

To main contacts, branch managers, CEOs, COOs, all integrated and interactive contacts, legal counsel, presidents, public relations contacts, region and council governors, selected committees, Board of Directors and SFNAs.

Marketing and Media Industry Launch Important New Online Behavioral Advertising Initiative

Today, I am pleased to announce the details of an industry-developed comprehensive new program for online behavioral advertising. This important new initiative will give consumers enhanced notice and control over the collection and use of data regarding their Web viewing for online behavioral advertising purposes.

As the Internet and the advertising practices that increasingly support online content have continued to evolve, 4A's, along with a select group of the nation's largest media and marketing trade associations – and in conjunction with the Council for Better Business Bureaus (CBBB) – have joined together to enhance industry self-regulation and foster transparency, knowledge and choice for consumers.

The members of the industry group that developed the online behavioral advertising initiative are the 4A's, Association of National Advertisers (ANA), Council of Better Business Bureaus (CBBB), Direct Marketing Association (DMA), and the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB).

I want to encourage you to study the components of the new program and to urge you and your clients to participate fully. Please share this bulletin with agency personnel having online and digital advertising responsibilities.

Nancy Hill
President-CEO

This new program provides specific implementation practices in support of the [Self-Regulatory Principles for Online Behavioral Advertising](#), which the industry released in July 2009.

The impetus for the initiative came from the Federal Trade Commission, which challenged marketers to develop a more robust and effective self-regulation program of online behavioral advertising practices. Congressional leaders also joined the push for industry leadership, promising legislative action if the industry was unable to develop an effective program.

The program includes several important components:

- **Advertising Option Icon:** The initiative promotes the use of an icon and accompanying language, to be displayed in or near online advertisements or on Web pages where data is collected and used for behavioral advertising. The Advertising Option Icon indicates that the advertising is covered by the self-regulatory program, and by clicking on it consumers will be able to link to a clear disclosure statement regarding the data collection and use practices associated with the ad as well as an easy-to-use opt-out mechanism.



- **AboutAds.info:** Starting today, companies collecting or using information for behavioral advertising are encouraged to visit www.AboutAds.info to acquire and begin displaying the Advertising Option Icon, signaling their utilization of behavioral advertising and adherence to the *Principles*. Interested companies engaged in behavioral advertising can also register to participate in the easy-to-use consumer opt-out mechanism on the www.AboutAds.info site.
- **Consumer Choice Mechanism:** As business registration and use of the Advertising Option Icon expand, consumers will have an opportunity later this fall to visit www.AboutAds.info for information about online behavioral advertising and to conveniently opt-out of some or all participating companies' online behavioral ads, if they choose.
- **Accountability and Enforcement:** Starting in 2011, the Better Business Bureau and the Direct Marketing Association (DMA) will be responsible for monitoring and enforcing compliance, as well as managing consumer complaint resolution. DMA and CBBB will employ monitoring technology to report on companies' adherence to the transparency and control provisions of the program.
- **Educational Campaign:** To build awareness of the program among the business community and consumers, the trade associations will conduct a broad-based educational campaign. To facilitate this initiative, we have planned a series of webinars for businesses on how to comply.

What Should Advertising Agencies Do to Implement this Program?

- **Website:** As a first step, all ad agencies should visit the industry website, www.aboutads.info for an overview of the program itself. Agencies may not need to take all or any of the actions outlined on the website, depending on your role in the placement of online ads.
- **Webinar:** You should sign up for one of the educational webinars planned in the next few weeks. See the list below with times and link to registration.

The implementation of the new online behavioral advertising initiative largely rests with "third party" advertising networks and data companies. Thus ad agencies themselves will need to approach the implementation on two levels.

1. ***If your ad agency creates the ad but uses an ad network for media placement:***
You will need to speak with your client about the program but the actual placement of the enhanced notice icon and link to the opt-out page and standard information will come through the ad network that actually places the ad itself. The network will purchase and hold the license for use of the enhanced icon as outlined at www.aboutads.info.

2. *If your ad agency creates the ad and acts as an ad network or data aggregator for targeting purposes:*

You will need to speak with your client about the program and get approval to use the enhanced icon. You also will need to secure a license for its use and fulfill the other requirements for “third party” networks detailed at www.aboutads.info.

For more information about this initiative, contact Dick O’Brien, head of the 4A’s Washington office, dobrien@aaaa.org

Webinars About the Behavioral Advertising Initiative

- **Thursday, October 7**, 12:00–1:30 p.m. EDT, [Register for this webinar](#)
- **Friday, October 15**, 12:00–1:30 p.m. EDT, [Register for this webinar](#)
- **Wednesday, October 20**, 9:00–10:30 a.m. EDT, [Register for this webinar](#)
- **Tuesday, October 26**, 12:00–1:30 p.m. EDT, [Register for this webinar](#)
- **Thursday, October 28**, 9:00–10:30 a.m. EDT, [Register for this webinar](#)