

DETAILS

Council Admin

Effective from:	31 March 2017	
Contact officer:	Manager, Customer Contact	
Next review date:	March 2019	
File reference:	CM787/790/07/09(P1)	
iSpot #	This policy	46304922
	Value Proposition	50494363

OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES

Objectives	Ensure compliance with stipulated quality standards for advertising on Council of the City of Gold Coast (Council) websites.
Performance measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of complaints from approved advertisements. • Number of unsatisfactory outcomes after complaint handling is completed. • Number of breaches to policy by advertising networks. • Amount of revenue raised from banner advertising and affiliate advertising.
Risk assessment	Medium

POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to define the acceptable standards for advertising on Council’s websites. This policy addresses the following key areas:

- Advertising disclaimer
- Permitted advertising
- Prohibited advertising
- Prohibited practices
- Quality standards
- Advertising formats and rules
- Complaints handling.

All decisions regarding commercial revenue to be raised as a result of online advertising are subject to the over-riding principle that the integrity of Council’s brand and reputation is paramount and shall not be compromised and must be in accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2009*.

Council has the right, at its sole discretion, to refuse or remove any advertising which does not comply with this policy and standards, puts Council’s reputation at risk or is deemed not in the best interest of website users. Advertisers with advertisements refused may refer to Council’s Complaint (Administrative Actions) Policy and procedures to request a review of their advertisement.

Advertising networks utilised by Council must be assessed to ensure that their advertising policy and standards are principally aligned to this policy. All online advertising must comply with the Online Advertising Standards (Attachment A).

SCOPE

This policy relates to all online advertising displayed on any websites or other digital channels owned by Council. This policy is also inclusive of all online assets, including videos, audio, images and content.

DEFINITIONS

Advertising network (or ad network) – A company that connects advertisers to websites that want to host advertisements. The key function of an ad network is aggregation of ad space supply from publishers and matching it with advertiser demand.

Ad serving – The technology or service used that places advertisements on websites. Ad serving technology companies provide software to websites and advertisers to serve ads, count them, choose the ads that will make the website or advertisers most money, and monitor progress of different advertising campaigns.

Advertising – The activity or profession of producing advertisements for commercial products or services.

Banner advertising – A web banner advert or banner ad is a form of advertising on a website delivered by an ad server. This form of online advertising entails embedding an advertisement into a web page which is usually placed at the top of the web page or in the right hand column.

Complaint - An expression of dissatisfaction by a person who is directly affected by an administrative action of Council or a Council employee.

Content – Web content is textual, visual or aural content that is encountered as part of the user experience on websites. It may include, among other things: text, images, sounds, videos and animations.

Council – Council of the City of Gold Coast.

JavaScript – An object-orientated computer programming language commonly used to create interactive effects within web browsers.

User/website user – User or website user refers to people using their computer browsers to view and browse through a website.

RELATED POLICIES AND DELEGATIONS

Advertising Spending Policy
Complaints (Administration Actions) Policy
Customer Contact Policy
Information Management and Information Privacy Policy
Procurement Policy and Contract Manual
Right to Information and Information Provision Policy
Social Media Policy

LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 2009
Public Records Act 2002
Copyright Act 1968 (Commonwealth)

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Attachment A – Online Advertising Policy Standards

RESPONSIBILITIES

Sponsor	Director, Organisational Services
Owner	Manager, Customer Contact

VERSION CONTROL

Document	Date	Approved	Amendment
46304922 v12	31.03.201	iSpot #61680061	Minor changes
46304922 v9	15.07.2015	iSpot #50494363	Minor formatting amendments
46304922 v8	02.04.2015	GA15.0326.007/G15.0402.029	New policy

ADVERTISING DISCLAIMER

Council does not endorse and makes no representations concerning any advertiser on Council owned websites which is inclusive of all content, product or services offered by advertisers. Reference to any specific commercial product, process, or service by trade name, trademark, or otherwise does not in any way represent endorsement or recommendation by Council. Any information obtained from an advertising link to an external website is not guaranteed by Council and website visitors should independently review the accuracy of any information before relying upon it.

PERMITTED ADVERTISING CONTENT

1. All advertising sold shall be limited to informing members of the public of the availability of commercial goods or services, public events and entertainment.
2. Permitted advertisements must be professional, clear and topically relevant for visitors to Council websites.
3. Council may allow advertising for local, state or federal government public programs, projects and services provided that they are aligned with the City vision.
4. All advertising content must be in keeping with contemporary community standards and any standards for public area advertising.
5. Advertisements must comply with all applicable local, state and federal government laws and regulations.
6. All advertising must adhere to the Australian Association of National Advertisers (AANA) guidelines.

PROHIBITED ADVERTISING CONTENT

1. Content containing any of the following characteristics is not permitted:
 - 1.1. Obscene or indecent;
 - 1.2. Discriminatory or defamatory;
 - 1.3. Religious with the intent to proselytise (this may exclude cultural celebrations including but not limited to Christmas and Easter);
 - 1.4. Political advertising promoting or opposing a political party; the election of any candidate or group of candidates for local, state or federal government offices; including political initiatives, referendums and other ballot measures;
 - 1.5. Advertisements making statements of public policy, opinion or lobbying matters.
 - 1.6. Advertising expressing or advocating an opinion, position or viewpoint on matters of public debate about economic, political, religious or social issues;
 - 1.7. Advertising that promotes an organisation and/or links directly or indirectly to an organisation's or individual's website(s) that includes prohibited content as determined by this policy;
 - 1.8. Advertising that is not aligned with the City vision or has the potential to impact significantly on the economic profile of the city.

2. Advertising that depicts or promotes the following messages, products, services or other material is not permitted:
 - 2.1. Tobacco products;
 - 2.2. Alcohol and drugs;
 - 2.3. Gambling;
 - 2.4. Pornography;
 - 2.5. Adult content;
 - 2.6. False or misleading content or advertisements that the advertiser knows or should know are false, misleading, deceptive, fraudulent or constitute defamation or invasions of privacy;
 - 2.7. Any representation which is likely to cause damage to any commercial business or competitor;
 - 2.8. Any advertisements relating to bombs, ammunition, firearms or other weapons including advertisements promoting or soliciting the rental, distribution, sale or availability of weapons or weapon-related products;
 - 2.9. Mature rated or adult films, television or video games or other products classified by the Australian classification board as only suitable for adults;
 - 2.10. Adult entertainment or establishments including but not limited to adult books, videos, adult Internet websites, adult telephone services, and dating or escort services;
 - 2.11. Insulting, disparaging, or degrading material directed at a person or group that is intended to be, or could be interpreted as being, disrespectful based on characteristics protected under Local, State or Federal law or that is so offensive as to be reasonably foreseeable that it will incite or produce imminent lawless action in the form of retaliation, vandalism or any other breach of public safety, peace and order;
 - 2.12. Illegal activity including any advertising that promotes any activity or product that is illegal under the relevant local, state or federal law.
 - 2.13. Any advertising that contains material that is an infringement of copyright, trademark or is otherwise unlawful or illegal;
 - 2.14. Profanity and violence including advertising that contains any profane language or portrays images or descriptions of graphic violence towards any individual, group, animal or property.

ADVERTISING FORMATS AND RULES

In addition to general restrictions, the following rules apply to advertisements on Council websites:

1. Council shall specifically designate the advertising spaces available on its websites. It is within Council's sole discretion to determine which website pages and advertising positions will be made available for paid advertising.
2. Advertising must not have any impact on the performance of Council's websites including degrading access to any information on the website.
3. All advertising must adhere to Council's online privacy policy and accessibility standards.
4. Advertisers must guarantee that content in their advertisement or website is free from any virus, infection, malware, or other code that places the website, its users, or any of Council's resources or security in jeopardy.

5. Pop-up overlay advertisements and advertisements containing animation and audio are not allowed. To minimise distractions and interruptions to Council's information, advertisers are not allowed to use pop-up overlay advertisements (advertisements that appear to "pop up" over the content of a website while users browse a website or view a new page), this includes pop-under, hover, floating and slide-in advertisements.
6. All advertising content must be clearly identifiable as an advertisement. Advertisements cannot mimic or resemble operating system or Internet browser error messages or dialogue boxes (e.g. dropdown menus, search boxes).
7. Advertisements that include links to external websites and web pages must open in a new window and allow users to return to the Council web page they were on before by closing the advertisement window.
8. Advertisements may not disable or prevent use of the browser back button. Likewise all advertising may not interfere with any of the user's browser functionality.
9. Advertisements may not launch multiple browser windows upon a user click. Only a single primary browser window launch is permitted.
10. All advertisement file sizes must comply with the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) guidelines (reference: <https://www.iab.com/guidelines/universal-ad-package/>)
11. All advertising must adhere to the Advertising Standards Bureau Ad Standards (reference: <http://www.adstandards.com.au/>) .

COMPLAINT HANDLING

Complaints related to online commercial advertising will be dealt with under the Council Complaints (Administrative Action) Policy and procedures (CAAP).