TAG Inventory Quality Guidelines version 2.1
Summary of Revisions

The Trustworthy Accountability Group (TAG) Inventory Quality Guidelines (IQG) promote the flow of advertising budgets into digital advertising with industry regulation that offers a framework for brand safety. The mission of the IQG Program is to reduce friction and foster an environment of trust in the marketplace by providing clear, common language that describes characteristics of advertising inventory and transactions across the advertising value chain.

In December 2015, TAG released an updated version of the Inventory Quality Guidelines. The main revisions included in IQG v2.1 are as follows:

- In order to receive the IQG Compliant Certification, companies must first complete the **TAG Registration** process. (TAG Registration is a prerequisite for all companies seeking to receive TAG certifications, participate in TAG Working Groups, or access TAG compliance products.) An annual fee of $10,000 is required for TAG Registration.
- Although IQG Compliant Certification can still be obtained at two different tiers (self-certification and independent validation certification), **third-party independent validation is strongly encouraged as opposed to self-certification**, providing more trust and transparency to the digital advertising supply chain.
- The Guidelines now cover **programmatic** buying, not just traditional Insertion Order Buying. The objects and related attributes highlighted in IQG 2.1 are taken directly from the OpenRTB Specification and the OpenRTB Native Ads API Specification, and highlight the opportunity to enhance the level of transparency in a real-time bidding environment.
- The Guidelines now allow the **buyer** to be more transparent with sellers by making certain disclosures relating to the creative advertising they are asking to serve (i.e., creative classification, creative rating and non-standard classification). These disclosures are aligned with the OpenRTB Specification.
- There were **three "minimum" disclosure requirements** added to the guidelines as follows:
    - **Source-Level Transparency** - IQG-certified companies must be in a position to offer full disclosure at a minimum if requested by the buyer.
    - **Content Rating** - IQG-certified companies must be in a position to identify content that is only suitable for mature audiences if requested by the buyer.
    - **Non-Standard Classification** - IQG-certified companies must be in a position to identify content that is classified as non-standard if requested by the buyer.
- What has become mandatory as opposed to optional:
    - Annual Compliance Officer training is now required
    - Certification requirements now include submission of the Description of Methodology to the TAG

- **Audience Targeting disclosures related to programmatic** were added - Although the IQG focuses on the seller's inventory, the majority of programmatic campaigns are focused on audience-based targeting (vs. content-based targeting) and therefore, controls need to be in place to ensure that the audience targeted by the buyer as agreed upon with the seller is being delivered.
- **Certification Process**
  - The IQG program year runs from January 1 to December 31 (the previous program year was from April 1 through March 31 of the following year). Submissions are due by January 31 of the year following the last quarterly report. Payment of the certification fee is expected during the application process, and no later than December 31 for admission in the following year's program.
- **Remediation** - This section was added to clearly state that if Independent Validation requires remediation, it is the responsibility of the Independent Validator to work with the participating company to remediate the issue. Upon successful remediation, Independent Validation Attestation will be submitted accordingly.
- **Governing Body** of the IQG is the TAG Board of Directors
- **Quarterly Reviews**
  - Control activities discussed during IQG training must be formally documented
  - Quarterly reviews are required regardless of the certification tier, and if a company elects to go through independent validation, quarterly audits will be reviewed by the independent auditing firm (supporting documentation must be maintained by the company seeking certification).
- **Native Advertising** was added as an advertising format covered by the IQG.
- **Content Classification** - The IAB Tech Lab Content Taxonomy will be owned by the IAB Tech Lab going forward.
- **Content Rating** - Removed "**Everyone over 12**" so that only two categories exist (i.e., All Audiences and Mature Audiences)
- **Level of Confidence** - Clarified procedures when proper controls are in place related to inventory vetting versus when a statistical sample is needed to be reviewed as part of the quarterly audit process (i.e., controls review vs. pulling a statistical sample)
- **Placement Details** - revised section to focus solely on "placements" and removed disclosures related to creative specifications (which are covered in another section)
- **Creative Specifications** - Revised creative specifications to align with the OpenRTB Specification
- **Data** - Updated section to include disclosures to publisher partners when leveraging their data for off-site behavioral targeting and to advertisers when using third party data (these were removed in version 2.0 but added back in version 2.1)
- **Glossary**
  - Added "Bid Response" to correspond with "Bid Request"
  - Placed "Mobile Video Advertising" in alpha order
  - Added "Third-Party Data" from a previous version
- **Appendix** – Edited attestations to reflect the changes in the guidelines