

A close-up photograph of a woman with dark, curly hair holding a smartphone in front of her face. The image is the background for the entire page. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

BEST PRACTICE GUIDE TO BRANDED CONTENT MADE MEANINGFULLY

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The Best Practice Guide to Branded Content Made Meaningfully

About This Best Practice Guide

The purpose of this guide is to lay out the principles by which teams can make branded content, meaningfully.

These set of principles will be continually updated to reflect culture, society and changing attitudes to what we define as ‘meaningful’.

Whilst this guide will be a set of principles that teams can hold themselves accountable for, it is the intention that with the support of industry and external bodies, other organisations will follow this example and similarly make the commitments to make content meaningfully.

These set of principles are designed for the North America market, but with adaptations to be progressed and implemented across all other local markets where relevant.

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What is it?

A guide of principles that are adhered to in pursuit of creating (and producing) the most meaningful experiences and content for clients

A public commitment, with full transparency as to the standards and beliefs to hold teams accountable for, and to encourage others to similarly adopt (from individual's, organisation and other agencies or holding companies)

The principles are divided into 4 key areas:

SAFETY
HONESTY
REPRESENTATION
SUSTAINABILITY

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Why it's important

This principle, vision and belief needs to be carried out across everything you and your teams do:

from **WHAT** is produced,

to **HOW** it's produced,

to **WHY** it's produced,

to **WHO** produces it and,

WHERE it's produced.

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What to do with it

The content made meaningfully best practice guide is a set of principles that you should be committed to.

It guides who you work with and how you work with them, and each other.

Any supplier, partners, freelancer or colleague is required to accept and sign up similarly, in order to work with you

The guide should be transparent and visible across all of your offices and buildings.

It's available to any other organisation to adopt and adapt for their own commitments.

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The four key principles in detail

G1) SAFETY

G2) HONESTY

G3) REPRESENTATION

G4) SUSTAINABILITY

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01) Safety

- Every physical workshop locations and content creation studio is health and safety certified
- No content will ever be produced that encourages anyone watching the content to take risks, or act irresponsibly (i.e. creating content for tobacco brands)
- Any content with alerting visual effects will clearly pre-warn viewers that the content contains footage that might lead to migraines, epilepsy and similar
- The safety, mental health wellbeing and protection of staff, colleagues, client and any co-worker is paramount and takes precedent over any other activity



Consider completing Institute of Advertising Ethics and become a CEAE (Certified Ethical Advertising Executive)



Ensure every team member is KidAware certified

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02) Honesty

- **You should abide by the Institute of Advertising Effectiveness 9 principles* to ensure you adhere to the highest ethical standards of truth, transparency, protection, creation and information dissemination**
- **Any member of the team can raise an issue, concern or suggestion anonymously without the fear of it being made public to their peers**
- **Actively educate your teams and explore issues around content adjacency for mis and disinformation**

* <https://www.iaethics.org/principles-practices>



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03) Representation

- **Physical attendance to contribute ideas to a workshop is never a pre-requisite, and anyone who can't or who doesn't want to attend physically, can always submit ideas online and virtually**
- **Everyone has a voice, and the moderator of any creative session should undertake bias training to ensure everyone is heard**
- **Actively encourage casting for ideation and creation sessions from the widest and most diverse representation as possible**

04) Sustainability

- Consider joining AdGreen which will mean you can take an active role in adhering to their guidelines in reducing the impact on the environment on all content productions
- Use the AdGreen carbon calculator to measure your carbon footprint throughout the production process
- Encourage your staff to attend the 2 hour online training AdGreen session*, allowing them to display their certifications on their profile, and on the work created
- Use the AdGreen supplier list to identify 100% renewable energy partners to reduce emissions to the absolute minimum
- Any unavoidable emissions are offset via the AdGreen Creative Offsets hub**, powered by Natural Capital Partners
- Actively encourage virtual attendance for any content production and shoots, to reduce your carbon impact on the environment

* <https://weareadgreen.org/sustainability-training/>

** <https://weareadgreen.org/resources/offset-emissions-from-your-production-activities>



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HAVAS

Founded in 1835 by Charles-Louis Havas, Havas is one of the world's largest global communications groups, with more than 22,000 people in over 100 countries sharing one single mission: to make a meaningful difference to brands, businesses, and people

To brands

We are here to help our clients cultivate their brand's reputation, and drive positive change in society through the power of our creative work.

To businesses

We are here to help businesses grow well and connect with audiences in a meaningful way. Havas is committed to improving its own industry standards by promoting transparency, diversity, and inclusion through the campaigns we create.

To people

We are here to make a positive impact on society as a whole. We are committed to building a healthy and happy workplace for our talents where everybody feels they can thrive.

For more information please visit <https://www.havas.com>

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The Branded Content Marketing Association (BCMA) has been at the forefront of this continually evolving sector of branded content marketing communications for the past twenty years.

Established in Soho, London in 2003, it was the forum for brands to meet producers. Thanks to its passionate and diverse membership base, it has grown to become the leading global member association promoting the value of branded content and influencer marketing.

BCMA continues to lead the debate on what makes great branded content and influencer marketing, how brands, producers, agencies, platforms, media owners, publishers and content creators can engage audiences for maximum benefit and payback.

More recently the BCMA has focused on the extraordinary growth of Influencer Marketing that is now reaching critical mass, and continues to prove the effectiveness and promote the value of branded content and influencer marketing, through best practice and shared learning.

For more information please visit <https://www.thebcma.info>