

# Ad Trade Groups Are Changing How Data Gets Labeled

## Article

- Earlier this month, a slew of advertising trade groups announced they were **developing data transparency labels**.
- The new labels look like the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) nutrition labels. They make esoteric data easier to understand for regular folks who are allergic to ad tech jargon.

- One of the groups behind this initiative, the Coalition for Innovative Media Measurement (CIMM), is **being acquired** by the Advertising Research Foundation (ARF), which is also involved with this project.
- The consolidation of trade groups reflects broader consolidation in the ad industry.
- Consolidation and straightforward data labels could make data-driven advertising easier to comprehend and navigate.
- Jane Clarke, CEO of **CIMM**, spoke with eMarketer about data measurement and media consolidation.

Data assessments are getting a makeover.

Ad industry groups including CIMM, ARF, Data Marketing & Analytics (DMA) and the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) Tech Lab have banded together to create labels that make it easier for marketers to understand their data segments. Marketers regularly acquire data from other companies to help their campaigns reach more people. But the data's quality can be difficult to assess.

In a January 2018 survey of 300 US mobile marketers **by Tune and Forrester Consulting**, about one-third of respondents said that managing data quality is a **major challenge**.

## Challenges that US Digital Marketers Face in Measuring Their Company's Mobile Marketing, Jan 2018

% of respondents



Note: n=300

Source: Forrester Consulting, "Master Mobile Measurement to Transform Customer Relationships" commissioned by Tune, April 4, 2018

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The data labels were meant to bring more clarity to marketers about their data quality and create awareness for what details they should be looking for when they seek data transparency, according to CIMM CEO Jane Clarke, who spoke to eMarketer about the initiative.

### How do you gather the information needed to create these labels?

We found that data companies had this kind of data; they just didn't have it in a standardized format. They were also giving it to clients who asked for it but not giving it out in a standardized way either. We created a big grid that listed the information the data companies already have in their system, and we mapped that all together to get a standardized view of how each company could easily implement it.

### What is the next step?

We're in the proof-of-concept, public comment period over the next few months. We're collecting feedback and making sure we are looking for the right characteristics and that it is easy for companies to implement. After that public comment period, we'll have a better idea if the current label and format is what they should roll out or if minor adjustments are necessary.

## **Are the data companies classifying their data themselves?**

Yes, they are. For the first part of this initiative, we decided that it will be on kind of an honor system. The second part, which the ARF is working on, is a lot more about data validation.

## **What would that look like?**

They're working on that and testing a couple different ways to do it. One way is a survey-based method.

For example, let's say I sell you a data segment for pet owners. They would survey a random group in that population and validate the segment against a nationally representative sample.

## **If the data companies are classifying their own data segments for this project, don't they have incentive to make themselves look favorable?**

The big guys are pretty happy about [the data labels], and they think it will root out some of the smaller or less scrupulous players who throw together data segments. The bigger, more reliable companies who have been in this business for a long time are behind this. Some of them have stepped up to the Media Rating Council (MRC) and asked to be audited.

## **I'm just very skeptical of any company in advertising respecting an honor system.**

You should be. Everyone should be. If the customers are finding problems with the data—and ask the companies to validate it and discover that it's not a good list—that will ruin [the data firms'] reputation. I think it may be considered a first step to get them to be transparent. It could lead to things like audits and validations and, over time, help to root out the bad players.

## **Why did CIMM get folded into the ARF?**

The CIMM member companies are also in the ARF. There's a lot of consolidation going on in the industry, and they just felt that our initiatives were close enough to the ARF's that we should combine so that they don't have too many different committee meetings. It simplifies our members' lives.

**The DMA recently got acquired by the Association of National Advertisers (ANA), and the IAB Tech Lab took over DigiTrust, too. Is ARF acquiring CIMM just part of the broader consolidation that's rippling through the industry?**

I think that's true. Everybody's trying to cut costs, and there will probably be more consolidation of media companies. It makes sense to streamline the process.

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## Five Charts Explaining Why Marketers Are Experiencing Data-Driven Growing Pains

In-House vs. Outsourced Marketing Services According to CMO Worldwide, Jan 2018		
% of respondents	In-house	Outsourced
Marketing strategy	90%	1%
Product marketing	70%	2%
Customer experience	70%	2%
Social media	50%	10%
CRM and analytics	40%	10%
Ad operations	40%	20%
Content marketing	40%	1%
Branding	40%	1%
Events marketing	40%	2%
Digital marketing	40%	1%
Communications and PR	30%	2%
Advertising	30%	3%
Regeneration	30%	2%
Research and insight	20%	4%
Create and design	20%	4%

NOTE: Among those with budget responsibility of up to \$10M and up to \$10M+.  
Source: eMarketer, "The Marketing Mix 2018," March 28, 2018.

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## What Is the Future of Third-Party Data?

