



news release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BPA's Hansen: There must be a global standard for measuring and reporting the new generation of digital media

Shelton, CT March 10, 2011 – Recognizing the great proliferation and evolution of smart readers around the world, the methods of utilizing and measuring digital media must also change if the platform is to become a truly viable currency, reported Glenn Hansen, BPA Worldwide President and CEO, as he spoke to at the MATESZ Digital Media Conference in Budapest, Hungary, February 16, 2011.

[Listen to the entire presentation here.](#)

The industry's first step is to re-define digital media because the industry does not view it as the traditional print channel. "No longer is a digital magazine simply a pdf of the print version," Hansen explained, adding digital issues must also be clearly defined as separate from web pages.

As an example, Hansen pointed to BPA's revised definition of a digital magazine or newspaper as:

A magazine/newspaper (either with a companion print version or as a stand-alone digital product) delivered periodically in a digital format with metered (i.e. linear) navigation, that is edited, designed, and contains date-stamped content that includes advertising (but not necessarily the same advertising as might appear in a print version). A digital product may be dynamically created, have targeted content, or may exist in parallel with pre-existing media.

Hansen went on to ask how many audit organizations have standards to accommodate the new digital environment. He noted that BPA offers four types of digital platforms to accommodate all variations.

Dynamic – Editorial can be created and/or selected at point of delivery. With a dynamic digital magazine/newspaper, each recipient can receive a copy with different content and that content can change at any time.

Targeted – Editorial is changed for specifically defined groups and/or platforms before point of delivery. With a targeted digital magazine/newspaper, each group of recipients, whether they are segmented demographically or because of the platform they use to receive the digital product, receive a copy with different content specifically selected for that group. Apart from minor updates, the content cannot change once the issue is made available.

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Enhanced – If a print brand existed first, “enhanced” is editorial that is retained from the original edition and is redesigned and/or supplemented. With an enhanced digital product, each issue’s content is primarily taken (but not necessarily replicated in its entirety) from the original edition (whether in print or digital). Apart from minor updates, the content cannot change once the issue is made available.

Replica – If a print brand existed first, editorial and design are unchanged from the original print edition. With a replica digital product, each issue’s content and design are identical to the original edition. Apart from minor updates, the content cannot change once the issue is made available.

Just as digital measurement must change, so too must media owners’ perception of their products, Hansen continued. “Things are changing quickly and moving toward measuring the entire brand,” he said. “In doing so, (at BPA) digital magazines are accepted but reported as ‘request’ or ‘non-request’ copies in the Brand Report.”

“Marketers are moving away from just the fact that someone subscribed to a product,” Hansen said. “They are now starting to look at how the product is used and that’s a big shift. Up until now, it’s always been about the number of copies pushed out, but now it’s more about engagement.”

Again, there is the question of standardized metrics. “What should those metrics be?” Hansen asked. For web site measurement, BPA uses unique users, unique browsers, visit duration and page impressions to track digital involvement. “We might see the market evolve and demand this data set of digital publications,” Hansen said, “and may include actions performed or content sharing.”

In spite of the moving target, Hansen warned that audit organizations cannot work in a vacuum as digital metrics evolve. “There must be reliable, standard measurement in order for (digital) to become a trading currency,” he explained. “Without that, advertisers and agencies can’t effectively spend. If they have to deal with different standards in every country—as well as for different platforms—it will become very uneconomical for them to spend on advertising in these products.”

As a result, Hansen told the group, the [IFABC \(International Federation of Audit Bureaux of Circulation\)](#) has created a committee on Digital Publications Measurement to recommend a set of standards for audit organizations around the world to consider as they set their rules for digital publications. The committee, made up of nine members from North America, Europe and Asia, will report back to the membership on progress and recommendations later in 2011. If the membership agrees on the standards, each will then implement the standards in their home markets so that digital products will be measured to a global standard. In addition, in those cases where members wish to add beyond the minimum standards, they are encouraged to do so and report back to the committee on the success of their endeavor.

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About BPA Worldwide A not-for-profit organization since 1931, BPA Worldwide is governed by a tripartite board comprised of media owners, advertising agencies and advertisers. Headquartered in Shelton, Connecticut, USA, BPA has membership spanning more than 30 countries. Worldwide, BPA audits 2,700+ media properties—including business publications, consumer magazines, newspapers, web sites, events, email newsletters, databases, wireless and other advertiser-supported media—as well as 2,700 advertiser and agency members. Visit www.bpaww.com for the latest audit reports, membership information and publishing and advertising industry news.