Common global marketing standards vital to boost trust in an age of disruptions, says ICC

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Paris/New York, 19 September 2024 – **The world’s largest business association – the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) – has issued a call for advertisers and marketers to step up as champions of robust ethical standards in the face of multiple industry disruptions and potential challenges to industry self-regulation.**

The call comes as ICC today releases a major update of its Advertising and Marketing Communications Code – the 11th edition of the code that has been the global backbone of advertising self-regulation for more than 85 years.

With a range of factors disrupting and reshaping the advertising market – from the rise of artificial intelligence in marketing communications to the growth of influencer marketing and increasing importance of climate issues – the global business body has pointed to the imperative for all participants in the industry to advocate for the widespread adoption of core standards to build trust among consumers and policymakers alike.

ICC Secretary General John W.H. Denton AO said**: “When we first issued the ICC Code in 1937 the world was a lot simpler. There was no TV, let alone the Internet. But what’s incredible is that the principles remain the same. Legal, decent, honest and truthful – the four foundations of the ICC Code – are as relevant in today’s fast paced media and marketing landscape as they were back then.**

**“At a time of significant global disruptions – and with some policymakers reaching instinctively for the statute book in response to perceived challenges – robust global advertising standards matter more than ever.”**

**“With the ambitious revision of the ICC Code that we are launching today, our aim is to set a higher bar for better advertising and marketing practices that everyone in the industry ecosystem can get behind. Together, we need to make a united stand for standards – and, in doing so, show the continued value, utility and responsiveness of self-regulation.”**

This first comprehensive update of the ICC Code in a decade – informed by over a year of consultations with industry experts – tackles a range of contemporary challenges such as sustainability, AI and influencer marketing. It also incorporates clarified provisions in a range of areas, including marketing aimed at children and teens.

Key new features include:

* new guidelines on the use of algorithms and AI in preparing and delivering marketing communications
* encouraging advertisers to be mindful of diversity and the importance of avoiding objectification stereotypes
* clear provisions on influencer marketing and the responsibility of influencers and content creators
* updated standards for green claims
* clarified rules regarding children, teens and minors.

The new ICC Code is supported by a global campaign that aims to engage actors across the marketing and advertising ecosystem through video assets, social media, and a new web experience that will reinforce the importance of standing for standards.

Mr Denton added: **"We know the vast majority of companies in our network already embed genuinely high ethical standards in their marketing and advertising. But trust can be quickly eroded by the unscrupulous minority or by those who simply don't know what's acceptable.**

**"That's why we are committed to using the new Code to make a renewed push to build broader awareness of what goes and what doesn’t — in close partnership with businesses and self-regulatory organisations. The ICC Code is not just the backbone of self-regulation globally: it can be the first port of call for the uninitiated or unsure. And — perhaps more importantly — it’s the platform we can use to make a collective stand for standards and, in doing so, preserve essential trust in self-regulatory models.”**

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**About the International Chamber of Commerce**

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) is the institutional representative of more than 45 million companies in over 170 countries. ICC’s core mission is to make business work for everyone, every day, everywhere. Through a unique mix of advocacy, solutions and standard setting, we promote international trade, responsible business conduct and a global approach to regulation, in addition to providing market-leading dispute resolution services. Our members include many of the world’s leading companies, SMEs, business associations and local chambers of commerce.

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