

Internet Advertising Advisory

The following guidelines were developed by the IPA Government Relations office for newspaper print and on-line advertising.

*** Do not agree to accept an Internet ad before you have checked it out and are comfortable with the service or product.**

*** Do not assume that the product or service being offered via the Internet is legitimate. * If possible call-up the service or visit the website of the potential advertiser.**

*** Advertising for Internet services and products should be reviewed for compliance with state and federal law in the same manner as any other service or product. All state and federal laws that apply to advertising in traditional media sources apply to advertisements for on-line products and services.** For example, newspapers are prohibited by law from publishing discriminatory employment and housing advertisements. No ad for an on-line service that provides job or housing listings should contain discriminatory language.

*** If a product or service is illegal to advertise through traditional media sources then it is illegal to advertise on the Internet.** For example, if a gun is illegal to possess then it is illegal to advertise.

*** Apply the same accountability standards to advertising for Internet services as with any other advertising.** For example, if there is a cost associated with the service being advertised; require that the cost be disclosed in the ad. Any additional costs that might be associated with a stated cost should also be disclosed in the ad.

*** Use common sense when reviewing ad content.** For example, if a local factory wants to advertise that job listings can be found on their web site, the newspaper may want to require that the factory also provide a local phone number for the job listings. The local phone listing ensures that all readers have access to the job listings and not just individuals with access to the Internet.

*** Make sure that all ads for Internet advertising are consistent with other like ads that appear in the newspaper.** For example, if you require that all advertisers run a phone number or address the same should be required of an Internet or on-line service. Another example might be if the newspaper requires that adoption advertising be accompanied by a letter from an attorney, then the same should be required of anyone advertising on-line adoption services.