

## Summarising the Adalytics report on Google Video Partner Skippable in-stream ad inventory – An overview of issues reported

A recent [Adalytics report](#) on Google Video Partner Skippable in-stream ad inventory asserts that the inventory often doesn't meet Google's policies and standards. The assertions are serious in nature.

1. Video action campaigns (paying for an outcome) with YouTube include GVP inventory, there is no opt out option for advertisers engaging in video action campaigns. For other inventory GVP is an opt-out meaning an advertiser has to actively click to not be involved.
  - Google has advised ISBA that advertisers can opt out of Video Action Campaigns by requesting it from their Google rep. If you don't have a dedicated Google rep you can raise a ticket requesting Google to set your account to opt out of GVP in Video Action Campaigns.
2. In Stream and out Stream. This is a critical part of the findings, advertisers believe they're buying In Stream ads, and getting Out Stream instead. Google themselves define that as invalid traffic. Out-stream video invalid traffic is the misrepresentation and display of in-stream video in an out stream format. For example, this happens when in stream video ads are shown in a banner ad, an advertiser is led to believe that their ad was displayed in stream with other video content, when in fact it was displayed in a different format.
3. IAS and DoubleVerify are included in the YouTube Measurement Program. They rely on aggregated, server to server data transfers. They don't have the ability to place their own independent pixels directly into the YouTube ad serving environments. Report questions their ability to adequately verify data.
  - *"YouTube does not allow independent 3rd party verification pixels in its ad campaigns. YouTube also does not provide impression level log file data to media buyers, unlike other advertising platforms such as the Trade Desk or MediaMath DSP".*
4. One example of a client campaign analysed found on a \$75k campaign 80% was served via GVP across 8000 unique websites and 5000 unique mobile applications. Report mentions several clients having similar issues and in some examples the majority of inventory appears to not meet Google's standards and policies.
  - [Google](#), [Double Verify](#) and [IAS](#) have come out stating the examples in the report are not an accurate reflection of advertiser norms. All 3 parties estimate the proportion of spend on GVP at much lower levels

than the examples in the report. IAS's statement suggests high levels like those shown in the report reflect a minority of advertisers (<10%).

5. Several instances found of inventory on premium publishers (NY Times, USA Today, etc) where the ads didn't comply with Google's representations for TrueView In Stream standards (ads were auto-playing, muted videos)
  - Sites with paywalls (news) present an issue, report has examples of ads run behind the paywall pop up, so people can't see them, hear them or skip them. While the signals firing indicate it's being reported as a completed view.
6. References 40,000 sites on GVP exclusion lists still serving TrueView ads, sites with copyright, MFA and other issues.
7. "When cross-referencing TrueView ad campaign placement reports from advertisers, approximately 80.7% of budget placed on Google Video Partner websites, was found to be delivering against sites which were identified as either serving video ads in muted, auto-playing, obscured, or out-stream video slots."
8. Examples of skip buttons being hidden behind banner ads overlapping the TrueView ads
9. The inability to skip TrueView ads on certain GVP publisher websites may result in artificially inflated video completion counts, and thus, billable events for brands and advertisers. Some consumers are shown the exact same TrueView ad 20-42x times on repeat.
10. On some GVP sites, the same TrueView ad is served over and over even when the consumer clicks 'Skip' repeatedly.
11. On some GVP sites, the same TrueView ad is being served in multiple video ad players at the same time. Google's public documentation states that "No more than one video ad placement may play in view at any given time."
12. **Google Search delists sites that receive copyright infringement complaints.** Google makes delisting stats publicly available for sites. The report shows that sites routinely delisted on Google Search (as much as 100k+ times) are included in GVP inventory. Adalytics held a very low bar on their copyright reporting (as in they're being very generous to Google). If a website had 70%+ of copyright infringement claims upheld by Google Search, their analysis treated it as poor inventory... meaning if 69% of copyright complaints were upheld (resulted in delisting) that website was excluded from Adalytics analysis on the subject of copyright infringement.
  - Applying this standard Adalytics identified <500 of these sites on TrueView.
13. TrueView in-stream ads serving on sites that have been labelled as having high bias or low factual accuracy. 1.7% of brand budgets analysed in the

report went on sites classified as low to very low levels of factual accuracy (fake news) as measured by MBFC.

14. One brand had ads served on a Russian website currently under EU sanctions.
15. Essence is named in this section regarding an ad placement they made for Peloton in 2021 on a Russian website. It's not specific about whether or not the site was covered by sanctions at that time.
16. Examples of ads being served against content on death and violence, inconsistent with Google's representations of what they exclude.
17. Many examples of Made For Advertising content, defined in the report. 12.3% of GVP ad budget assessed appears on MFA sites as defined by deepsee.io
18. >80% of spend on mobile apps via GVP is on gaming apps.
  - Happy Colour Colouring Book, Candy Crush and Word With Friends were the top 3 for Android
  - Google's public online documentation states that "games" are a type of "non-in-stream video placements", which would likely make them inconsistent with the requirements for TrueView in-stream video ads.
    - The gaming apps are consistent with Google's definition of out of stream.
19. Of particular interest was the observation that approximately 4% of brands' TrueView in-stream ad budget was delivered against mobile apps that appeared to be un-locatable or delisted from the Google Play Stores.
20. 202 Android Apps found to not disclose their apps contain ads in the Google App store, in violation of Google's rules for apps containing ads to disclose that on the app store.
21. Ads run on apps for children as young as 2.
22. End of the report is a long list of advertisers identified as having bought some of this sub-standard inventory, as well as all the agency holding companies and many independent agencies.