



TAG-ID and the TAG Registry

Features and Usage

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The TAG-ID and the TAG Registry make it possible for legitimate companies to identify responsible, trusted players across the digital advertising ecosystem, helping to solve the challenges of fraud, malware, piracy and transparency facing digital advertisers today.

TAG Member companies that successfully complete the TAG Registration process and are identified as “Verified by TAG” and receive a unique, persistent identifier called a TAG-ID. They are also listed in the TAG Registry, joining a protected community of supply chain participants that demonstrate their commitment to higher standards of transparency and disclosure to their partners.

This document is intended to familiarize you with your company’s TAG-ID and its uses, to guide you as you integrate use of your TAG-ID into your business practices, and to help optimize your use of TAG-IDs that are shared with you by your partners in the digital advertising industry.

What is a TAG-ID?

A TAG-ID is a globally unique and case-insensitive 16-character hexadecimal string.

Sample TAG-ID: **f8a5e56e45113235**

As a business tool, the TAG-ID is a global and persistent identifier that enables a wide variety of use cases for companies. TAG-IDs function as legitimacy and reputation indicators as companies maintain their status over time.

Companies can use their TAG-IDs in many ways to ensure that criminals are not masquerading as their brands, and that they are only doing business with legitimate partners. In short, use of TAG-IDs enables digital ad companies to ensure that they are working with trusted parties throughout the life of their campaigns.

It is important to note that a TAG-ID is not intended to be proof of identity for an organization, but rather to verify whether an organization is part of the TAG Registry. The TAG-ID is one unique identifier that companies can use in conjunction with other data points to confirm that they are communicating with true representatives of partner organizations.

What Value Does TAG-ID Provide?

Advertiser use of TAG-ID increases brand safety and business transparency. The information made transparent via the TAG-ID can inform business practices regarding everything from partner verification to bid strategy. It provides an actionable and defensible way to track investments in digital advertising and ensure that advertisers partner only with known and trusted companies in the placement of digital ads.

Agency use of TAG-ID enhances reputation and increases business transparency, ultimately aiding agencies in running the most profitable campaigns for clients. Agencies use their TAG-IDs to easily communicate the high standards they meet to the marketplace, and to ensure the safety of client brands through transparency about the status of potential partners across the digital advertising supply chain. The TAG-ID helps agencies identify illicit use of creative assets, providing more proactive and granular rights management to avoid issues of fraud, piracy and malware in campaigns.

Publisher use of TAG-ID enhances reputation and increases business transparency in ways that show their inventory is legitimate – making them better, more attractive business partners – and make it easier for publishers to safeguard their own brands. The identity information communicated via TAG-ID helps publishers avoid having their inventory spoofed or resold by unauthorized parties, provides forensic insight in situations where fraud is alleged in campaigns.

Buy-Side Ad Tech (DSPs, etc.) use of TAG-ID supports business transparency by communicating their responsible business to the marketplace and informing their choice of supply chain partners. By making TAG-IDs transparent on their

platforms, buy-side ad tech also enables buyers to recognize authentic inventory sources, helps parties on both sides of a transaction make more informed choices about potential digital advertising partners, and provides valuable forensic insight in situations where fraud is alleged in campaigns.

Sell-Side Ad Tech (SSPs, Exchanges, Ad Networks, etc.) use of TAG-ID supports business transparency by communicating their responsible business to the marketplace and informing their choice of supply chain partners. By making TAG-IDs transparent on their platforms, sell-side ad tech can also enable parties on both sides of a transaction make more informed choices about potential digital advertising partners.

Vendor (anti-piracy, anti-fraud, anti-malware, and measurement companies) enhances reputation and supports business transparency by communicating their responsible business to the marketplace. TAG-ID is key in identifying vendors as legitimate supply chain partners, authorized resellers, etc.

How Should My Company Use its TAG-ID?

Some uses of the TAG-ID are relevant to all companies in the digital advertising supply chain, while other are only relevant to specific business types.

	Advertiser	Agency	Publisher	Buy-Side Ad Tech	Sell-Side Ad Tech	Vendor
Sharing TAG-ID	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Requesting and Verifying TAG-ID in the TAG Registry	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Employing TAG-ID in Partner Onboarding, Contracting and Reporting	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Appending TAG-ID to Ad Creative	✓	✓		✓		
Employing TAG-ID in Ads.txt			✓	✓	✓	
Employing TAG-ID in Payment ID System				✓	✓	

Sharing Your TAG-ID

Your company can share its TAG-ID with partners as a means of verifying legitimacy and reputation. Your TAG-ID is not a secret – it is meant to be shared with your partners and clients so that they can use it in identifying your organization.

When business partners and clients inquire into your company’s TAG Registration or certification status, share your company’s TAG-ID so that the recipient can verify your “TAG Registered” status, as well as any TAG certifications that your company has achieved.

When sharing your TAG-ID with a partner or client, inform recipients that they can verify your TAG-ID using the TAG Registry, accessible via the TAG website or API.

TAG will never share your company’s TAG-ID with external parties. TAG will only confirm the validity of the given TAG-ID through the TAG Registry.

Requesting and Verifying TAG-ID in the TAG Registry

Your company can ask its partners in the digital advertising industry to provide their TAG-IDs as a means of verifying their legitimacy and reputation. When you have been given a TAG-ID and are in the process of verifying its validity, take special care to utilize other operating procedures to confirm you are communicating with true representatives of your partner.

Use the TAG Registry to “look up” TAG-IDs provided by your partners to verify that they are indeed known and reputable “TAG Registered” companies.

The TAG Registry can confirm in real-time whether a TAG-ID provided is associated with a company name, or whether a company is included in the TAG Registry.

Please note that the TAG Registry will not reveal a company’s TAG-ID when a Company Name is entered, as a TAG-ID can only be disclosed by the company to whom it is assigned.

Accessing the TAG Registry via the TAG-ID Verification Tool

Companies can access the TAG Registry and use the TAG-ID Verification Tool online at <https://tagtoday.net/tagregistry/>.

You can verify a company’s status in the TAG Registry by entering a Company Name or its TAG-ID.

- If you are not sure whether your digital supply chain partner is TAG Registered, enter its Company Name to learn its status in the TAG Registry.
- If your supply chain partner has provided its TAG-ID as a means of verification, enter that TAG-ID to confirm the company to whom that identifier has been assigned.

Entering a Company Name

If the Company Name entered in the TAG-ID Verification Tool matches a company with an active TAG Registration, the TAG Registry will confirm that the Company’s TAG Registration is active:

“Acme Company’s TAG Registration status is Active.

Please contact the company’s compliance officer to receive their TAG-ID.”

The TAG Registry will also respond if it is unable to validate a company’s status based on the company name entered:

“Acme Company was not found in the TAG Registry.”

If you do not know the specific TAG-ID of a given company, TAG will only confirm if the company is listed the TAG Registry or not (i.e. TAG will not share the TAG-ID of that company to you). TAG will never share your TAG-ID to external parties and will only confirm validity of the given TAG-ID.

If a company cannot be found in the TAG Registry, the Company Name entered may not be an exact match to an active company in the TAG Registry, or a company’s TAG Registration status has expired. Please check that you have correctly typed in the Company Name. If you are still unable to validate a company’s status, please ask your partner for the exact Company Name on its TAG Registry listing.

Entering a TAG-ID

If the identifier entered is a valid TAG-ID, the TAG Registry will return the name of the company to which that TAG-ID is assigned:

“This TAG-ID is Active and is associated with Acme Company.”

The TAG Registry will also respond if it is unable to validate a company’s status based on the TAG-ID entered:

“This TAG-ID was not found in the TAG Registry and cannot be validated.”

If an identifier cannot be found in the TAG Registry, the identifier may not be an exact match to the TAG-ID of an active company in the TAG Registry, or the TAG-ID is valid but associated with a company whose TAG Registration status has expired. Please check that you have correctly typed in the TAG-ID provided by your partner (noting that TAG-IDs are not case-sensitive). If you are still unable to find the TAG-ID in the TAG Registry, please contact your partner for additional information.

Accessing the TAG Registry via API

Companies can now verify their partners' TAG-IDs through an automated process by using an API connection with the TAG Registry. The TAG Product Specification for TAG Registry API provides full details on how to establish and use an API connection to the TAG Registry. If you do not have that document, please contact info@tagtoday.net.

Employing TAG-ID in Partner Onboarding, Contracting and Reporting

TAG-ID in Internal Supply Partnership Onboarding

Companies that work with any number of supply sources need an internal tool for onboarding new supply partners and for managing current ones. TAG-IDs, which are easily and quickly ingestible identifiers, allow organizations to conduct preliminary assessments of supply sources, streamline onboarding operations, and coordinate ongoing management.

TAG-ID in Business Identity Verification

Direct partners looking to establish a more trusted relationship can exchange their TAG-IDs to verify each other's business identity when drafting SOWs, preparing IOs, mapping S2S integrations, etc.

TAG-ID in Offline Partnership Contracts

All companies can share their TAG-ID or check partners' TAG-IDs in offline partnership contracts. TAG encourages companies to include the request for a partner's TAG-ID as part of all standard contracts.

Additionally, customers of various service providers (anti-fraud, anti-malware, viewability, brand protection, et al.) benefit from a common ID system across vendor reports and diagnostics.

TAG-ID in RFPs and IOs

Advertisers, Agencies and Publishers can share their TAG ID or check partners' TAG IDs in any RFP/IO development. TAG encourages companies to include a TAG-ID field in all IO, RFP and Media Plan templates.

Companies can also include verification of a partner's TAG-ID as part of its “credit check” prior to direct buys.

Buy-Side Ad Tech and **Supply-Side Ad Tech** can also share their TAG ID in any RFP/IO tech, by allowing their proprietary technology to support sharing TAG-ID.

Additionally, customers of various **Vendors** (anti-fraud, anti-malware, viewability, brand protection, et al.) benefit from a common ID system across vendor reports and diagnostics.

TAG-ID in Reporting

Advertisers and Agencies can work with data sources to include TAG-ID unique business identifiers in delivered reports.

For example, in ad verification reporting, Advertisers can look for TAG-IDs from publishers' ads.txt files, to verify the authorized digital resellers supply path.

Employing TAG-ID in Ads.txt

Ads.txt is a simple, flexible, and secure method for publishers and distributors to declare who is authorized to sell their inventory, improving transparency for programmatic buyers. You can learn more about Ads.txt and download the Ads.txt Specification at <https://iabtechlab.com/ads-txt/>.

Using Ads.txt, **Publishers** can share their TAG-IDs and those of their authorized reseller by hosting a text file web page that is available for buyers and intermediaries to crawl and verify the inventory.

The Ads.txt specification helps **Sell-Side Ad Tech** support their publishers by communicating their authorized resellers on sell-side platforms.

The Ads.txt specification provides a mechanism for **Advertisers, Agencies** and **Buy-Side Ad Tech** to confirm a publisher's domain, seller account ID, authorized resellers, and the publisher's TAG-ID. These components can then be used in buyer targeting strategies to buy legitimate non-fraudulent inventory.

Vendors can benefit from Ads.txt as well. TAG-IDs found in Ads.txt files can be attributed to businesses and TAG-IDs may provide additional layer of in ad verification.

Employing TAG-ID in the Payment ID System

The Payment ID System enables companies to ensure that payments made in the digital ad ecosystem are going to legitimate companies. The Payment ID System creates transparency by linking identifiers for partners from whom a company buys ad inventory and those buying from that company to their inventory, effectively "following the money" across the entire digital advertising supply chain to prevent criminals from receiving ad spend. TAG-IDs are used in the Payment ID System as "Intermediary IDs," one of two identifiers that intermediaries append to transactions in order to create a chain of custody for a single digital advertising transaction. To learn more and implement the Payment ID System, please reference the *TAG Product Specification for Payment ID System*.

Supply-Side Ad Tech use their TAG-IDs as the required Intermediary IDs appended to transactions, helping to create Payment ID Chains ("pchains") that make transparent the supply chain paths of legitimate inventory.

Buy-Side Ad Tech can recognize and consume pchains (including the TAG-IDs employed as required Intermediary IDs). They keep records of the supply chain paths of legitimate inventory for later forensic use when fraud is alleged in those campaigns, and can also develop analytics based on pchains to inform buyers' pre-bid strategy.

Safeguarding Against Misuse of Your TAG-ID

Your TAG-ID is not a secret – it is meant to be shared with your partners and clients so that they can use it in identifying your organization in the TAG Registry.

However, as use of TAG-IDs becomes a widespread and valuable business practice across the digital advertising supply chain, implementers should expect attempts at impersonation to leverage the reputation of good actors. Therefore, it is vital that companies develop and implement business processes to defend against impersonation attempts. For example, companies should ensure that business correspondences happen on the expected email domain.

The Future of TAG-ID

As anti-fraud and transparency technology advances, there will be additional ways for companies to share their TAG-ID and verify their partners' TAG-IDs. The TAG-ID Working Group focuses on this area of work and will document new use cases for TAG-ID as they arise.

Questions?

Learn more at www.tagtoday.net, or reach out to TAG with your questions at info@tagtoday.net.



TAG Due Process for Allegations of Non-Compliance & Appeal

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About the Trustworthy Accountability Group

The Trustworthy Accountability Group (TAG) is the leading global certification program fighting criminal activity and increasing trust in the digital advertising industry. Created by the industry's top trade organizations, TAG's mission is to:

- Eliminate fraudulent traffic,
- Combat malware,
- Prevent Internet piracy, and
- Promote greater transparency in digital advertising.

TAG advances those initiatives by bringing companies across the digital advertising supply chain together to set the highest standards.

TAG is the first and only registered Information Sharing and Analysis Organization (ISAO) for the digital advertising industry.

To learn more about the Trustworthy Accountability Group, please visit www.tagtoday.net.

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1. TAG Due Process for Allegations of Non-Compliance & Appeal

Companies that achieve a certification seal associated with a TAG program (“Certified Companies”) must meet the requirements of the applicable guidelines associated with that program. Failure to comply with those guidelines can result in consequences, including but not limited to the loss of the applicable certification and seal. Certified Companies are permitted to review allegations of non-compliance, submit rebuttal evidence, seek review of decisions of non-compliance and appeal any final decision.

All complaints, notices and briefs set forth in this process shall be submitted to info@tagtoday.net.

1.1. Complaints of Non-Compliance

Any company (“Complainant”) is permitted to file a complaint with TAG asserting that a Certified Company failed to comply with the rules set forth in the Certified Against Fraud Guidelines (hereafter, “Complaint”).

Complainant must submit specific evidence of evidence of non-compliance, and a completed TAG Certification Complaint form.

TAG’s staff also is permitted to initiate a Compliant if it has a reasonable basis to believe that a Certified Company failed to comply with the rules set forth in the applicable guidelines.

1.2. Initial Decision by TAG Staff

Upon receipt of a Complaint, TAG will advise Certified Company in writing that a Complaint was filed against it and that it is being reviewed by TAG’s staff.

TAG’s staff is permitted to request, in writing, that Complainant provide additional information and clarification. TAG’s staff also is permitted to review other publicly available information. Once TAG has completed information gathering concerning the Complaint, TAG will provide the Certified Company against whom the Complaint has been lodged: (i) the Complaint; (ii) any evidence concerning non-compliance; and (iii) identification of the provision in this document for which non-compliance is alleged (collectively, “Non-Compliance Allegations”).

Within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the Non-Compliance Allegations, the Certified Company against whom a Complaint was lodged will have the opportunity to submit a Brief in Opposition to the Non-Compliance Allegations (“Opposition Brief”). Alternatively, Company can, in its sole discretion but subject to the limitations in Section 1.1, within seven (7) days of receipt of the Non-Compliance Allegations, choose to forgo submission of an Opposition Brief and TAG’s rendering

of an Initial Decision and request a remediation plan from TAG. Certified Company has seven (7) days from receipt of the remediation plan to agree to its terms (“Remediation Deadline”). If the remediation plan is not agreed to, Company must submit its Opposition Brief and accompanying evidence to TAG within fourteen (14) days of the Remediation Deadline.

Within fourteen (14) days of TAG’s receipt of the Opposition Brief and accompanying evidence, TAG will weigh all of the evidence using a preponderance of the evidence standard and render a decision in writing (“Initial Decision”).

1.3. Review of the Initial Decision by TAG’s Complaint Review Committee

A Certified Company is permitted to seek review of the Initial Decision by a 3 person panel (the “Review Committee Panel”) of TAG’s Complaint Review Committee, which shall be composed of 15 TAG Compliance Officers who represent a diverse cross-section of the digital advertising industry and are appointed by TAG’s staff. Committee Members of the TAG Complaint Review Committee must recuse themselves in cases where the Committee Member is an employee of, vendor or client to the Complainant or Certified Company.

A Certified Company that seeks such review must submit a Notice of Request for Review of Initial Decision (“Review Notice”) within seven (7) days of receipt of the Initial Decision.

Upon receipt of the Review Notice, TAG’s staff will send the Complaint, all evidence concerning non-compliance, the Opposition Brief and any accompany information previously submitted by the Certified Company, as well as the Initial Decision, to the Review Committee.

Within fourteen (14) days of Certified Company’s submission of its Review Notice, it must submit a Brief in Support of its Request for Review and Reversal of the Initial Decision, which shall include: (i) an explanation of why the Certified Company’s believes TAG’s Initial Decision is incorrect; (ii) any additional evidence it did not previously present prior to the Initial Decision; and (iii) any request for a telephonic hearing to present arguments to the TAG Review Committee and respond to questions (“Review Submission”). Such telephonic hearing, if requested, will be scheduled within fourteen (14) days of submission of the Review Brief.

Within fourteen (14) days of TAG’s receipt of the Review Submission or the telephonic hearing, if applicable, the Review Committee will weigh the evidence using a preponderance of the evidence standard and render a decision (“Final Decision”). TAG’s staff will assist the Review Committee in drafting the Final Decision, which must be approved by a majority of the Review Committee Panel.

1.4. Appeal of the Final Decision

A Certified Company is permitted to appeal the Final Decision, which will be heard by the Executive Committee of the Board (the "Executive Panel"). A Certified Company that seeks to appeal the Final Decision must submit a Notice of Appeal of the Final Decision ("Appeal Notice") within seven (7) days of receipt of the Final Decision.

Upon receipt of the Review Notice, TAG's staff will send to the Executive Panel copies of the Complaint, the Initial Decision, the Final Decision, the Opposition Submission, the Review Submission and all of the evidence that was collected in the prior proceedings.

Within fourteen (14) days of Certified Company's submission of its Appeal Notice, it must submit a Brief in Support of its Request for Reversal of the Initial and Final Decisions ("Appeal Brief"), which shall include: (i) an explanation of why the Certified Company believes TAG's Initial and Final Decisions are clearly erroneous; (ii) an explanation, with factual support, of any failure to comply with the procedures set forth herein or other alleged denial of fundamental fairness in the process; and (iii) any request for a telephonic hearing to present arguments to the Executive Panel and respond to questions. Such telephonic hearing, if requested, will be scheduled within fourteen (14) days of submission of the Appeal Brief. The Certified Company is not permitted to submit any new evidence in support of its appeal.

Within fourteen (14) days of TAG's receipt of the Appeal Brief or the telephonic hearing, if applicable, the Executive Panel will determine whether the Initial Decision and the Final Decision were clearly erroneous and, if raised by the Certified Company, whether the procedures set forth herein were followed and that there has been no denial of fundamental fairness (the "Appeal Decision"). TAG's staff will assist the Executive Panel with drafting the Appeal Decision, which must be approved by a majority of the members of the Executive Panel.

1.5. Consequences of Remediation

The first time during a 12 month period that a Certified Company has a Complaint filed against it pursuant to Section 1.1 and chooses to remediate pursuant to Section 1.2, no consequence will be imposed.

The second time during a 12 month period that a Certified Company has a Complaint filed against it pursuant to Section 1.1 and chooses to remediate pursuant to Section 1.2, no consequence will be imposed.

The third time during a 12 month period that a Certified Company has a Complaint filed against it pursuant to Section 1.1 and chooses to remediate pursuant to Section 1.2, no consequence will be imposed; provided, however, except that no further opportunities to remediate will be permitted.

1.6. Consequences of Final Decision(s) of Non-Compliance

The first time during a twelve (12) month period that a Final Decision is rendered finding that the Certified Company failed to comply with the guidelines that apply to a TAG program, that company will: (i) lose its status as certified for that program and the concomitant right to use and display the applicable seal; (ii) be publicly identified by TAG as having lost its status as certified in that program; and (iii) be permanently barred from certification via self-attestation under the Certified Against Fraud Program if the compliance failure occurs in that program.

The second time during a twelve (12) month period that a Final Decision is rendered finding that the Certified Company failed to comply with the applicable guidelines that company will: (i) lose its status as certified for that program and the concomitant right to use and display the applicable seal for six (6) months; (ii) be publicly identified by TAG as having lost its status as certified in that program; and (iii) be permanently barred from certification via self-attestation under the Certified Against Fraud Program if the compliance failure occurs in that program. Company is permitted to reapply for certification via independent validation six (6) months after receipt of the Final Decision or Appeal Decision, if applicable.

The third time during a twelve (12) month period that a Final Decision is rendered finding that the Certified Company failed to comply with the applicable guidelines that company will: (i) lose its status as certified for that program and the concomitant right to use and display the applicable seal for twelve (12) months; (ii) be publicly identified by TAG as having lost its status as certified in that program; and (iii) be permanently barred from certification via self-attestation under the Certified Against Fraud Program if the compliance failure occurs in that program. Company is permitted to reapply for certification via independent validation twelve (12) months after receipt of the Final Decision or Appeal Decision, if applicable.

If during a twelve (12) month period, a Certified Company chooses to remediate three (3) times and has one (1) Final Decision rendered against it finding that the Certified Company failed to comply with the applicable guidelines, it will: (i) lose its status as certified for that program and the concomitant right to use and display the applicable seal for twelve (12) months; (ii) be publicly identified by TAG as having lost its status as certified in that program; and (iii) be permanently barred from certification via self-attestation under the Certified Against Fraud Program if the compliance failure occurs in that program. Company is permitted to reapply for certification via independent validation twelve (12) months after receipt of the Final Decision or Appeal Decision, if applicable.

All consequences for non-compliance will be held in abeyance during the pendency of an appeal before TAG.