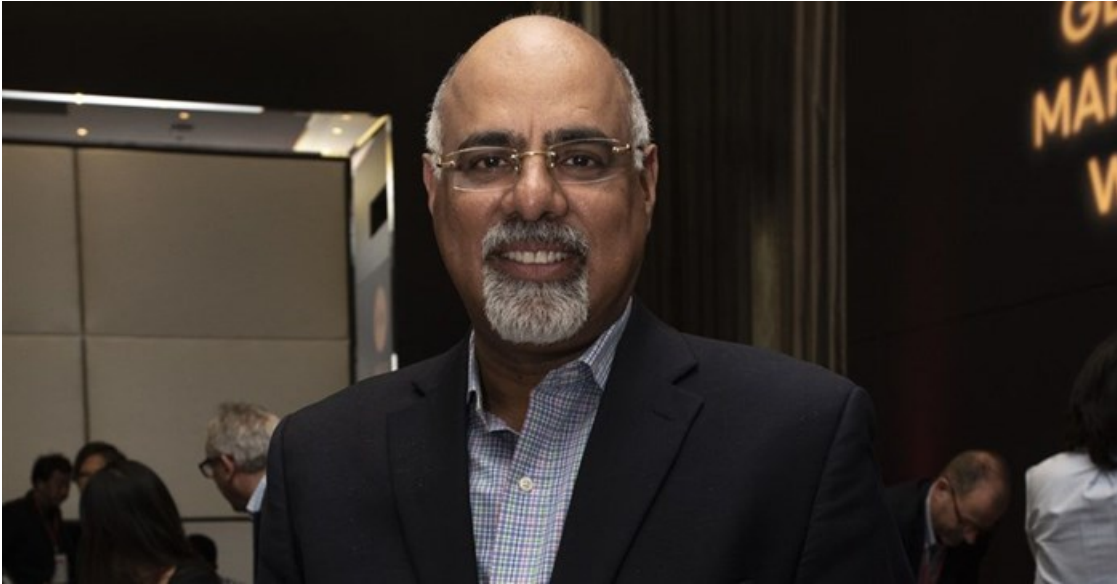


WFA calls on brands to hold social media platforms to account

The World Federation of Advertisers (WFA) is urging all brands worldwide in their capacity as the funders of the online advertising system - to put pressure on platforms to do more to prevent their services and algorithms from being hijacked by those with malicious intent.



Mastercard's chief marketing and communications officer and WFA president, Raja Rajamannar. © [WFA website](#).

The announcement has been made at the opening of the WFA Global Marketer Conference in Lisbon, which brings together more than 800 industry leaders, 80% of whom are brand owners.

While companies must decide their own approaches, WFA is calling on its members and brands globally to hold social media platforms to account.

Moral question

The call comes after multiple incidents on some of the world's biggest digital platforms, including paedophile comments being left in comments below videos of children on YouTube, the glorification of self-harm and suicide content on Instagram and, most recently, the live-streaming of the terrorist attack in Christchurch, New Zealand on Facebook.

All these platforms are funded by advertisers and as such those that make them profitable have a moral responsibility to

consider more than just the effectiveness and efficiency, they provide for brand messages.

WFA is standing alongside its member association and colleagues at the Association of New Zealand Advertisers (Anza), which has issued a call asking for members to think carefully about where they place advertising and challenging platform owners to do more.

“This is not an issue of brand safety, this is a moral question to hold social media platforms to account – in the same way, we do for traditional media,” says Anza chief executive, Lindsay Mouat.

Global action

WFA's call to action reflects the fact that these are not challenges that can be addressed by one country alone but need global action.

Improving the online ecosystem is a top priority for WFA members. 47% of respondents to a WFA member barometer conducted this month of more than 200 senior marketers from over 100 brands representing \$125bn in ad spend cited improving the online advertising ecosystem as the single biggest issue the marketing industry needed to address in 2019.

The organisation's [Global Media Board](#), which brings together 16 of the world's biggest ad spenders has been leading the WFA's work on this front.

Stephan Loerke, CEO of the WFA says:

“ Marketers must reflect on the extent and terms on which they fund these platforms. Conversely, the platforms must do more to assuage the growing number of advertiser concerns. WFA is committed to working with the platforms in a constructive manner in order to find solutions to these grave problems. For our shared goal must be to build an ecosystem that is sustainable and doesn't undermine people, communities and society at large. ”

Raja Rajamannar, chief marketing and communications officer at Mastercard and WFA president says:

“ The influence of online platforms in shaping cultures and mobilising communities around the world is already significant and growing ever more so. This means brands and platforms must assume a higher level of responsibility to ensure these online environments are forces for good, not conflict or violence. That begins with acknowledging flaws and quickly investing in lasting solutions. To drive change, we need less debate and more action. ”

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