



EASA's 30th Anniversary Gala Dinner – 12 May 2022

Opening speech by Charo Fernando Magarzo (Chairwoman of EASA; AUTOCONTROL, Spain)

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Members, Dear Friends,

I am delighted to be before you tonight.

First, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our hosts tonight, Suzanne McElligott, Chairperson of the Irish SRO, as well as Orla Twomey, EASA Vice-Chair, Michael Lee, and the whole ASAI team, for making this great event possible. I would also like to thank – of course – the EASA team, the people at ICAS and Google as well, as all the parties involved in the organization of this evening's event and these three days of meetings.

This is a very special occasion. This year, EASA celebrates its 30th anniversary. So much has been accomplished since the official launch of EASA, which coincided with the creation of the European single market back in 1992. We can be proud of what has been done and what we believe in.

Indeed, EASA was created as a response to EU Vice-President and Commissioner for Competition Policy, Sir Leon Brittan, who challenged the advertising industry to seek a self-regulatory solution to problems raised by the creation of the Single Market. Back then, EASA counted 15 SRO or ad standard bodies members from 13 European countries. Since, SRO membership extended to Central and Eastern European countries, and in 2001, membership was opened to industry members (representing advertisers, agencies, and media). More recently, in 2020, it was extended to digital pure-play companies, with EASA having the pleasure of welcoming Google on board as its first such member.

The milestones are too numerous to be individually pointed out tonight. However, I'd like to hereby acknowledge and thank the work done by all the men and women who were instrumental in growing EASA into what it is today, many of whom are in the room today!

Today, our Alliance is strong of 13 industry associations, 1 digital pure-play company, and 28 self-regulatory organizations operating across 26 markets in Europe. EASA has played an important role in the development of many of these SROs.

We are thankful for this great legacy, driven by the genuine belief that ad self-regulation is a very relevant solution when it comes to contributing to responsible advertising.

Since 1992, many things have changed in society and advertising. Ad SR has adapted. It never ceased to help ensure that advertising is legal, decent, honest, and truthful, and prepared with a due sense of social and professional responsibility.

This is thanks to what is in our DNA:

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Versatility and flexibility. Ad SR is flexible and can quickly respond to societal and technological changes. New rules can be drawn up quickly. I am thinking about those covering digital marketing communications of influencer marketing. At the same time, we are adapting our own tools and procedures to new technologies. Over the last year, many SROs, with the support of EASA, have used Artificial Intelligence tools to help regulate advertising at scale. So far, over 10 SROs have embarked on what we call the “data-driven SR journey”.

Independence. This is a key component of effective ad self-regulatory systems. Going beyond company-specific commitments - which are of course valuable – ad SR is a comprehensive system with checks and balances. No one marks his or her own homework. Independent juries adjudicate complaints. On average, every year, our SR network handles 54,000 complaints

Prevention. Through training, copy advice, pre-clearance, and monitoring, self-regulatory organizations are there to help ensure compliance even before the ads are launched. A few figures: on average, every year, our SR network organized collectively 100 to 200 training sessions and issues near 200,000 pieces of copy advice and pre-clearance.

Consumer-centric. This is also a unique feature of ad SR: through SROs, consumers have access to a national contact point they can address in their own language. Also, complaint resolution is very fast, with figures steadily improving year-on-year.

And togetherness. Yes, together we are stronger. This is the true meaning of an Alliance.

EASA is a unique platform where all the key players of the advertising ecosystem come together.

Ortega y Gasset, one of my favourite Spanish philosophers of the early 20th century, wrote in his famous work "The rebellion of the masses" that people do not usually agree on anything but silly things. We must disagree. Throughout these years, in EASA, we have proven to be able to agree on relevant issues from distant positions. All our members may have diverging agenda items but are aligned and able to constructively work together to ensure responsible advertising.

On this note, I also wanted to highlight that EASA is also a team player beyond its own membership. I would like to hereby acknowledge EASA's strong partnerships with the International Council for Ad Self-Regulation and with the European Interactive Digital Advertising Alliance, entities to which it contributed to launching. I would like to thank Guy Parker, the Chair of ICAS, who is with us tonight. Also, a shout-out to the International Chamber of Commerce's Commission on marketing and advertising, and more specifically to Anders and to Rae who are also with us tonight, for the great collaboration in shaping global ad standards.

Finally, I am proud of our good, and long-standing collaboration with policymakers and authorities who recognize the value of ad SR as part of the solution, working hand in hand with law and control.



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Building on these unique core elements and assets, we are ready and eager to tackle the future. To keep pace with changing times and to show that we are ready for the next 30 years, I am happy to formally announce that, today, EASA has launched its new visual identity, including a new more modern logo as well as a more visually appealing website, and, moreover, a promotional campaign on ad SR that will run till October 2022!

My children, Daniel and María, asked me why I had to come to Dublin (*so far away from them, for three days*). I told them that I was coming "to work for a better world." (*Big questions, big answers!*) I was not lying. I firmly believe that all those who have participated in EASA over the last 30 years have planted their seed for a better world. Their seed for a world that protects children better, that is concerned about our planet's sustainability, that is committed to diversity, to equal rights for women, to respect privacy, etc.

Thank you all, once again, dear members and friends, for your continued trust, commitment, and support through the years. We are on the right track, and I look forward to the next 30 years working with you all.

Charo Fernando Magarzo
Chair, EASA