



## **BRAND SAFETY INSTITUTE LAUNCHES TO EDUCATE AND ACCREDIT BRAND SAFETY EXECS IN DIGITAL AD INDUSTRY**

### **Joint BSI/TAG White Paper Highlights Industry Confusion Over Scope of Challenge, Illustrates Need for New Position of “Brand Safety Officer”**

WASHINGTON, DC – July 25, 2018 – To help the digital advertising industry tackle one of its most visible and persistent challenges, a new industry initiative – the Brand Safety Institute – launched today to advance brand protection through research, education, and professional certification. The centerpiece of BSI’s efforts will be a rigorous Brand Safety Officer certification program offering information, training, and accreditation for industry executives who manage brand safety and related issues within their companies.

“In today’s economy, a company’s single most valuable asset is its brand, yet too many companies are addressing their brand safety issues in a decentralized, piecemeal, and reactive manner,” said Neal Thurman, Co-Founder of BSI. “The Brand Safety Institute is designed to raise the bar on brand safety education and training, so every executive who works on these complicated challenges has the information, tools, resources, relationships, and certification needed to effectively protect and improve their company’s brand in the digital advertising space.”

As part of the announcement, the Brand Safety Institute and the industry’s corporate-focused Trustworthy Accountability Group (TAG) jointly released a new white paper highlighting the confusion around the brand safety issue and offering several recommendations for industry action to address it. Based on detailed interviews with more than 20 senior executives with leading companies across the digital advertising ecosystem, the BSI/TAG white paper found significant disagreement over the scope of the brand safety problem, as buyers felt it included brand ROI issues like ad fraud, while sellers tended to limit it to association with inappropriate content.

“When you ask industry leaders to describe their biggest brand safety challenges, it’s like the blind men and the elephant, as each sector of our industry describes a slightly different, yet interrelated, set of problems,” said Mike Zaneis, CEO of TAG and Co-Founder of BSI. “The brand safety issue is complicated, multi-faceted, and quickly-evolving, and company leaders need the tools and training to address not only their own company’s brand safety needs but those of their partners as well.”

Based in part on feedback from those interviews, the TAG/BSI white paper offered several recommendations to improve industry-wide standards around brand safety, including:

- Adoption of industry best practices around supply chain issues, including those offered by the MRC, IAB, and TAG;
- Creating a new position of “Brand Safety Officer” dedicated to addressing these challenges; and
- Ensuring that the internal brand safety lead at every company has the education, training, and resources necessary to fulfill their responsibilities.

The Brand Safety Institute plans to conduct its initial Brand Safety Officer training programs for its certification program in October 2018. Individuals can request information and an application for the certification program by registering at [brandsafetyinstitute.com](http://brandsafetyinstitute.com).

#### **About the Brand Safety Institute**

The Brand Safety Institute is a digital advertising industry initiative to professionalize the work of brand protection. Through its research, education, and certification programs, the Brand Safety Institute gives ad industry executives the expertise and skills they need to minimize brand risks and capitalize on brand opportunities in the digital advertising supply chain. Through its Brand Safety Officer certification program, the Brand Safety Institute helps leaders set the highest standards for brand protection, learn new and emerging best practices, and build an industry-wide community of brand safety peers. More information about the Brand Safety Institute can be found at [brandsafetyinstitute.com](http://brandsafetyinstitute.com).