



Joint Industry Committee for Web Standards

**JICWEBS**

**Social Video Code of Conduct**

Issued February 2015

# THE SOCIAL VIDEO CODE OF CONDUCT

## CONTENTS

---

### The Social Video Code of Conduct comprises:

	Page
1 Compliance	3
2 Definitions	3
3 Schedule A – Environments	4
4 Schedule B – Views	4
5 Schedule C – Transparency	5
6 Schedule D – Compliance with Third Party (TOS)	6
7 Schedule E – Data Reporting	6
8 Schedule F – VAST Delivery	7

## 1. Compliance

Signatories of the SVCoC commit to:

- 1.1 Provide social video services in accordance with the best practice guidelines detailed in schedules A, B, C, D, E, and F.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 “Advertiser” means a business, that places or wishes to place advertising either directly or via an advertising agency (or other agency acting on its behalf).
- 2.2 “Agency” means a media, creative or planning agency that places or wishes to place advertising on behalf of an advertiser.
- 2.3 “Branded Content” means any video content created for the purpose of promoting a message about or related to the “Advertiser”. In addition to video, this includes content such as editorial copy, links, comments, tweets, status updates.
- 2.4 “View” is a partially or fully completed play of a single piece of Branded Video.
- 2.5 “Placement” is the carriage of the Branded Content on a site, app or social network.
- 2.6 “Insertion Order” is a written contractual request from an Advertiser to the SVCoC member to fulfil an agreed amount of Advertising on an agreed Placement, group of Placements or network of Placements.
- 2.7 “Media Entity” means the proprietor of a Placement or group of Placements.
- 2.8 “Media Agreement” means a written agreement with a Media Entity pertaining to advertising that is to appear on the relevant site.
- 2.9 “Social Video” is a single or multiple commercial video stream from one brand, not supported by preceding or following content.

### **3. SCHEDULE A – ENVIRONMENTS**

Signatories of the SVCoC commit to using best endeavours to ensure that Branded Content is not distributed into environments that are inappropriate for the brand in question.

Signatories agree to demonstrate such best endeavours by supporting and operating in accordance with industry agreed best practice in respect of brand safety, as embodied in the JICWEBS approved Good Practice Principles on brand safety published here, <http://jicwebs.org/digital-trading-standards-group-good-practice-principles/good-practice-principles>, which have been developed by the DTSG (Digital Trading Standards Group).

This commitment also extends to refraining from the use of placements/links/images (redirects) on inappropriate environments to drive users to appropriate environments which host the video player.

In the case of any reasonable doubt, SVCoC signatories should defer to the commissioning media agency or brand during the planning phases of a Social Video campaign regarding the suitability of any specific environment.

It is possible that content might appear within inappropriate environments through various possibilities for sharing of the video content. SVCoC signatories cannot accept legal responsibility for advertisers' content appearing within these environments if it is the result of such user sharing or other factors beyond the SVCoC signatories' control.

### **4. SCHEDULE B - VIEWS**

Signatories of the SVCoC agree to protect the view metric as a currency by activating branded content playback opportunities in accordance with the following recommendations. In particular:

1. Player should render in a fixed position within page content, and not be served into a pop-up/under ad position. This does however not include full screen options and/or other user-initiated player activations that launch lightbox solutions to experience the content through.
2. Player should be configured for secure streaming to authorise load into secure pages (https).
3. Prominent call-to-action (play/rollover) icon located in centre of video player to initiate playback.
4. Content to only commence playback following a click/multiple-second hover on the player's call-to-action icon by the user.
5. AV Content Plays (content views) should only be counted following the user action, in reasonable expectation that the video has buffered and commenced playback.

Signatories of the SVCoC agree to have documented policies in place that are publicly accessible and incorporated into or referenced in standard contractual terms, showing that they will not engage in the following practices that are designed to inflate views or in any other way jeopardise client expectations of the view currency:

**i) Non-user-intended views**

1. Autoplaying the video.
2. Millisecond triggered hover to play video starts which create accidental viewing.
3. Multiple video players on the same page, which play simultaneously on accidental hover.

**ii) Misleading driving of views**

1. Buying of non-relevant cheap keywords to drive clicks to and views of Branded Content.
2. Using malware to drive clicks to and views of Branded Content.
3. Using automated bot traffic (web robots which run automated tasks over the internet) to fraudulently drive up view numbers on videos with the aim of making the video trend on video platform homepages, e.g. YouTube.
4. Player should only be embedded/served on the registered domain of targeted media.

All of the methods outlined above in **i)** and **ii)** deliver cheap view costs, but low quality, non-valid and non-user-engaged views. Key indicators of these practices are poor interaction rates (such as share rate, CTR or replay rate).

## **5. SCHEDULE C – TRANSPARENCY**

Signatories of the SVCoC agree to use general industry recommendations to ensure appropriate transparency around online Branded Content. These can be summarised as follows:

**i) Blogger outreach**

1. To ensure transparent communications with all potential media entities, defer to WOMMA (Word of Mouth Marketing Association) guidelines when contacting bloggers and micropublishers with Branded Content [**Appendix 1 - WOMMA guidelines**]. WOMMA membership is not a requirement of the code.

**ii) In-unit disclosure**

1. Always disclose that the Branded Content is sponsored before the user has initiated video playback. This should ensure that viewers realise they are about to watch Branded Content.

**iii) In-post disclosure**

1. Sponsored Branded Content (where editorial content has been written around the Placement) must be disclosed when live before payment can be commissioned by the signatory.

**iv) 3<sup>rd</sup> party redirection**

1. Clear opportunities to share and click through to 3<sup>rd</sup> party destinations to be identifiable via icons or text links, with only a user's click-interaction redirecting them away from the player.

## **6. SCHEDULE D – COMPLIANCE WITH THIRD PARTY TOS**

Signatories must have a documented policy in place which is easily accessible and incorporated into or referenced in standard contractual terms, stating that they comply with the Terms of Service of all third parties which are used to deliver Signatories' social media campaigns.

Examples are given below for some frequently used channels, but the Signatory's policy must cover all applicable third party channels, not just the following:

- i)** Facebook: Signatories must be listed as Facebook Ad Providers (and hence must commit to complying with Facebook's Platform Policy and Page Guidelines).
- ii)** Twitter: Signatories must commit to complying with Twitter Ad Policies.
- iii)** Youtube: Signatories must commit to complying with Youtube's requirements for use of the Youtube player.

## **7. SCHEDULE E – DATA REPORTING**

**i) Third party verification**

1. Social video providers agree to provide advertisers with the ability to embed 3<sup>rd</sup> party video tracking through their player to provide validation for any views delivered. Advertisers will be subject to charge for view tracking via their 3<sup>rd</sup> party partner.

**ii) Ensuring a brand safe campaign**

1. Social video companies agree to provide advertisers with the ability to embed 3<sup>rd</sup> party content verification (CV) tags to help advertisers ensure their content is not shown in environments that are deemed inappropriate.
2. Social Video companies agree to have established technical solutions of their own deployed, which may include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Per site referrer detection for detecting non-authorized placement of video players.

- ii. Automated screenshotting of every new ad placement to enable visual checks for quality of site and accuracy of targeting.
- iii. In-ad feedback mechanisms so that users can report anomalous placements from within deployed Social Video Player unit.
- iv. Scanning all URLs used by publishers through an independent online reputation service on a rolling basis to help detect unauthorised placements.
- v. Ability to block placements on a per site and per publisher level promptly and without unreasonable delay.

**iii) Restricting access to content via data**

- 1. Social video companies agree to provide advertisers with the ability to enforce age gates or in other ways to ensure the advertiser fulfils their legal obligations.

## **8. SCHEDULE F – VAST DELIVERY**

Social Video distribution platforms can use best endeavours to deliver content via VAST if necessary for the dynamics and reporting components of a campaign, as long as the views are delivered in accordance with the schedules of this document.

**Joint Industry Committee for Web Standards**

Contact us via [info@jicwebs.org](mailto:info@jicwebs.org)  
© JICWEBS 2015 [www.jicwebs.org](http://www.jicwebs.org)