and how we can help you promote your ABC audit either internally or externally.

For further information on how we can help you please contact your client service team

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Confidence   Expertise

Comparability   **Trust**   Knowledge

Understanding