

Supers readability & audiovisual advertising

GUIDANCE NOTE

The present guidance note is the result of the **"Supers readability & audiovisual advertising"** workgroup, brought together by the ARPP and composed of representatives from the **Advertising industry**, agencies, production companies and advertisers.

This guidance note **is to help the implementation of the "Notes and Overlays" ARPP Code** which was adopted in 2012 and updated in 2017, and the displaying of supers in TV commercials.

What characteristics for readable supers?

Check list of the readability of your supers according to the **"Notes and Overlays" ARPP Code**:

- ✓ 1. Duration of hold and scrolling speed allowing a full reading of the super
- ✓ 2. Sufficient contrast
- ✓ 3. Appropriate height
- ✓ 4. Fonts normally gaped
- ✓ 5. Other rules of the "Notes and Overlays" ARPP Code
- ✓ 6. Compression quality

1. Duration of hold and scrolling speed

In accordance with the *"Notes and Overlays" ARPP Code*, which lays down specific rules for audiovisual advertising, *"when the note is fixed on screen (not scrolling), it must appear long enough for the consumer to be able to read it entirely, without having to wait for a new broadcast of the advert. When the note scrolls, the speed of the scrolling must be slow enough for the consumer to be able **to read it entirely, without having to wait for a new broadcast.**"*

2. Sufficient contrast

Concerning audiovisual advertising, the “Notes and Overlays” ARPP Code requires that *“when the background of the message is not the same color throughout the advertisement, depending on the script and the set, it is essential to check the perfect readability, in terms of contrast, for all remarks. If necessary, a banner will be materialized, with a single color which will contrast with the color of the characters chosen for the text appearing in the said banner.”*

3. Appropriate height and fonts normally gaped

According to the “Notes and Overlays” ARPP Code, to be legible under normal conditions of reading, notes must appear horizontally, with fonts normally gaped, in fonts which permit an easy reading (the font doesn’t have to be the same in all the advertisement) and use characters in a sufficient size.

The present guidance note specifies the reference values and correct measuring methods ensuring the displaying of characters with appropriate height on fixed and scrolling supers.

3.1 For which type of supers?

All types of supers: legal, informative, corrective and translations except those already ruled by the law or regulation that impose heights or conditions of presentation (“health warnings” banner, “Telephony”¹ CNC notice, credit, SAR value....).

3.2 How to measure supers’ height?

The height has to be measured on “flat-topped” characters such as:

“u, v, w, x, z”

Characters that should not be used to measure the height are:

- Characters with “arms” and “legs” (e.g.: “j, k, p, b”)
- “Round head” characters (e.g.: “o, c, e”).

¹ To measure the height of “health warnings” and “gambling” banners as well as “Telephony” CNC notice, please refer to the [CST RT 018 « ZONES DE PROTECTION DES PROGRAMMES DE PUBLICITE POUR LA DIFFUSION TELEVISION »](#) (Safe areas for television adverts) technical ARPP Code.

3.3 What about caps and lowercases?

The measure depends on the type of character composing the majority of the super:

- If there is a majority of caps in the super, the height will be measured on caps
- If there is a majority of lowercases in the super, the height will be measured on lowercases.

3.4 Which height? (Reference value)

A super is considered particularly readable when the height of “flat-topped” characters is at:

2% of the height of the active picture

Here is the transcription in pixels:

Format	Height
HD (1080 pxls)	22 pixels
SD (576 pxls)	12 pixels

Note:

- A 1.8% reference value can also be accepted providing high contrast and quality of compression, and normally gaped characters.
- The above mentioned reference values are expressed in real pixels (i.e. “small squares” visible when zooming on a screenshot), not in font height. (*see illustration below*)

