

BBC Commercial Cross Promotion Guidance

This guidance sets out the BBC's approach to cross promotion of commercial products and services, both from the BBC's commercial subsidiaries and third parties, through the UK Public Services.

It identifies three particular types of promotion through the BBC's Public Service Activities which could give rise to potential issues:

- the promotion by the BBC through the UK Public Services of BBC Programme-Related Materials;
- the promotion by the BBC through the UK Public Services of other BBC Commercial Services; and
- providing online links from the UK Public Services to third parties' online services.

For complex queries that may not clearly fall within the scope of this guidance, or further assistance, please contact Fair Trading or Editorial Policy as appropriate.

Promotion of BBC Programme-Related Materials

Trails for programme related materials are permitted on all of the BBC's UK Public Services – TV, radio and online.

BBC Programme-Related Materials are commercial goods and services which have been commissioned, licensed or developed directly in conjunction with BBC public service content/service or are relevant to the Public Purposes. This could be with one of the BBC's commercial subsidiaries, or with a third party.

Programme related materials include, but are not limited to:

- books
- DVDs
- digital downloads or on-demand services
- commercial events associated with BBC brands and/or services
- commercial podcasts.

The BBC does not run trails for magazines.

Any trails for BBC programme related materials must be editorially justified, should be made on a non-discriminatory basis (i.e. to provide no unfair advantage to one of the BBC's commercial subsidiaries) and comply with any relevant BBC trails guidance.

Television

The BBC may trail programme related materials through, for example, end credit squeezes (i.e. an announcement during the junction between programmes of available programme related materials).

All requests, whether from one of the BBC's commercial subsidiaries or from a third party, should be sent to the BBC's Media Planning Team. The Media Planning team will consider the appropriateness (i.e. is it in line with this guidance?) and feasibility (i.e. is it practical to put a trail on air?) of all requests.

The Media Planning keeps a record of all requests submitted, those approved, those shown on the UK Public Television Services and those published online.

Radio

The BBC may trail programme related materials during natural breaks where any trail is clearly distinct from programme editorial content.

All requests, whether from one of the BBC's commercial subsidiaries or from a third party, should be sent to the Divisional Head of Editorial Standards (or equivalent), who may consult Editorial Policy where relevant on the appropriateness (i.e. is it in line with this guidance?) and feasibility (i.e. is it practical to put a trail on air?) of all requests.

The Divisional Head of Editorial Standards (or equivalent) will keep a record of all requests submitted, those approved, and those aired on the UK Public Services.

All requests to for online links and/or trails that relate to Radio programme related materials should also be sent to the Divisional Head of Editorial Standards (or equivalent).

Online

The BBC may trail BBC Programme-Related Materials online by either:

- linking, on a non-discriminatory basis, to external websites which offer purchase of these materials.
 - Non-discrimination in this context would require providing adequate links to a range of commercial providers of any programme related materials (e.g. if a programme is available on download to own from multiple providers).
 - It must also be clear to a user, prior to leaving bbc.co.uk, that the user is navigating to an external site not part of the UK Public Services.
- including on the UK Public Services trails for programme related materials (i.e. highlighting that a book or DVD is available to purchase).

All requests for links and/or trails that relate to Television programme related materials should be sent to the Media Planning Team, as with television trails.

All requests for links and/or trails that relate to Radio programme related materials should be sent to the Divisional Head of Editorial Standards (or equivalent), as with Radio trails.

All requests for links or trails other than those listed above, whether from one of the BBC's commercial subsidiaries or from a third party, should be sent to BBC Editorial Policy who will consider the appropriateness (i.e. is it in line with this guidance?) and feasibility (i.e. is it practical to include a link or trail?) of all requests in consultation with Fair Trading. The BBC will keep a record of such requests submitted, those approved, and such links provided on the UK Public Services.

The principles outlined in this guidance also apply in general to social media accounts controlled by the BBC public service. However as this is a rapidly evolving area, specific guidance will be issued.

Links to third party and commercial subsidiaries' websites from bbc.co.uk

The BBC has an obligation under Ofcom's operating framework to offer editorial links from its website (bbc.co.uk) to external websites. Such links may provide an additional source of information, source material or informed comment in relation to a news item. Any such links should be in line with the BBC's Editorial Guidelines. Further guidance in this area should be sought from Editorial Policy if required.

The BBC may link to specific items of content on one of BBC Global News Limited's features sites available to UK audiences where the content is aligned with a current BBC online editorial campaign. This draws UK audiences' attention to additional BBC online content, made available in the UK without advertising and which therefore which does not contribute to any of BBC Global News Limited's commercial revenues. The BBC will keep a record of all instances where such links are provided, with a record of the relevant editorial campaign.

Cross promotion of commercial activities

The BBC will not publicise the BBC's commercial activities (other than BBC Programme-Related Materials) through the UK Public Services unless there is a clear editorial justification for doing so. Editorially justified references will, by definition, not be considered cross promotion. The BBC will apply the same principles to its commercial subsidiaries as it does to third parties, where references to commercial organisations may be made where editorially justified. This may include, but is not limited to, circumstances where:

- a major news story arises as a consequence of the BBC's Commercial Services. The BBC's UK Public Services may be justified in mentioning the BBC's commercial activities when reporting the story.
- an employee from a BBC commercial subsidiary is being interviewed because of their expertise in a particular field. A mention of the commercial subsidiary may be justified.
- If the BBC's commercial activities were included for legitimate editorial reasons in a review programme, then it may be acceptable to mention details of the activities.

The BBC's Editorial Guidelines set out that the BBC must not give the impression that it is endorsing a commercial product or service, including those offered by the BBC's commercial subsidiaries. This requires that the UK Public Services cannot provide any form of implicit or explicit promotion, including links on online services or within the editorial content the UK Public Services, in return for cash, services or any other consideration in kind.