[NL] New Code on YouTube advertising transparency

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On 17 November 2017, a self-regulatory code on transparency in YouTube advertising was announced by the Dutch Media Authority (Commissariaat voor de Media). A large group of YouTube users who create professional online video content have developed, with the help of the Dutch Media Authority, the Social Code: YouTube, in order to be more transparent about advertising in online videos. The Social Code: YouTube was a response to the results of research by the Dutch Media Authority on the frequency with which products and brands are visually shown in videos on YouTube. During the development of this Code, several parties, including the Dutch Advertising Code Authority (Stichting Reclame Code), Multi-Channel Networks (third-party service providers for YouTube channels), media agencies and interest groups, were given the opportunity to submit views. The Code was also informed by a study on how to enhance transparency in advertising, commissioned by the Dutch Media Authority.

In this Code, YouTube video creators have established guidelines about how to indicate advertisements in their videos. For example, the Code includes guidance to video creators on how to indicate in videos when they are paid to promote a particular product or brand. The guidelines are not official rules, but are tools for creators of videos that want to be transparent about advertising in their videos. These online creators of videos can join the Social Code: YouTube on the website desocialcode.nl, where the guidelines and the other YouTube users that have already joined the Code are included. In order to join the Code, video creators must (i) apply the provisions of the Code from the date of registration; (ii) announce that they apply the Code, (iii) agree to be supervised, and (iv) contacted about the Code. The website is funded by a group of promoters and the Dutch Media Authority.

The Code attempts to create clarity for online creators of videos, but also for viewers, parents of underage viewers, companies representing YouTube users and advertisers. It is also designed to help YouTube users to prepare for any possible future legislation, including at EU level (see, for example, IRIS 2017-10/7, IRIS 2017-8/7 and IRIS 2016-6/3), that might extend the supervision of the Dutch Media Authority to online platforms such as YouTube. In this regard, the Dutch Media Authority will support the initiators in monitoring the functioning of the Code. A first evaluation of the Social Code: YouTube by the Dutch Media Authority is planned for the spring of 2018.

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Social Code: Richtlijnen voor reclame in online video, 17 november 2017

https://www.cvdm.nl/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Social_Code_YouTube.pdf

Social Code: Guidelines for advertising in online video, 17 November 2017

Commissariaat voor de Media, "YouTubers ontwikkelen met hulp van Commissariaat voor de Media een code om transparanter te zijn over reclame," 17 November 2017

https://www.cvdm.nl/nieuws/youtubers-ontwikkelen-hulp-commissariaat-media-code-om-transparanter-reclame/

Dutch Media Authority, "YouTubers develop a code with the help of Dutch Media Authority to be more transparent about advertising," 17 November 2017

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