

IAS Media Quality Report Finds Ad Buyers Must Rethink Viewability Optimization in Changing Ad Market

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New data suggests that ≥60% viewability pre-bid segments are marketers' sweet spot to maximize conversions

NEW YORK, Sept. 14, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- Integral Ad Science (Nasdaq: IAS), a global leader in digital media quality, today released the [17th edition of its Media Quality Report \(MQR\)](#). Analyzing billions of global data events between January 1, 2022, and June 30, 2022, the report provides insights into the performance and quality of digital media worldwide. The results empower ad buyers and sellers with the preeminent industry benchmarks to measure campaign and inventory quality into the next year and beyond.



"Digital media is progressing at an unprecedented rate, and the past several years of unpredictability have altered digital trends," said Yannis Dosios, Global Chief Commercial Officer (CCO) at IAS. "The latest edition of the MQR demonstrates IAS's ability to observe global media quality developments in real-time. Through this research we have gleaned key insights into optimal viewability thresholds, recorded an impressive uptick in video ad completion, and gathered data emphasizing the benefit of optimizing campaigns against fraud. By building trust and transparency for the world's leading brands, publishers, and platforms the MQR continues to help drive actionable next steps and real-world business outcomes."

Several noteworthy trends emerged in the first half of 2022:

There is a Point of Diminishing Return for Viewability

Viewability remains the top key performance indicator for understanding, activating, and setting custom standards for ad campaigns across all digital environments. Viewability rates have skyrocketed worldwide in several formats. Remarkably, video ads in mobile web environments surpassed 80% viewability rates in the first half of 2022, while mobile web display ads saw the lowest rates with an average of less than 70% viewability.

Yet the latest MQR, backed by findings from IAS's Insights As A Service (IAAS) team, suggests the achievement of 100% viewability is not the optimal way for marketers to measure success. Targeting higher viewability with pre-bid segments may lead to increased quality impressions, but the report found that marketers pushing for total viewability KPIs can risk compromising scale and elevate cost, thus reducing ROI.

Data showed that reach was highest for pre-bid segments targeting viewability rates between 40%-50%. There was a significant 41% drop in reach for pre-bid segment optimization when viewability targets were set to 70% or higher.

There were limited reductions in reach with trivial CPC increases when viewability targets were set at greater than or equal to 60%, meaning ≥60% viewability pre-bid segments are the most effective way to optimize viewability, keep cost-per-conversion numbers competitive, and effectively boost scale.

Consumers Are Watching More Full Video Ads Than Ever Before

Both desktop video and mobile web video saw completion rates increase worldwide when compared to H1 2021, while drop-off rates decreased across both environments. In particular, ad completion rates for mobile web improved twice as much in absolute annual terms when compared to desktop. More than 80% of desktop ads were watched in full worldwide in H1 2022, while that number holds at nearly 74% worldwide for mobile web video ads for the same period.

In the U.S., desktop video ads hit nearly 93% completion through the first quartile, trailing behind Australia, Spain, Italy, and the U.K; while mobile web video surpassed 90% in the U.S. in the first quartile, following Italy, Australia, Canada, and the U.K.

Meanwhile, the average time-in-view for display campaigns continued a long-term downward trajectory, dropping in every environment. The diverging trends in both formats may be indicative of the crucial role video ads increasingly play for advertisers, delivering on the promise of greater engagement over display. Consumers are watching more complete video assets from start to finish than ever before.

Non-Optimized-Ad-Fraud Rates Rose 10 Times Faster than Optimized

The first half of 2022 saw invalid traffic (IVT) increase across all formats and environments. Optimized against ad-fraud (with anti-fraud protection) averages rose worldwide between 0.1 and 0.4 percentage points annually. Campaigns without anti-fraud protection saw fraud rates increase 10-times faster, with a 1.0 percentage point jump for desktop video and a 3.8 percentage point increase for desktop display.

The data from the report found that fraudsters are increasingly active, particularly in lucrative advertising markets with valuable inventory (i.e., high CPMs) and lofty ad spending levels. The impact of ad fraud has been limited on campaigns where protection is present, but campaigns running without anti-fraud protection opened up new opportunities for nefarious actors to increase their fraud efforts.

Contextual Targeting Offers the Best Cookieless-World Solution

With third-party cookies being phased out and legislation putting up barriers to target audiences, marketers will have to look for new and better ways to connect with customers without jeopardizing their privacy. The latest MQR predicts that methods such as contextual targeting will be the most privacy-friendly and effective method for advertisers to reach the right audience at the right time to drive desired outcomes.

By using trillions of data points and sophisticated pre-assigned categories to display ads based on a website's content, as opposed to more intrusive methods, marketers can dig into key insights and still create campaigns that resonate with preferred audiences.

About Integral Ad Science

Integral Ad Science (IAS) is a global leader in digital media quality. IAS makes every impression count, ensuring that ads are viewable by real people, in safe and suitable environments, activating contextual targeting, and driving supply path optimization. Our mission is to be the global benchmark for trust and transparency in digital media quality for the world's leading brands, publishers, and platforms. We do this through data-driven technologies with actionable real-time signals and insight. Founded in 2009 and headquartered in New York, IAS works with thousands of top advertisers and premium publishers worldwide. For more information, visit integralads.com.

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