

Quality Criteria In-Stream

Preamble

The following quality criteria serve as a guideline for best possible monetisation of in-stream inventory in Europe. The contents of this guideline are based on market developments over the past 24 months. The performance values are assessed by RTL AdAlliance through the use of smartclip's proprietary systems as well as leading ad verification providers.

Failure to comply with or violations of the criteria could result in deactivation and/or loss of revenue; a knowing or unknowing disregard of the criteria leads to a detailed analysis as a first step. Thus, implementation and respect for the guidelines not only honour buyers' expectations but are also linked primarily to the best possible generation of sales.

Publisher Requirements

- Installation and regular maintenance of an ads.txt and/or app-ads.txt file; guarantee from publisher that all inventory is properly authorised.
- Correct transfer of the referrer and/or BundleIDs.
- Correct transmission of the consent string signal according to TCF 2.2 (EU only).
- Correct transfer of the App Store URL for in-app inventory.
- Enabling viewability measurement following the OM SDK & OMID standards set by the IAB is required, and VAST4 must be supported.
- No violation of applicable law. Compliance with legal safety regulations is obligatory.
- Invalid Traffic (IVT) needs to be avoided. In the event that the IVT rate surpasses the predefined threshold, RTL AdAlliance reserves the right to deactivate the publisher.
- Correct transmission of SupplyChain nodes according to the IAB SupplyChain Object specifications if all or parts of the inventory are not owned and operated.
- Implementation of an openly accessible sellers.json file according to the IAB specifications if the publisher belongs to either of the seller types BOTH or INTERMEDIARY.

Player Requirements

- In-stream video ads are served into and executed by a video player; said video player executes the in-stream ads (pre-roll, mid-roll, and post-roll) before, during, or after the content — permitted content formats include (among others) traditional streaming videos (e.g. news reports), animations (e.g. recipes or tutorials), music videos, and gaming.

- The video player is placed in a fixed position within the website/app and starts with the sound on.
- Player size for desktop and tablet: min. 400x225 pixels (16:9).
- The player must not be so large in such a way that prevents it from being fully visible within the viewport.
- Player technology exhibits consistent behaviour.
- High-quality picture, sound, and audio are required.
- Content must be in video format; annotated photo slideshows are of lesser quality.
- Responsive design for optimal mobile use.
- Support for interactive campaigns.
- Acceptable video starts:
 - o Standard click-to-play: click on the play button within the player.
 - o Pre-click-to-play: click on a teaser/button which clearly indicates that video content will follow, and the player must be 100% in the visible area at the ad start.
 - o Click on an article teaser in which a "Play" button indicates that an article will follow upon click with a video that starts immediately.
- Pre-rolls: The length of the content should be at least three times the length of the advertisement (CBA standard); for shorter content, bumper ads are possible after consultation with RTL AdAlliance.
- The video player pauses when the user changes tabs; it is highly recommended that the advertisement continues upon the user's return.
- The player pauses when less than 50% visible.
- Desktop: The player must have the following player controls: Volume control, full-screen option, and pause function (mouse-over or by click) — these must be visible and clickable but may only overlay the content on mouse-over.
 - o For players that have enabled viewability measurement via OM SDK, the player controls may also overlay permanently if they are declared as "friendly obstructions" within the SDK.
- The video player must contain an advertising notice.
- Fly-out players are only accepted under the following conditions:
 - o The fly-out player is always visible and remains sticky in the viewport.
 - o The fly-out player does not cover another ad at any time; all ads must be 100% visible.
 - o The fly-out player has player controls (volume control, full-screen option, pause function).
 - o The fly-out player is neatly placed at the edge/corner of viewport.
- All KPIs (video start, click, quartiles, completed view) must be passed to the smartclip ad server.
- Where technically possible, 3rd party targeting or access to 1st party data will be enabled.
- No skippable ads.

Placement Requirements

- No looped playing of the same video content.
- The player must be able to display all information as required by Article 26 of the Digital Services Act (EU only).
- No integration with pop-up/pop-under/autostart/banner ads (unforced views).
- Only one video ad is allowed to play at a time within the viewport (also applies in cases where both in-stream and out-stream players run on the same page).
- The player environment is ideally editorial — user-generated content must be pre-screened by the publisher and approved by RTL AdAlliance.
- Integration of the player is located between header and footer in the body of the website; ideally, the integration is placed in the upper area of the website and thus in the area immediately visible to the user.
- No direct borders to other ad placements on the website.
- The video player must not overlay or be overlaid by other page elements or advertisements.
- Display video advertising is not allowed.
- No overlay ads.
- Ad clutter must be avoided in the player environment.