

# UK LEADERS IN BEHAVIOURAL ADVERTISING GAIN INDEPENDENT CERTIFICATION OF THEIR COMMITMENT TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE CONSUMERS' ONLINE PRIVACY

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[www.youronlinechoices.com](http://www.youronlinechoices.com)

Some of the UK's biggest digital players have reinforced their commitment to consumers' online privacy, receiving an independent certificate of compliance with the IAB's Good Practice Principles in online behavioural advertising.

The seven organisations - AOL Advertising, Audience Science Inc, Crimson Tangerine Ltd, Google UK Ltd, Microsoft Advertising, Specific Media UK, Yahoo! SARL - have each successfully completed a process of independent verification by leading auditor ABCe to confirm their compliance with the Principles.

Each company has been issued with an official badge which they can display on their websites, which acts as a 'stamp of trust' to reassure consumers that the good practice principles have been implemented, and that these companies are committed to providing transparency and control to internet users.

This latest milestone is part of an on-going programme of activity led by the IAB to develop good practice and promote it widely within the sector. In 2010, IAB UK intends to increase the number of advertising network signatories to the Principles to ensure as much of the industry is represented as possible. It will also be working with IABs from other EU countries to further develop industry good practice, promoting increased participation from advertisers, agencies and publishers.

The IAB's Good Practice Principles, first released in March 2009, set out commitments to transparency, user choice and education about online behavioural advertising – the process of serving internet users with interest-based advertising based on their web browsing activity.

They are backed by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), communications regulator OFCOM and the UK Government, as well as the advertising ecosystem. The Principles commit businesses to providing consumers with clear and unambiguous notice, choice and education within the realm of online behavioural advertising. The IAB also operates a site [www.youronlinechoices.co.uk](http://www.youronlinechoices.co.uk) to provide internet users with further information on behavioural advertising and online privacy.

Nick Stringer, Director of Regulatory Affairs at the Internet Advertising Bureau, said: "Online privacy is about transparency: providing consumers with the information they require to make an informed choice. One year on from the launch of the Good Practice Principles for online behavioural advertising, the signatory businesses are taking an important step in delivering this, independently verified by auditors ABCe."

Richard Foan, Managing Director at ABCe, said: "The biggest global and local providers of behavioural advertising have taken an important step to deliver increased transparency to the online world by signing up to be audited by ABCe. We are delighted to be able to work with the IAB to underpin the Good Practice Principles, providing a vital stamp of trust for the industry."

Stuart Colman, Managing Director European Operations, AudienceScience, said: "It's one thing to say you're going to do something but another to actually deliver on this. This represents another important step in ensuring we as an industry are committed to trust, transparency and choice for the consumer."

Paul Goad, Managing Director of Crimtan said: "Crimtan is delighted to join other leading organisations in openly demonstrating our respect for web users and a commitment to transparency and choice in behavioural advertising. We hope that publishers and advertisers will view this initiative in a similar way to IASH and acknowledge the IAB's effort to establish clarity in the marketplace and support networks that have taken this positive step."

Matt Brittin, Managing Director of Google UK said: "When we launched Interest Based Advertising a year ago we enabled every user to access their own Ads Preferences Manager, giving them the ability to modify their interests or opt out all together. Google is committed to user transparency and choice and is delighted to receive our independent accreditation from ABCe for compliance with the IAB Good Practice Principles. This is an important industry-wide initiative which will help to increase user knowledge and understanding of online advertising and the way it serves them."

Zuzannah Gierlinska, Head of Microsoft Media Network Sales at Microsoft Advertising said: "Microsoft is dedicated to providing transparency, control and security to web users and the self regulation under the GPP has been a key milestone in uniting the industry towards this effort. The recent ABCe audit further reinforces this commitment to a robust self regulatory approach in the behavioural advertising space."

Colin Petrie-Norris, MD International at Specific Media, said: "It is vital consumers feel informed about the nature of behavioural targeting and the options available to them. Initiatives like these mirror Specific Media's ongoing commitment to championing good practice throughout the industry. Participating in this audit highlights our continued dedication to protecting the best interests of publishers and consumers."

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#### **About the IAB**

The Internet Advertising Bureau (IAB) is the trade association for digital advertising. With over 540 members, it's run for the leading media owners and agencies in the UK internet industry. Online is an exciting and fast-growing medium and our job at the IAB is to work with members to ensure marketers can identify the best role for online and the emerging mobile market, helping them engage their customers and build their brands. Through the dissemination of research and the organisation of regular events, we aim to put digital on the agenda of every marketer in the UK, acting as an authoritative and objective source for all internet advertising issues whilst promoting industry-wide best practice.