

Digital Media Advertising Guidelines,
2023
of
Government of Maharashtra

Directorate General of Information & Public
Relations,

General Administration Department

Government of Maharashtra
September 2023

1. Short title and extent of Guidelines

These guidelines may be called **Digital Media Advertising Guidelines, 2023** and shall be applicable in the State of Maharashtra on and with effect from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

2. Objective

Guidelines for Expanding the Outreach of Government Schemes and Initiatives Through Digital Media

1. **Improved Outreach:** Enhance the government's ability to reach a wider audience and effectively communicate information about various schemes, programs, and initiatives to the public.
2. **Real-time Interaction:** Utilize the interactive and real-time nature of digital media to engage with citizens, address their queries, and provide timely updates on government initiatives.
3. **Assured Visibility:** Ensure that government messages gain increased visibility and reach the intended beneficiaries through various digital media platforms.
4. **Quality Control:** Maintain high standards of content quality, accuracy, and relevance when disseminating government information through digital media, ensuring that the content is credible and informative.
5. **Reporting and Accountability:** Require agencies to submit periodic reports on digital advertising activities, promoting transparency and accountability in government communications.
6. **Enforcement of Guidelines:** Address persistent or severe violations through appropriate disciplinary actions in alignment with relevant laws and policies.
7. **Periodic Review:** Periodically review the guidelines to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness in the ever-evolving digital media landscape.
8. **Introduction of Web Jackets Ads:** Innovate by introducing Web Jackets Ads for websites and web-based applications, enhancing the visual and interactive elements of major government campaigns.

3. Definitions

Unless there is something repugnant in the subject or context, the terms used in this Guidelines are in the sense explained here under:

- a) **“Government”** means the Government of the State of Maharashtra.
- b) **“Competent Authority”** means the Director General of Information & Public Relations, Maharashtra, or any other officer authorized as such by him for this specific purpose.
- c) **“Department”** means the General Administrative Department, in the Government of Maharashtra.
- d) **“Date of Empanelment”** means the date of issuance of letter of empanelment.

- e) **“DAVP Rates”** mean the rates decided by the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity, Government of India.
- f) **“DGIPR Rates”** mean the rates decided by the Directorate General of Information & Public Relations, Government of Maharashtra.
- g) **“Blacklist”** means debarring an agency from the privilege and advantage of entering lawful relationship with the Government for purposes of gains.
- h) **“Bankrupt or insolvent”** the term used in these guidelines shall have the same meaning as defined in clause (3) of section 79 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code 2016.
- i) **“Web Channel”** shall include any internet-based Channel permanently engaged in programming and verified by YouTube and Meta platforms; and **“Websites”** mean a collection of various web pages linked to a particular web domain, which are operated through internet. It should have URL (Uniform Resource Locator) to ensure that it is a part of World Wide Web (www).
- j) **“Application”** An application program (software application, or application, or app for short) is a software that can be used by a computer, mobile device, or tablet to perform useful tasks with specific functions and can be accessed from any device with internet connections
- k) **“Social Media Influencer”** is someone who creates entertaining or educational material to be expressed through a digital medium or channel, has a mass appeal & social impact.
- l) **“Celebrity”** A celebrity is famous, especially and has had a significant social contribution and can positively influence the masses.
- m) **“OTT Platform”** a media streaming service offered directly to viewers via the Internet.
- n) **“Advertisement”** means advertisements of all the Departments, Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and Autonomous Bodies such as Boards and Corporations, Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), Universities, various Commissions, Authorities, Societies constituted by Government Departments, Trusts under the Government, Companies, Apex Cooperative Institutions, and other State Government Institutions (SGIs) and Organizations etc., released through DGIPR or society/agency constituted for the purpose.
- o) **Pixels:** The pixel is the basic unit of programmable colour on a computer display or in a computer image. Pixel Dimensions are the horizontal and vertical measurements of an image expressed in pixels. The pixel dimensions may be determined by multiplying both the width and the height by the DPI (dots per inch).
- p) **“Unique User/Visitor”** means counts of website’s individual visitor/one visitor over a specific period. It does not matter how many times they visited the website during that period. i.e., if one individual visited the site ten times, still count that person as one visit.
- q) **Web Banner Advertisement:** Means a form of advertising on the World Wide Web (WWW) delivered by an ad server. This form of online advertising entails

embedding an advertisement into a web page. The web banner will be in the shape of animation, fix and rotating.

- r) **Video Advertisement:** Means a visual presentation, typically a moving picture which is accompanied by sound.
- s) **“CPTP” (Cost per thousand impression)** represents the cost an advertiser pays to obtain 1000 views or impressions of an advertisement.
- t) **“CTR” (Click Through Rate)** is the number of clicks that your ad receives divided by the number of times your ad is shown.
- u) **BOC:** Bureau of Outreach & Communication.
- v) **Advertisement Rate:** Means rates of advertisements approved by the State Government from time to time for release of advertisements to News Websites/Web Portals.
- w) **Empanelment:** Means to add or include News Websites/Web Portals in a list of Websites/Web Portals maintained by the Director Information and Public Relations as per the prescribed procedure and criteria fixed for this purpose for the release of State Government advertisements.
- x) **Empanelment and Rate Advisory Committee:** A Committee of the officers of the Information and Public Relations Department constituted to examine the applications for empanelment and recommend the empanelment of the eligible Websites/Web Portals, Web Channels, Applications and Social media influencers.
- y) **Web Jacket Ads:** Jackets are extra page on the home page/screen meant to carry advertisements and are placed before the front page on the website or web channel.

4. Standard Guidelines:

- All advertisements will be exclusively placed at the State level.
- The Directorate General of Information and Public Relations (DGIPR) will hold sole rights to advertisements displayed across all internet-based media platforms.
- Advertisements shall not be restricted by geographical boundaries and should be broadcasted on the worldwide web (WWW).
- The rate structure for advertisements will be adopted from the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP) or DGIPR rates, whichever is lower.
- The proposed committee or DGIPR will have sole rights to select the agency for ad promotion based on the situation and target audience of the scheme, campaign, or guidelines.
- Agencies with a history of malpractices or similar violations will not be empanelled.
- Content categories of the content creators will be considered and monitored during the empanelment process.
- The empanelment process will be conducted online, and the review and grading of applied agencies will be based on their performance and reach. DGIPR will categorize agencies accordingly (A, B, C, etc) based on the submitted documents.
- The duration of advertisements may vary based on the nature of the campaign or initiative.
- Advertisements with fixed durations should be promptly removed after the end of the campaign or initiative.

- Agencies are required to submit periodic reports on digital advertising activities to the appropriate authority for review and assessment.
- Persistent or severe violations may lead to further disciplinary actions in accordance with relevant laws and policies.
- These guidelines shall be subject to periodic review to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness.
- The Directorate plans to introduce Web Jackets Ads for advertisements on websites and web-based applications for major campaigns of the State Government.

DIGITAL MEDIA PLATFORMS:

Guidelines for Web Jacket Ads on Government Websites

1. The various departments of the Government of Maharashtra and their allied offices with government websites (gov.in) are obligated to display the web jacket ads provided by the Directorate General of Information and Public Relations (DGIPR) on their respective websites.
2. Government departments shall initiate the process by approaching DGIPR for digital advertisement purposes related to various schemes and programs within their respective domains.
3. All digital advertisements intended for placement on government websites must undergo a pre-approval process by DGIPR.
4. The approval process entails a comprehensive review of the advertisement's content, its relevance, compliance with government policies, and adherence to ethical standards.
5. Web jacket ads should be strategically placed in designated areas on government websites, ensuring they do not interfere with the provision of essential services and access to critical information. Ads must not obstruct or overshadow crucial public services.
6. To promote fairness and diversity, multiple advertisements from different government departments or agencies should be rotated on government websites.
7. Priority should be given to advertisements that promote public awareness campaigns and essential government services, ensuring that vital information is readily accessible to citizens.
8. Government departments and agencies are responsible for regularly monitoring the performance and impact of digital advertisements to ensure their effectiveness and relevance.
9. These guidelines are designed to facilitate the proper placement of web jacket ads on government websites, ensuring that they are informative, non-disruptive, and aligned with government policies and priorities.

Guidelines for Empanelment of Non-Government Websites for Government Advertisements

1. Eligibility Criteria

Websites already empanelled with the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP) will be automatically considered empanelled with DGIPR, Maharashtra, based on the criteria established by DAVP. Empanelment eligibility is contingent on the website's continuous operation under the same name (website address), calculated retroactively from the empanelment application date.

For new websites applying for empanelment under Categories A, B, and C, rates will be determined according to the prevailing rates defined by DAVP or DGIPR.

First-time empanelment for websites in Categories D and E will be processed based on the rates specified by DGIPR.

2. Financial Documentation

Websites must provide income tax return certificates for the last five years, demonstrating earned revenue from their sites.

Website owners must furnish registration documents, PAN Card, and address details of their firm or company. Applications submitted directly by website-owning companies or individuals will be considered, and intermediary agencies will not be eligible to apply on behalf of websites or website groups.

3. Reporting Unique Users

Websites must report their certified "Minimum Average Unique Users" monthly, based on data from the preceding six months before the empanelment application date. Certification of user data must be conducted by a reputable agency as specified by DAVP or DGIPR. Unique users from both mobile and desktop platforms will be considered.

4. Empanelment of Multiple Websites

Different websites within a single company or group may be empanelled, provided each website individually meets the Unique User Criteria. Combining or aggregating unique user counts from different websites within one group or company is not permitted. In such cases, separate applications for each website should be submitted, along with other formalities.

5. Preference for Maharashtra-Based Content

Websites or web portals owned and operated by companies, firms, or individuals incorporated in India, especially those featuring content related to Maharashtra and impacting the state or benefiting its image, will receive preference for empanelment. Government advertisements/messages must be prominently displayed on these websites for maximum viewership, as specified in the Release Order.

6. Rate Consistency

Once accepted, there will be no changes in the rates offered to empanelled websites or web portals throughout the empanelment period. Websites must bear the costs associated with technical requirements, such as adapting the department's design format to the website's

format. The department may empanel a Third-Party Ad Server (3-PAS) for verification and cross-checking of advertisement displays on websites and web portals.

7. Target Audience and Advertisement Impact

The effectiveness of advertisements on these websites will be evaluated concerning their impact on public awareness and campaign objectives. DGIPR may specify the target audience for advertisements, whether within the state, pan India, or both, as required.

8. Reporting and Compliance

Empanelled agencies must provide their Google Analytics access credentials and integrate their Google Analytics accounts with those of DGIPR. Unique User Data should be submitted based on Google Analytics and Google Ad Manager reports when billing DGIPR. DGIPR reserves the right to audit empanelled websites at its discretion, and website owners are responsible for compliance with all relevant rules and regulations of the Government of India and the State of Maharashtra.

9. Compliance and Suspension

DGIPR holds the right to decline or suspend empanelment if the content of any empanelled website or web portal is found to be anti-national, obscene, indecent, anti-social, in violation of communal harmony and national integrity, or in violation of extant cyber laws and deemed objectionable by a competent committee. Actions against such websites will be in accordance with the applicable laws at that time.

These guidelines outline the criteria, processes, and responsibilities related to the empanelment of websites for government advertisements, with an emphasis on transparency, accountability, and adherence to guidelines and policies.

To qualify for empanelment, websites seeking consideration must meet specific criteria.

1. First, their domain registration for the server hosting the website should be for a minimum of five years.
2. Each website category must attain a minimum Unique User count, representing the number of visitors.
3. Furthermore, websites are required to prominently display essential information about their publisher, director, editor, along with contact details, such as mobile number, email address, and the physical address of the editorial office.
4. Websites should be regularly updated daily, providing fresh and current content. Empanelled websites are expected to focus exclusively on display advertising, particularly visual advertisements.
5. They must maintain an online presence for at least two years without altering their name or URL during this period.
6. Importantly, websites should consistently attract a monthly unique user count exceeding ten thousand, with Google Analytics providing feedback and reporting on this user count.
7. These criteria are designed to ensure that empanelled websites are well-established, routinely updated, and capable of reaching a substantial audience, enhancing their effectiveness for government advertising purposes.

Payment Procedures:

All websites are required to electronically submit their complete invoices, along with display certificates for the content or advertisements, within 30 days of either the campaign's completion or the last date of monthly telecast/display.

In the case of advertisements or campaigns released by DGIPR, a minimum Click-Through Rate (CTR) of 0.30 (equivalent to 3 clicks per thousand impressions or 3000 clicks per million impressions) is mandatory for all categories.

This CTR requirement must be reflected in the reports generated through Google Analytics Report, Google Ad Manager, or any third-party Ad server engaged by DGIPR for payment purposes.

CTR falling below 0.3 but up to 0.2 per release order will result in a 20 percent deduction from the billed amount.

CTR below 0.2 but up to 0.1 per release order will lead to a 30 percent deduction in the billed amount, while CTR less than 0.1 will entail a 50 percent deduction, following DAVP's pattern.

Empanelled agencies are responsible for daily submission of screenshots and live links of the website portal once the publicity campaign goes live. Screenshots should be provided at regular intervals, including in the morning, evening, and night.

Payment will be processed exclusively through e-payment methods. In the event of excess payment, recovery procedures will be initiated by the client.

If an empanelled website consistently refuses to accept and carry advertisements issued by DGIPR, Maharashtra, it may face debarment from department campaigns for the remaining period of its empanelment.

Applicable GST and other taxes will be as per the relevant provisions.

The Directorate General of Information and Public Relations, Maharashtra will accept the rates approved by DAVP or BOC for release of advertisement to the websites/web portals. The DGIPR may revise the rates, when needed in Categories D & E.

The Directorate General of Information and Public Relations, Maharashtra will decide the duration and rates of the web Jacket Ads provided to the agencies as per the requirements.

Web Channels:

Eligibility Criteria

Every Channel shall have to fulfil the following general and technical qualifications to be eligible for empanelment with the Department, namely:

- a) Only Channels owned and operated by registered companies and limited liability partnership firms registered with State Government or Government of India other than individuals shall be considered for empanelment.
- b) The Channel or its owner or partners should not be bankrupt or insolvent.
- c) The Channel or the owner or partners should not have been in the dispute, blacklisted or dis-empanelled by any State Government or Government of India. The applicant shall upload a self-declaration to this effect when the department may verify.
- d) The Channel should have continuously operated under the same name for a minimum period of three years.
- e) The publicity impact of advertisement through such Web Channels will also be considered, while empanelling these Web Channels for the purpose of Government advertisements. DGIPR can specify the target audience for the advertisement/ campaign within state or pan India or both as per the requirement.
- f) The Channel must have a verified Meta page or YouTube Channel. All these channels must be in active operations from the last six months.
- g) The Channel must submit the Meta analytics and YouTube analytics report for a period of six months before the date of application.
- h) The Channel should have uploaded at least 100 videos or sound bites (minimum 1 minute of duration) in the period of six months.
- i) The Channel should have an office in Maharashtra.
- j) The Channel should have filed Income Tax Returns for at least one year before filling of the application for empanelment and shall attach copies thereof with the application.
- k) The empanelment shall be non-transferable.
- l) The Channel should have at least Five lakh subscribers/followers on the date of submission of application for empanelment, **by way of-**
 - i. **Verified Meta official page or**
 - ii. **Verified YouTube official channel.**

Mode of Payment

- i. The Channel shall be obliged to submit its bills (in hard copy and soft file), complete in all respects, within thirty days of completion of the campaign, along with certificates to the effect that the advertisement has been displayed or relayed on the Channel. The Channel shall also provide the entire schedule or log of the displayed or related advertisements along with YouTube Analytics and Meta Analytics and PDF files of the daily screenshots.
- ii. Online payments shall be made by the competent authority for only that period during which the advertisement was displayed or relayed at the DGIPR/DAVP rates.
- iii. The Channel shall abide by all the instructions of the Government issued from time-to-time.

- iv. The Channel will be required to submit certified data regarding its views and followers/subscribers whenever demanded by the Department. If required, the Department may, from time-to-time, re-check or assign any agency to review the data provided by the Channel.
- v. The Channel shall provide an undertaking that the rates accepted by them from the Department, are the lowest.
- vi. The payment shall be made through e-payment Platform only. Recovery shall be made in case of excess payment by the client. An empanelled web channel can be debarred from department campaigns, for the remaining period of his empanelment, if it deliberately and consistently refuses to accept and carry advertisements issued by DGIPR, Maharashtra.
- vii. GST & Other Taxes will be applicable as per the provision.

Rate structure and advertisement format

- i. The minimum base rate fixed in a category for the ads would be offered to all applicant web channels in the category found eligible based on minimum subscriber data.
- ii. The minimum base rate for the Aston Band Format ads and L Band Format ads would be offered to all applicant web channels in that category found eligible based on minimum subscriber data.

Government Advertisement Format:

- i. Aston Band Format: The advertisements shall be shared in animated Aston band format to be used on videos exclusively for the Government. No other advertisements shall be posted alongside Government advertisements on these particular set of videos.
- ii. Video ads: Video advertisements of duration of fifteen seconds to thirty seconds shall be embedded within particular videos after one minute as a part of the video.
- iii. L Band format: The advertisements in L Band format shall be displayed for fifteen seconds along with other advertisements and shall be given priority.

Advertisement shall only be inserted on videos in a verified Meta or YouTube Channel, empanelled with the Government of Maharashtra.

In- Application Advertising (including OTT Platforms)

Eligibility Criteria

Every internet based mobile, and Desktop Application shall fulfil the eligibility for empanelment with the Department, namely:

- a) The Application should be operating on the major application stores including Google play store and Apple App store.
- b) The empanelment of Applications for advertising with DGIPR Maharashtra will be done in three Categories; A, B & C and will be at rates defined by DGIPR.
- c) The application will be categorised and considered based on the number of downloads of the application. In case of the application being available on both, Google play store and Apple App store, the platform on which the number of downloads is the highest will be considered.
- d) Alongside the downloads, the number of unique active users will also be considered. It shall be crucial for the company or the owner or partners owning the application to report their duly certified, 'Unique Active users' (from within India), every month (based on the data of six months immediately preceding the date of applying for empanelment). The report so furnished shall be certified by reputed agency as prescribed or specified by the DGIPR. For consideration, active users of a particular applications will be counted for mobile and desktop data both.
- e) The App must submit the Google Play store analytics and Apple App Store analytics report for a period of six months before the date of application.
- f) The App should have continuously operated under the same name for a minimum period of three years.
- g) The publicity impact of advertisement through such applications will also be considered, while empanelling these applications for the purpose of Government advertisements. DGIPR can specify the target audience for the advertisement/campaign within state or pan India or both as per the requirement.
- h) The company or the owner or partners should not have been in the dispute, blacklisted or dis-empanelled by any State Government or Government of India. The applicant shall upload a self-declaration to this effect when the department may verify.
- i) All types of ads provided on the App must be enlisted.
- j) Apps with gaming, gambling, betting, and financial risking will be excluded from the empanelment.

Mode of Payment

- i. Every application operator will be obliged to submit its complete bills electronically in all respects along with the display certificates of the contents/advertisement within 30 days of completion of the campaign or last date of monthly telecast/display.
- ii. For advertisement/Campaign/ Video advertisement released by DGIPR, a minimum click-Through Rate (CTR) of 0.30 (i.e., 3 clicks per thousand impressions or 3000 clicks per million impressions) shall be mandatory across all

categories which should be reflected in the reports generated through the Google Analytic Report & Google Ad Manager or third-party Ad server engaged by DGIPR for payment purposes. CTR less than 0.3 but up to 0.2 per release order will invite a deduction of 20 percent in the billed amount. CTR of less than 0.2 but up to 0.1 per release order will invite a deduction of 30 percent in the billed amount while CTR less than 0.1 would invite deduction of 50 percent on the pattern of DGIPR.

- iii. Screenshot of the website portal will be submitted by the empanelled agency on daily basis once the publicity campaign goes live. (Screenshots should be reflected at regular intervals, i.e., morning, evening, and night).
- iv. The payment shall be made through e-Kuber platform only. Recovery shall be made in case of excess payment by the client. An empanelled website can be debarred from department campaigns, for the remaining period of his empanelment, if it deliberately and consistently refuses to accept and carry advertisements issued by DGIPR, Maharashtra.
- v. GST & Other Taxes will be applicable as per the provision.

Rate structure and advertisement format

The minimum base rate fixed in a category for the ads would be offered to all internet application in the category found eligible based on the downloads and active user data. The Directorate General of Information and Public Relations, Maharashtra will decide the duration and rates of the Jacket Ads provided to the agencies as per the requirements.

Social Media Influencers

Eligibility Criteria

Every Social Media Influencer/ Content Creator shall have to fulfil the following general and technical qualifications to be eligible for empanelment with the Department, namely:

- a) The Social Media Influencer/ Content Creator should be operating their handle/ page/ channel through the mentioned platforms: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.
- b) The empanelment of Social Media Influencer/ Content Creator for advertising with DGIPR Maharashtra will be done in three Categories; A, B & C and will be at rates defined by DGIPR.
- c) The Social Media Influencer/ Content Creator must provide income tax return certificate of the last two-years in reference to earned revenue from these sites.
- d) Different handles/ pages/ channels belonging to one individual /group can be empanelled, provided they individually fulfil the minimum subscribers/ followers' criteria. In other words, bunching/ adding of subscribers/ followers of the different handles/ pages/ channels of one individual /group shall not be permitted. In such cases, separate applications for each platform may be submitted along with other formalities.
- e) The owner of the handle/ page/ channel must provide documents of registration, PAN Card/Address details. The applications submitted directly by the owners owning and

operating the handle/ page/ channel will only be entertained. In other words, no intermediary agency will be eligible to apply on their behalf.

- f) The owner (individual/ group) should not have been in any dispute, blacklisted or dis-empowered by any State Government or Government of India. The applicant shall upload a self-declaration to this effect when the department may verify

Mode of Payment:

- i. The **Social Media Influencer / Content Creator** shall be obliged to submit its bills (in hard copy and soft file), complete in all respects, within thirty days of completion of the campaign, along with completion certificate to the effect that the advertisement has been displayed or relayed on the Platform. The Social Media Influencer / Content Creator shall also provide the entire schedule or log of the displayed or related advertisements along with YouTube Analytics, Meta Analytics & Twitter Analytics and PDF files of the daily screenshots.
- ii. Online payments shall be made by the competent authority for only that period during which the advertisement was displayed or relayed at the DGIPR rates.
- iii. The Social Media Influencer / Content Creator shall abide by all the instructions of the Government issued from time-to-time.
- iv. The Social Media Influencer / Content Creator will be required to submit certified data regarding its views and followers/subscribers whenever demanded by the Department. If required, the Department may, from time-to-time, re-check or assign any agency to review the data provided by the Social Media Influencer / Content Creator.
- v. The Social Media Influencer / Content Creator shall provide an undertaking that the rates accepted by them from the Department, are the lowest.
- vi. The payment shall be made through e-billing (e-Kuber) Platforms only. Recovery shall be made in case of excess payment by the client.
- vii. GST & Other Taxes will be applicable as per the provision.
- viii. Failing to submit any of the following requirement shall result in delayed payment procedures.
- ix. Social Media handles/pages/channels fulfilling all the norms will be issued advertisement of the prescribed amount up to the maximum limit of their category:
 1. For category A, not exceeding 7 lakhs per annum
 2. For category B, not exceeding 5 lakhs per annum
 3. For category C, not exceeding 3 lakhs per annum

The maximum limit mentioned above can be exceeded if deemed necessary by the State Government.

Celebrities and Impactful Social Personalities

Celebrity can be defined as a person who is well renowned in their field and have/ had a significant social/economical contribution and impact.

If a celebrity is to be considered for advertising, DGIPR can approach the same for the campaign/ advertisement of the government schemes/ policies. The celebrities shall be selected based on their target audience and their social impact in the society.

The payment and its mode shall be discussed with the individual entity and be decided at the time of campaign by DGIPR.

Rate structure and advertisement format

The minimum base rate fixed in a category for the ads would be offered to all social media influencers and content creators in the category found eligible based on the followers and impressions.

Empanelment Advisory Committee (EAC) / Regulatory Committee:

To evaluate applications from websites, web channels, and other digital media platforms seeking empanelment or registration for receiving advertisements under these guidelines, an Empanelment Advisory Committee (EAC) will be established.

This committee will be composed of the following members: Directorate General of DGIPR, serving as the Chairperson; Director of Administration; Director of News; Deputy Director of Publication; Deputy Director of News; Deputy Director of Accounts; Accounts Officer; and a Senior Officer from NIC.

The EAC will not only recommend the rate structure and categorization of digital media platforms lacking DAVP-approved rates but also seeking registration for DGIPR Maharashtra's advertisement releases. Its recommendations will be submitted to the Directorate General of Information and Public Relations Department, Maharashtra, for approval.

Furthermore, the EAC will consider additional incentives for agencies based on their reach or impressions, following a review of the analytical reports submitted. This committee will also have the authority to establish Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with specific prominent digital advertising agencies for the purpose of advertising.

Technical Committee

This committee will also establish a technical team within DGIPR, which will include a Digital Marketing Manager, Data Analysts, a Communication and Digital Media Officer, and a Digital Marketing Specialist. This team will be responsible for verifying the monthly analytical reports and data submitted by the empanelled agencies. Additionally, they will review reports related to CPTI, CPM, CTR, and other metrics of the agencies, facilitating the performance-based payment process.

OR

The committee will consist of experts in various domains:

1. Advertising Technology Experts: These individuals possess a deep understanding of ad tech, including ad servers, ad exchanges, demand-side platforms (DSPs), supply-side platforms (SSPs), real-time bidding (RTB), header bidding, and programmatic advertising.

2. **Data and Analytics Specialists:** These experts are skilled in data analysis, data science, and data privacy, enabling them to develop and enforce standards for data collection, utilization, and protection in digital advertising.
3. **User Experience Designers:** This group of designers focuses on creating user-friendly ad formats that enhance user experience while achieving advertising objectives.
4. **Security and Fraud Prevention Specialists:** These professionals specialize in ad fraud detection, prevention, and cybersecurity, contributing to the maintenance of the integrity of the advertising ecosystem.
5. **Standardization and Protocols Experts:** Individuals well-versed in industry standards, they assist in developing and maintaining technical protocols that facilitate communication between different components of the advertising ecosystem.
6. **Mobile and Cross-Platform Experts:** Specialists who understand the unique challenges and opportunities presented by mobile advertising and cross-platform campaigns.

Validity of the Empanelment

The empanelment shall be valid for a period of two years from the date of empanelment. The Competent Authority may extend the empanelment further for a period of one year at a time. Every year an updated report is to be submitted by empanelled agencies to continue to be empanelled with DGIPR. Failure to submit a report will result in delisting from the empanelled list. An open empanelment will be implemented by DGIPR, and any agency can apply to DGIPR by submitting an application to DGIPR between the 1st to 7th day in the months February, May, August or November.

Advertisement Guidelines:

1. DGIPR Maharashtra will issue work orders at rates prescribed by DAVP or will establish rates where DAVP rates are undefined. Rates for a specific category cannot exceed the rates prescribed for the immediately higher category.
2. Empanelment for all categories will remain open throughout the year, and DGIPR Maharashtra will accept and process empanelment applications in accordance with the guidelines.
3. DGIPR will charge an empanelment application fee of Rs. 10,000 for each application.
4. Websites, web channels, applications, and social media influencers must submit online and physical bills, along with a campaign analytical report, within 30 days from the last day of the Release Order.
5. It is the responsibility of website, web channel, application, and social media influencer owners to comply with the rules and regulations prescribed by the Centre/State Government as required.
6. The nature of work will be based on the specific advertisement campaign, which may include audio, audio-visual, creatives, graphics, and similar elements.
7. Once rates have been offered to and accepted by an empanelled agency, there will be no rate changes for the entire duration of empanelment until rates are revised by either DAVP or DGIPR Maharashtra.

8. Any technical requirements, such as adapting the design format provided by DGIPR Maharashtra to the website's format, will be the responsibility of the website, web channel, application, or social media influencer.
9. DGIPR will periodically define rates for Category A-C (based on DAVP Rates) and Category D-E for the following:
 - a) **Standard Banners:** Rates must be quoted in Rs. for banner sizes, including 300 x 250 Pixels and 728 x 90 Pixels, on a CPTI basis.
 - b) **Video Ads:** Applicants should quote rates in Rs. per five seconds for video Ads.
 - c) **Fixed Banner/Property on Home Page:** Rates for fixed properties on the first scroll of a website's Home Page, with a minimum display size of 350 x 250 pixels, will be quoted separately for a six-hour slot and 24-hour basis.
 - d) **Fixed Video Ads on Home Page:** Rates for fixed video ads on the first scroll of a website or news web channel's Home Page, visible to all visitors for one or more days as required, will be quoted for a 24-hour slot.

Suspension of Empanelment:

1. In cases where a channel engages in the telecast of objectionable content, such as hate speech, violent material, pornography, nudity, sexual activity, intoxicants (liquor), cruel and insensitive content, personal disputes, false news, misrepresentation, promotional interviews, or any other objectionable material, the following consequences shall apply:
2. Immediate suspension of the empanelment of the website, web channel, application, or social media influencer by the Competent Authority.
3. Blacklisting of the website, web channel, application, or social media influencer for a specified duration, which shall not be less than six months, as determined by the Competent Authority.
4. Advertisements falling within the following categories may result in penalties or the cancellation of the empanelment of the channel:
 - a. Hate Speech (Religious, Community, etc).
 - b. Violent Content.
 - c. Gender Discrimination.
 - d. Nudity and Sexual Activity, Intoxicants (Liquor).
 - e. Cruel and Insensitive Content.
 - f. Personal Disputes.
 - g. False News.
 - h. Misrepresentation.
 - i. Anti-State/Anti-National content sharing.
 - j. Promotional interviews.
 - k. Any other objectionable Material.

These measures are in place to ensure that empanelled channels adhere to ethical content standards and refrain from disseminating harmful or offensive material.

Cancellation of Empanelment:

The Competent Authority reserves the right to cancel the empanelment of websites, news web channels, applications, or social media influencers under the following circumstances:

- a) If the website, web channel, application, or social media influencer refuses to display an advertisement issued by the department within the specified timeframe and in the prescribed manner, as indicated in the Release Order (RO).
- b) In cases where the unique visitors, followers, or subscribers of a particular web channel, website, application, or social media influencer decrease by ten percent at any given point in time, until they meet the qualification criteria once again.

It's important to note that when the Competent Authority issues an order under sub-clause (a), the empanelled website, web channel, application, or social media influencer will not be eligible for re-empanelment until at least six months have passed since the date of the order. Furthermore, if the Competent Authority issues an order under sub-clause (b), the empanelled entity may reapply for empanelment, and re-empanelment may be granted upon satisfactory compliance with the qualifications outlined in clause 3 of these guidelines.

Additional Terms and Conditions:

1. Websites, web channels, applications, and social media influencers applying for empanelment must provide an Affidavit, bearing the name, signature, and seal of the authorized signatory. This Affidavit should declare the accuracy of the information submitted and the commitment to abide by all DGIPR Maharashtra's empanelment Terms & Conditions, as well as any decisions made by DGIPR Maharashtra. In the event that the submitted information is found to be false or incorrect in any way, the website, web channel, application, or social media influencer may face suspension or debarment from empanelment or applying for empanelment for a period of up to three years.
2. Empanelment and the finalized advertisement rates will remain valid for a two-year period. If a website, web channel, application, or social media influencer is rejected by either DAVP or DGIPR Maharashtra, a fresh application can be submitted only after one month.
3. The Unique User Data for each empanelled website and the followers/subscribers of web channels, websites, and applications will be annually reviewed in the first week of April by DGIPR Maharashtra. Any necessary revisions to categories and corresponding rates will be considered, and the decision of the Director General, DGIPR Maharashtra, will be final.
4. An empanelled website or news web channel may be debarred from receiving government ads from DGIPR Maharashtra for the remaining duration of its empanelment if it consistently refuses to accept and display advertisements issued by DGIPR Maharashtra.
5. In the event of disputes or disagreements related to empanelment, rates, or other terms and conditions, the decision of the Director General, DGIPR Maharashtra, will be considered final.
6. All quoted rates are net rates, with applicable GST and other taxes to be paid separately.

7. Copies of all required documents for empanelment must be submitted in hard copy to the DGIPR Maharashtra office, clearly labelled with "Empanelment of the website, web channel, application, or social media influencer" on top.

Note:

DGIPR, Government of Maharashtra shall have the right to interpret and elaborate any provision of this guidelines.

Working Draft