

COVER STORIES 6/3/08

Tesco's successful trial of mobile commerce around Valentine's Day prompted it to draw up plans for full m-commerce.



against other forms of **behavioural targeting**. However, with the IAB behavioural targeting taskforce set up this year, it might help combat concerns over the controversial sector.

This year also saw rivals **Platform-A**, **Yahoo** and **Microsoft** launch integrated display platforms. It remains to be seen if the offerings mean they gain more of clients' budgets. ●

INTO 2009: ONLINE ADVERTISING



Richard Sharp

IASH chairman

What started in 2005 as simply a council of the IAB is now a fully fledged company in its own right. IASH's membership continues to flourish. We have a defined strategy for 2009, which has evolved from listening to the industry and will make ad networks raise their game.

In 2008 we were asked for random auditing and a tighter code of conduct, both of which we have delivered. In 2009 we've been challenged to introduce a more transparent code, centralised vetting and a process for how we work with ad exchanges.

Next year focuses us on continuing to educate the industry about the benefits of the ad network model. We'll be engaging with ad exchanges, which we'll treat in the same way we do ad networks and invite them to become members by undergoing the ABC Electronic audit.

Ad networks currently account for 41% of all online display ad spend, according to the IAB. We've grown incredibly in terms of both relevance and sophistication, and as we all tighten our purse strings, we provide the perfect channel for advertisers to gain incredible return on investment.

We look forward to becoming a part of every marketing schedule, using our optimisation, behavioural and contextual targeting capabilities, while working closely with bodies such as the IAB and the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising to make this happen.

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The Year in REGULATION

By Nic Howell

As **new media age** predicted, regulation was never far from the agenda in 2008. With 58% of households enjoying broadband access and online second only to TV in terms of ad spend, digital is now part of the mainstream. So it was only natural that the Government took a keen interest in the sector, particularly where **health** and **children** were concerned.

Given the restrictions placed on offline advertising of high-fat, high-sugar foods, increasing numbers of food and drink brands, such as **Kinder** and **Hubba Bubba**, moved their corporate sites away from being marketing tools



GOVERNMENT Taking lessons in digital from IAB

aimed at children, following the example set by Kellogg's and Burger King the year before.

Yet grey areas remain and the loophole in the **CAP code** that lets brands treat their marketing sites as editorial content presents a potential elephant trap. The Government is leaving the system of **self-regulation** in place for now, but ministers make repeated veiled threats that more regulation is being considered. Yet when we surveyed the industry earlier this year, few people had confidence in the Government's ability to act in this area. This was compounded by headline-grabbing initiatives like the **Byron**

Review, which called for a rating system for gaming content, despite the fact the **BBFC** has spent the past 18 months working with the industry on a voluntary system.

At times it looked as though the industry was in danger of losing the initiative. The **IVR** sector was sent reeling by a series of fines. At IAB Engage in November, Culture Secretary **Andy Burnham** called for **behavioural targeting** to be made explicitly opt-in and said the industry needed to do more to educate the public. The departure of the formidable **Peta Buscombe** from the **Advertising Association** in 2009 will leave a worrying gap in self-regulation's defences. But on a positive note, this year the **IAB** began a programme to educate civil servants in the **DCMS** and **Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform**. It comes not a moment too soon as despite, or indeed because of, the worsening economic situation, regulation of digital will still be very much on the political agenda for 2009. ●

INTO 2009: REGULATION



Nick Stringer

Head of regulatory affairs, IAB

The IAB is either driving or advising a number of significant initiatives in 2009 to alter the nature of the online regulatory landscape. In addition to the continued rollout of our programme to help government departments better understand digital media, the New Year should see the launch of our Good Practice Principles for Behavioural Advertising.

In January the Government will publish its interim report into Digital Britain. A full report will be published in June.

Following up on the launch of the Children's Plan and year-long review, in

March the Government should reveal policy recommendations on the impact of commercial activities upon childhood.

In the spring, plans to extend the self-regulatory framework for non-broadcast ad content will be unveiled. New digital advertising techniques are likely to be brought within the ASA's remit.

Also in the spring, the UK Council for Child Internet Safety will unveil its strategy, which will include a response to the industry's plan to review the self-regulatory framework for non-broadcast advertising content.

In late 2009, the Government will implement an EU Directive introducing regulations for online VOD, including advertising, affecting platforms such as BT Vision and 4oD. As we strive for political support for self-regulation, these projects will be high on our agenda.

AS TOLD TO NEW MEDIA AGE

“We spend a lot of time worrying about online. Having some clearer regulation would be helpful because, if anything, we're over-cautious”

Bill McDonald, IAB Chairman