

**INTERNET ADVERTISING BUREAU LAUNCHES FIRST SEARCH
MARKETING BEST PRACTICE CHARTER**
IAB and DMA join forces to establish industry-wide search standards
All search marketing companies urged to comply before 2008

www.iabuk.net
www.dma.org.uk

The Internet Advertising Bureau – the trade association for internet marketing – and the Direct Marketing Association are launching the first search marketing charter to establish best practice throughout the industry. The charter includes four key requirements for search marketing companies in the UK.

This is the first time industry bodies have collaborated on search standards in the UK. The charter is a product of the IAB search council and the DMA's continued efforts to educate marketers about search marketing – currently worth 58% of all online advertising expenditure in the UK – and to reinforce advertiser and agency confidence in the medium.

The charter is aimed solely at search engine marketing companies (SEMCos) and significantly raises the bar on best practice in the UK. To conform with the charter SEMCos must currently fulfil 4 criteria, with more to be added before the end of the year:

- They must have at least two employees dedicated to search marketing
- They must have search engine accreditation (from Google or Microsoft with more to follow) and have received official search engine optimisation (SEO) training as relevant
- The company must have been trading for 6 months
- The company must be a member of either IAB UK, IAB Europe, DMA or Search Engine Marketing Professionals Organisation (SEMPO) or the Association of Business to Business Agencies (ABBA).

All IAB and DMA members will be encouraged to comply with the current criteria over the next few months, with a view to achieving maximum industry coverage before the end of the year.

Search marketing companies that adhere to the charter can declare their compliance with an IAB 'best practice icon' on either their website or additional promotional company literature. The DMA is also looking at a similar compliance mechanism.

This is the first section of the IAB/DMA best practice charter, which is intended to grow with the industry. The IAB search council, working in cooperation with the DMA is currently producing two follow-up sections on working with affiliate marketers and trademarking in search engines.

Guy Phillipson, chief executive of the Internet Advertising Bureau said: "This charter represents an important first step in the establishment of search marketing best practice in the UK. Paid-for search has grown at an incredible rate over the past five years, and could well become a 10% medium in its own right by the end of the decade. It is therefore essential that all dedicated practitioners adhere to this code in order to reinforce the status of search as an effective and highly measurable online marketing tool."

Robert Dirskovski, head of Interactive Media, DMA, said: “Best practice lies at the heart of the DMA’s ethos. As the digital element of direct marketing continues its fast paced growth, it is vital that we embrace all facets of digital marketing – including search – to promote and maintain high standards. Together with the IAB, we hope to create a rigorous set of best practice principles that will set the standard for search marketing while being adaptable to change within the industry.”

David White, chair of the IAB Search Council and Managing Director of search marketing company Weboptimiser said: “We created the charter to help clients identify reliable suppliers who know, understand and demonstrate best practice within this fast moving industry. We have further plans for the charter that will include affiliate marketers and detail advanced search engine marketing techniques.

With more search engines and trade bodies set to join this initiative it looks certain that this will demonstrate the reliability of the search marketing and the benefits that online marketing can deliver to a wider audience.“

<http://www.iabuk.net/searchmarketingcharter/>

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About the Internet Advertising Bureau (IAB)

The Internet Advertising Bureau (IAB) is the trade association for online advertising. With over 360 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, helping them engage their customers and build their brands. Through the dissemination of research and the organisation of regular events, we aim to put online on the agenda of every marketer in the UK, acting as an authoritative and objective source for all internet advertising issues.

About the DMA

The DMA UK is the largest trade association in the marketing communications sector, with over 900 corporate members. The DMA’s mission is to maximise value for members, whilst maintaining and enhancing consumer trust and confidence in the direct marketing industry.

To assist, the DMA administers a portfolio of Preference Services that allow consumers to register their contact details, free of charge, should they choose to reduce the amount of direct marketing approaches they receive via mail, telephone, fax and email.

DMA members benefit from added protection, intelligence and growth, which together we call the Power of Association. Within these three areas, DMA member services include government lobbying, free legal advice, training & development, representation on DMA Councils, networking opportunities, regular updates of current dm issues/legislation, research, use of the DMA logo, promotion of member companies and discounts on a range of dm products/services.

For further information please visit www.dma.org.uk. For details on the benefits of becoming a DMA member please call 020 7291 3388 to speak to the membership team, email membership@dma.org.uk, or visit www.dmamembership.org.uk.