[GB] Ofcom extends the remit of the Advertising Advisory Committee

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Alexandros K. Antoniou
University of Essex

On 3 October 2019, Ofcom, the UK's communications regulator, announced that the remit of the Advertising Advisory Committee (AAC) will be expanded so that the Committee can bring a consumer voice to both broadcast and *non-broadcast advertising* policy issues.

In the UK, advertising is regulated through a combination of "co-regulation" and "self-regulation" systems. Co-regulation sees the Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice (BCAP) of the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) given responsibility for regulating the content of broadcast adverts (television and radio), under contract from Ofcom. Self-regulation means that the ASA and the Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) are responsible for regulating *non-broadcast advertisement*s (for example, advertisements run by newspapers and on websites and social media) through a system that the advertising industry has voluntarily established and paid for.

The AAC was established in 2004 with the aim of providing independent, third-party advice to the BCAP. Since its inception, the Committee has ensured in particular that a consumer perspective is taken into account in relation to issues affecting broadcast advertising – including the drafting and interpretation of the UK Code of Broadcast Advertising. Following a request from the BCAP and the CAP, Ofcom agreed that it was in consumers' interest to include non-broadcast advertising in the AAC's remit. As a result, the Committee will now be able to provide advice on issues affecting both broadcast and *non-broadcast advertising*.

To facilitate this change, amendments were introduced into the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Ofcom, the BCAP, the Advertising Standards Authority (Broadcast) Limited and the Broadcast Advertising Standards Board of Finance Limited. These amendments concern the AAC's access to relevant research resources relating not only to broadcast but also *non-broadcast advertising*; the Committee's composition and notification of new appointments to it; the repeal of Ofcom's status as an observer at AAC meetings (to reflect the fact that the Committee will discuss issues beyond the Ofcom's remit); and finally, issues concerning transparency.

With the increasing convergence between broadcast and *non-broadcast advertising* issues, the expansion of the AAC's remit constitutes an important step

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towards ensuring the representation of consumers' perspective and interests across all media and forms of advertising.

Ofcom, Extension of the remit of the Advertising Advisory Committee

https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0034/169864/statement-extension-of-the-remit-of-the-aac.pdf

Memorandum of Understanding between the Office of Communications, the Advertising Standards Authority (Broadcast) Limited, the Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice and the Broadcast Advertising Standards Board of Finance Limited

https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0037/169858/memorandum-of-understanding-october-2019.pdf

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