TRUSTe / EDAA research shows digital advertising self-regulatory programme continues to improve consumer attitudes towards interest-based advertising.

*Industry Self-Regulatory Programme**delivers favourable impression and increased trust in interest-based advertising and brands.*

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**Brussels, 13 January 2017** – Recently conducted online research shows an icon () aimed at providing greater transparency and control over online behavioural advertising (OBA), commonly referred to as interest-based advertising, is improving consumer attitudes towards OBA and growing in awareness. The study of 15 European countries was commissioned by the [European Interactive Digital Advertising Alliance (EDAA)](http://www.edaa.eu/), a European industry coalition setup to licence the ‘OBA Icon’ to companies involved in Online Behavioural Advertising across Europe and [TRUSTe](https://www.truste.com/), a leading data privacy management company.

The [European Advertising Consumer Research Index 2016](http://www.edaa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/EDAA-Report-2016-Final-13012017.pdf)delivers a broad view of attitudes and awareness of the European Self-Regulatory Programme for Online Behavioural Advertising (*The Programme*) across 15 European countries surveyed. The study was conducted by Ipsos MORI, on behalf of TRUSTe and the EDAA from 04 – 20 November 2016 with more than 15,000 participants.

Results show that awareness of the OBA Icon is growing in nearly every country where year-on-year data is available. In fact, in Great Britain - the largest digital advertising market in Europe - 34% of those surveyed (up from 13% in 2012) now recognise the Icon. Furthermore, those who have seen the Icon are choosing to find out more – in 14 out of 15 countries surveyed, at least 1 in 4 respondents who have seen the Icon report they have clicked on it. The Programme continues to deliver positive results in terms of attitudes as well. When presented with information provided by clicking on the Icon and having the opportunity to manage their privacy preferences, more than 2 in 5 respondents (44%) across the 15 countries surveyed report being more favourable about the concept of OBA.

*“The research shows the importance and effectiveness of the industry-led program that empowers consumers to exercise meaningful choice with respect to online behavioural advertising. This consumer-friendly alternative to ad-blockers is helping companies demonstrate their commitment to privacy and supporting the growth of the digital advertising market.”* says Chris Babel, CEO TRUSTe.

*“This report comes as the European regulatory landscape for the online advertising industry poses significant*

*uncertainty. Therefore, we are proud to demonstrate, through this report and the day to day operation of the Self-Regulatory Programme, that effective ad self-regulation can deliver value to consumers, businesses and regulators, and therefore should be an essential part of the regulatory toolkit”* states Nick Stringer, EDAA Chair.

Find a copy of the research infographic are [here.](http://www.edaa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/EDAA_Infographic_2016-Final.pdf)

**Summary of Key Findings**

The positive impact in creating consumer awareness for the Programme is holding strong.

Among those surveyed across 15 countries:

Consumer awareness of the OBA Icon and Admarker is highest in Portugal (59%), Greece (52%) and Ireland (39%) followed by Great Britain (34%). In all four countries awareness increased significantly, with gains led by Portugal, where there has been a 19-percentage point increase since 2015. In Great Britain, awareness has risen steadily for four consecutive years and is up six percentage points since last year.

Results from newly added countries such as Romania, where the EDAA’s awareness campaign was being run parallel to the research, suggest the Programme’s awareness campaign has had a positive impact. Among Romanian adults aged 16 – 60 surveyed:

* 19% recall seeing the OBA Icon and Admarker
* 43% who are aware of the OBA Icon report they have clicked on it
* When asked what the OBA Icon means, 1 in 5 (21%) correctly identified that clicking on the icon allows you to manage your privacy preferences; this was also the top response provided.

Across the 13 countries where the research was also completed in 2015, awareness of the Icon with Admarker text increased 6 percentage points to 27% among 18-50 year olds.

Among adults questioned who have seen the Icon in either form (either with the Admarker text or the icon on its own):

* In 14 of the 15 European countries, at least 1 in 4 surveyed said they have clicked on it. This is as high as around 2 in 5 in Bulgaria (45%), Romania (43%), Poland (41%), Spain (41%) and Greece (40%).
* Gains in understanding the Icon’s meaning is holding firm, with adults in 12 of the 15 countries who had seen the icon placing “manage your privacy preferences” in their top two choices for the meaning of the Icon. This is roughly in-line with the results in 2015 (11 of the 13 countries), but far above 2014 when only 4 of the 10 countries surveyed demonstrated this level of recognition.

Seeing the information provided by clicking on the Icon and the option to manage privacy preferences can lead to adults having more favourable attitudes towards the practice of OBA and increase the level of trust towards the brand being advertised.

Among 18-50 year olds questioned in the 15 countries surveyed in 2016:

* 44% say they are more favourable towards the concept of OBA when presented with information provided by clicking on the icon and having the opportunity to manage their privacy preferences
* More than 1 in 5 in every country surveyed said this makes them trust the brand being advertised more. The positive effect for brands exceeded 1 in 2 surveyed in Bulgaria (55%) and 2 in 3 in Portugal (67%).

**Research Methodology**

The study was conducted online by Ipsos MORI, on behalf of TRUSTe and the EDAA from 4 – 20 November 2016 with 15,896 adults across 15 different European countries listed below. Interviews were carried out on Ipsos MORI’s online i:Omnibus service using a quota sample of adults who are members of Ipsos’ European Online Panel. For each country, data have been weighted to the known offline population profile of this audience according to age, gender, region and working status. The ages of adults interviewed for each country were as follows: Great Britain and France (adults aged 16-75), Belgium, Germany and Italy (adults aged 16-70), Spain and Sweden (adults aged 16-65), Romania, Hungary and Poland (adults aged 16-60), Finland and Republic of Ireland (adults aged 18-65), Portugal and Bulgaria (adults aged 18-55), and Greece (adults aged 18-50).

The following number of adults in each country report having seen the icon in either form (either with the Admarker or without it): Belgium – 145 of 1,091, Bulgaria – 230 of 1,000, Finland – 154 of 1,001, France – 197 of 1,100, Germany – 126 of 1,077, Great Britain – 408 of 1,100, Greece – 549 of 1,000, Hungary – 282 of 1,081, Republic of Ireland – 411 of 1,001, Italy – 129 of 1,082, Poland – 136, Portugal – 607 of 1,000, Romania – 233 of 1,086, Spain – 222 of 1,089, Sweden – 106 of 1,100.

The eight countries where awareness of the OBA Icon with Admarker is significantly greater are Bulgaria, France, Finland, Great Britain, Greece, Ireland, Portugal, and Spain.

The 14 countries where at least 1 in 4 adults who have seen the Icon in either form report having clicked on it are Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania Spain and Sweden.

The 12 countries where adults who have the seen the Icon in either form place “manage your privacy preferences” in their top two choices for meaning of the icon are Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.

Comparison data is available for all markets apart from Belgium and Romania as TRUSTe and the EDAA conducted comparable research with Ipsos MORI in 2015. Certain findings from Great Britain are also trackable where TRUSTe ran comparable research carried out by Harris in 2012 and 2013.

 **About TRUSTe**

TRUSTe powers privacy compliance and risk management with comprehensive technology, consulting and certification solutions. We have nearly 20 years’ experience across all industries and a team of more than 150 professionals developing innovative solutions to address global regulatory and data protection requirements that govern the use of customer and employee information. Our award-winning Data Privacy Management Platform addresses all phases of privacy management including program development, data inventory, risk assessments, monitoring, and compliance reporting. Companies worldwide rely on TRUSTe to demonstrate compliance, minimize risk, and build trust. See [www.truste.com](http://www.truste.com/)

**About the EDAA**

The European Interactive Digital Advertising Alliance (EDAA) is a non-profit organisation based in Brussels and is responsible for enacting key aspects of the Self-Regulatory Programme for Online Behavioural Advertising (OBA) across Europe since its launch in October 2012. EDAA principally acts as the central licensing body for the OBA Icon and provides technical means for consumers to exercise transparency and control over OBA through the youronlinechoices.eu online consumer choice platform. EDAA is governed by EU-level organisations which make up the value chain of OBA within Europe and acts to ensure European consistency in approach. More information can be found at [www.edaa.eu](http://www.edaa.eu)

**For media enquiries contact:**

Dave Deasy, TRUSTe

ddeasy@truste.com

Uzo Madu, EDAA Communications

+32 2 213 4180

uzo.madu@edaa.eu