

Underwriting Requirements

Legal Alert
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The Communications Act contains two distinct and sometimes competing requirements concerning underwriting acknowledgements. Section 317 requires all stations to identify sponsors of broadcast programs by announcing, at the time of broadcast, that the program material was “paid for or furnished by” the sponsor. Section 399B prohibits noncommercial stations from airing any “advertisement.” An advertisement is defined as programming material, broadcast in exchange for remuneration, that promotes a service, facility or product which is offered on a “for-profit” basis. The FCC’s underwriting policies have evolved out of the tension between a required identification and a prohibited promotion of underwriters. Please note that this memo is limited to announcements regarding for-profit entities and their products, services or facilities. Different considerations apply to announcements on behalf of non-profit entities, political candidates and advocacy groups.

To read the full article, please click [here](#).