



EASE OF USE RATINGS PROGRAM ADVERTISING GUIDELINES

To promote accurate characterization and comparison of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA's) Ease of Use rating results, the agency is releasing the following guidelines for manufacturers and advertising agencies. The following guidelines are effective immediately and apply to advertisements in print, the Web, TV or radio, press releases, and other consumer-facing marketing communications.

Appropriate Claims

Advertisements must make it clear that it is an Ease of Use rating and not a safety performance rating. There should be no safety claim relating to the Ease of Use ratings.

Showcasing Ratings

Regarding the display of Ease of Use ratings -- When displaying an Ease of Use rating, manufacturers cannot just show any one of the four rated categories alone. The overall Ease of Use rating for the specific mode of use must be shown if any individual category or group of categories is to be highlighted.

What Is a "Top Star Rating" – And When to Use It

Regarding a five-star Ease of Use rating -- a five-star rating in each of the four Ease of Use categories *and* an overall five-star Ease of Use rating must be achieved before the child restraint can be characterized as receiving "top stars" in the Government Ease of Use rating program. An overall five-star Ease of Use rating must be achieved before the child restraint can be characterized as "receiving the Highest Government Ease of Use rating."

Avoid Misleading Terminology

NHTSA discourages the use of language referring to "doubling," "tripling" or "quadrupling" of an Ease of Use rating, as doing so implies that the child seat scored a rating two, three or four times that of another equally rated child restraint, and therefore may be misleading to consumers. NHTSA also discourages the use of potentially misleading words such as "perfect" or "flawless" to describe the Ease of Use rating received by the child restraint. More acceptable phrases to describe a child restraint receiving an Ease of Use rating would include phrases such as "highest" or "maximum" Ease of Use or "top" Ease of Use rating.

Competitive Comparisons

Advertisements that competitively compare Ease of Use ratings of two or more child restraints can only be done if the child restraints being compared are the same type of child restraint (e.g., infant only, convertible, etc.).

Retest Timing

For child restraints which are changed mid-model year and subsequently undergo an official retest, the advertisement must include in the disclaimer that the revised Ease of Use rating applies only to child restraints manufactured on or after the date of the running change.

Use of NHTSA Quotes

Only NHTSA-approved quotes may be used in advertisements and press releases. An example of a NHTSA approved quote is, "Remember, the best car seat is the one that fits your child properly, is easy to use, and fits in your vehicle correctly." Advance approval is required for materials that intend to use any NHTSA quote. Please see guideline on "Submitting Ads for Review".

Use of Logos

The NHTSA logo and Ease of Use ratings logo may be used in an advertisement (print, web or TV) along with Ease of Use ratings, provided the logo is displayed in immediate proximity to the Ease of Use rating so as to indicate NHTSA's association with the advertisement is limited to the Ease of Use rating and not to the contents of the entire advertisement. Any advertisement using the NHTSA logo must be submitted in advance for approval. Please see guideline on "Submitting Ads for Review".

Since a logo will not be visible on radio, add, "For more detailed information regarding the Ease of Use Ratings Program, please visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's web site at www.nhtsa.gov".

Vector based images of the NHTSA logo and Ease of Use ratings logo are available for download by visiting <ftp://ftp.nhtsa.dot.gov/AdSlicks/>. Click on the Logos folder. Look for the Adobe Illustrator eps file named NHTSA.eps. The logos are shown below and the preferred logo color is Pantone 287.



Disclaimer Requirement

The following phrase(s) should appear in the disclaimer, as applicable:
"Government Ease of Use ratings are part of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA's) Ease of Use Ratings Program."

Voiceovers

The use of voiceovers during TV commercials must be consistent with the display of the Ease of Use rating in use. For example, a commercial with a superimposed display of a five-star Ease of Use graphic midway through the spot and a voiceover at the end of the spot stating, "Seat XYZ... five-star Ease of Use rating," would be misleading.

Submitting Ads for Review

NHTSA is requesting that advertising materials using the NHTSA logo or quote with NHTSA Ease of Use ratings meet the above guidelines and be submitted for review by NHTSA's Office of Communications and Consumer Information. NHTSA anticipates a turnaround time of 1-2 business days. Each advertisement or spot that will incorporate the NHTSA logo or

quote with Ease of Use ratings must be submitted for review. For questions regarding these guidelines or to submit materials for review, please contact Mike Joyce in the Office of Communications and Consumer Information. Phone: 202-366-5600. Email: Mike.Joyce@dot.gov

Preferred file formats are as follows:

For print advertisements: screen resolution PDF.

For radio spots: script in MS Word or text file format.

For television spots: VHS, CD-ROM or electronic file (Media Player or QuickTime compatible).

For Web advertisements: html or flash type file or link to an externally accessible website.