



## Marketer FAQs

**Will prioritizing cost over quality impact my ad campaign outcomes?**



## Ads placed in trusted, brand safe media platforms drive much better business results

In the past year, it's become impossible to ignore the issue of advertising transparency. Headlines are littered with [explosive investigative research reports](#), [inflated metrics scandals](#), [children's data being compromised](#), [ads running in wildly inappropriate content](#) and [more](#).

Yet, marketers have been relatively quiet on these scandals, especially when compared to other, [less serious](#) topics that dominate the [industry narrative](#).

*We wondered, why?*

**Could it be due to the pressure many marketers are feeling to prioritize cost over quality?**

To understand their (lack of) response, we partnered with Advertiser Perceptions and conducted interviews and surveys with agencies and brand marketers.\*

\*See appendix for full details on methodology behind interviews and custom survey

# Consumers and marketers both prioritize the context and environment in which ads appear

nearly  
**90%**

of consumers feel that **brands bear responsibility** for ensuring their ads run beside content that is safe

**82%**

of consumers say it is important that a brand's ads appear on **content that is safe, accurate and trustworthy**

over  
**80%**

of marketing professionals believe **brand safety is a major concern** for their organization\*

Source: DoubleVerify & Harris Poll, *Consumers Reject Brands That Advertise on 'Fake News' and Objectionable Content Online*, June 2019. \*WARC Journal of Advertising Research, *Is your brand protected? Assessing brand safety risks in digital campaigns*, November 2023. Based on an online survey of advertising and brand management professionals with decision-making authority over the purchasing or spending for brands with at least \$10 million in annual advertising spend. Download VAB's ['What is Brand Safety'](#) to learn more.

# Yet, more than two out of three brand marketers and agencies rank cost over brand safety



% of respondents who are prioritizing brand safety over lower CPMs



Brand Marketers

32%



Agency Professionals

27%

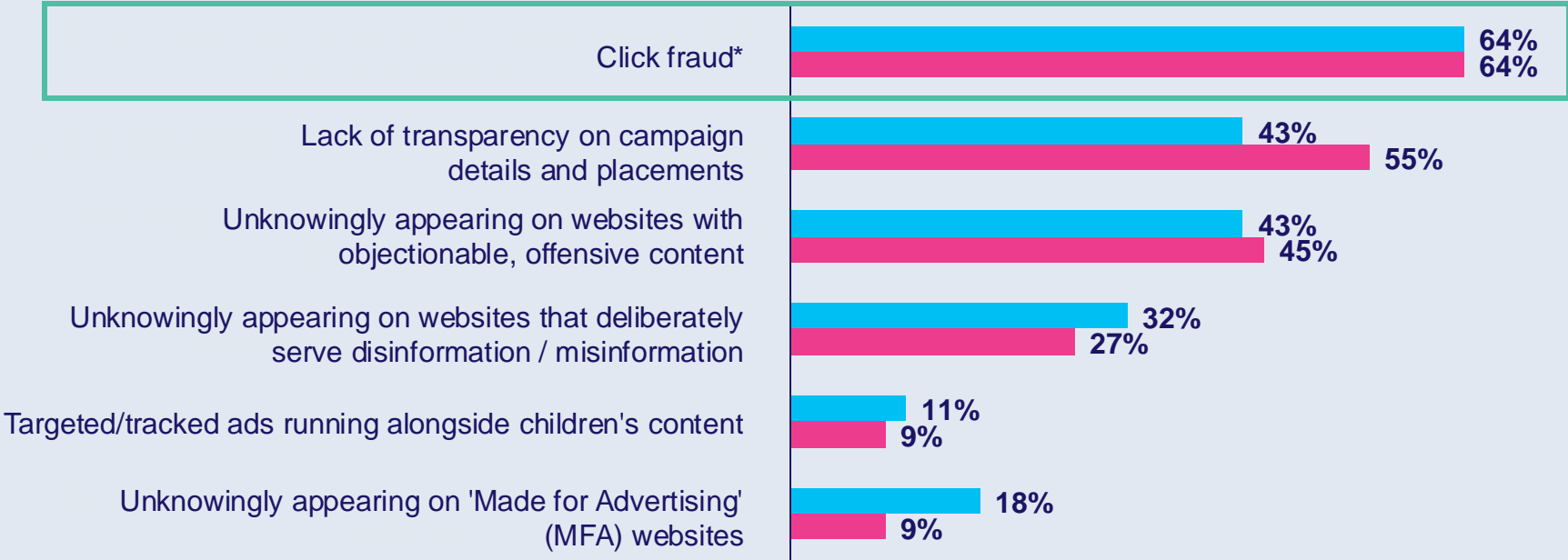
*Brands and agencies have different reasons to push for lower costs including cost suppression tied to compensation or KPI directives*

Source: VAB / Advertiser Perceptions 'Marketer Sentiment on Ad Fraud' Survey, November 2023. Survey base: Marketer and agency contacts from the Advertiser Perceptions 'Senior Marketer' and 'Streaming Video' online communities. Q6. What solutions [is your company/are your clients] using to prevent digital ad fraud? Base = Total Respondents.

# Under enormous pressure to deliver efficiencies, clicks are a higher priority than brand safety, child privacy violations, disinformation, etc.

## % of respondents who are concerned about the following For Their Business / Client's Businesses

■ Brand Marketers ■ Agency Professionals



Source: VAB / Advertiser Perceptions 'Marketer Sentiment on Ad Fraud' Survey, November 2023. Survey base: Marketer and agency contacts from the Advertiser Perceptions 'Senior Marketer' and 'Streaming Video' online communities. Q3A. What are your top 3 concerns surrounding digital ad fraud regarding [your business/your clients' businesses]? Base = Total Respondents. \*Click fraud\* refers to bots, click farms, etc. that generate fake clicks on an ad or website.

# Beyond the ethical and legal implications of running in harmful content, brand safe ads have proven to drive superior conversion rates



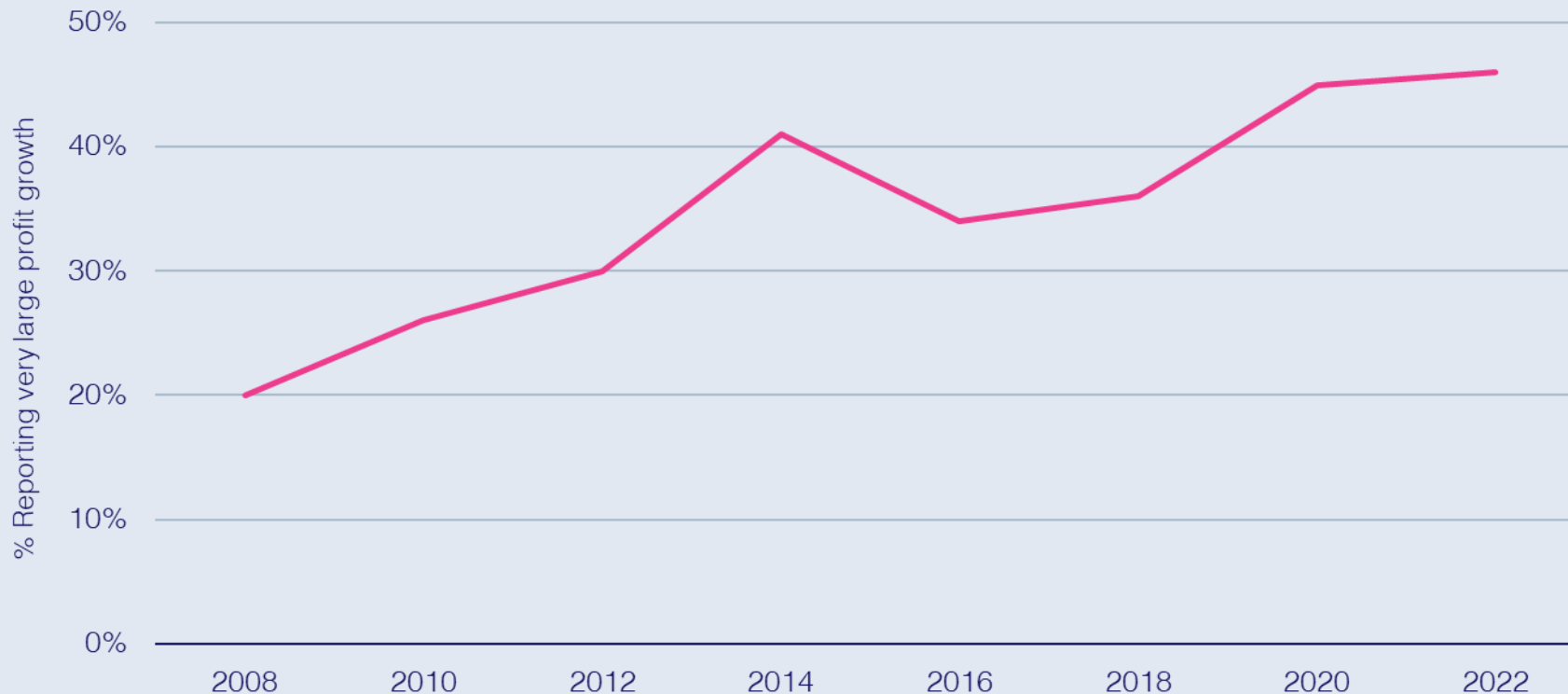
**+233%**

**lift in conversions for  
brand safe impressions vs.  
non brand safe impressions**

Source: Integral Ad Science, *Does Media Quality Drive Attention and Outcomes?*, March 2022. Download VAB's '[What is Brand Safety](#)' to learn more.

# And the ability of a 'brand safe' ad to build trust in today's increasingly skeptical society has a direct, positive effect on profitability

% cases with strong 'trust' growth reporting strong 'profit' growth



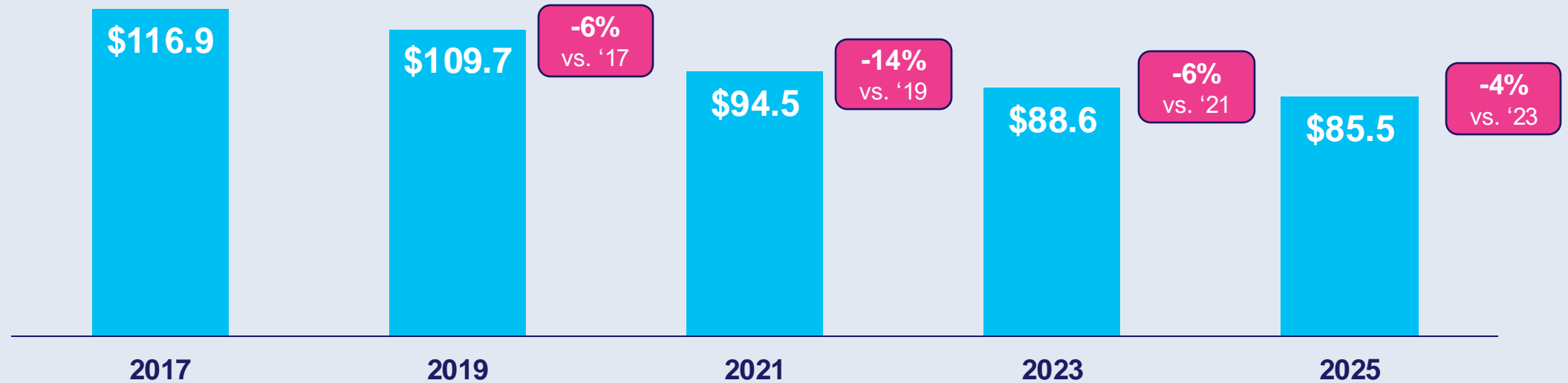
# 67%

of consumers would be likely to **stop using the brand** if they viewed the brand's digital advertising beside false, objectionable or inflammatory content\*

Source: Peter Field, *Why TV is Still at the Heart of Effectiveness*, presented at 'The Future of TV Advertising Global' conference in December 2023. Base: IPA Databank 2004-2022 for profit cases reporting very large trust improvements. NB: insufficient data prior to 2008. Click [here](#) to view Peter Field's full presentation online. \*DoubleVerify & Harris Poll, *Consumers Reject Brands That Advertise on 'Fake News' and Objectionable Content Online* June 2019.

# Still, marketers are shifting ad investment from known brand-safe, transparent media platforms including TV

**'Transparent' Media Ad Spend**  
in billions



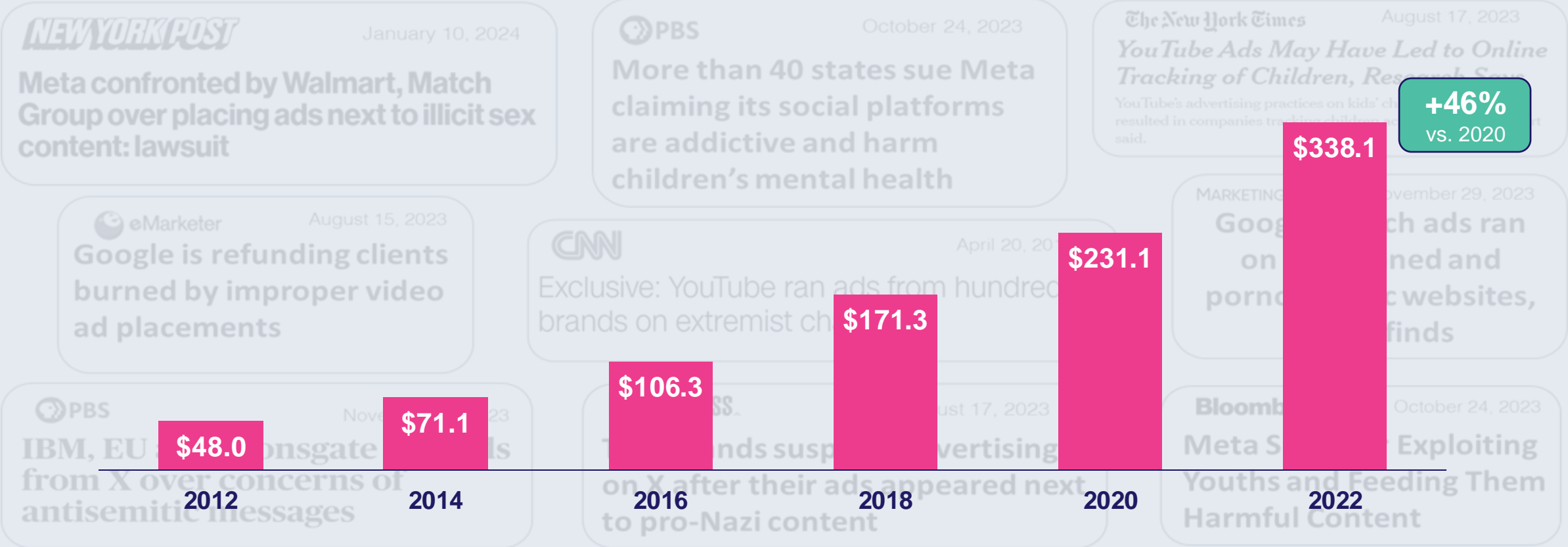
% of total U.S. ad spending**	2017	2019	2021	2023	2025
	57%	44%	30%	25%	20%

Source: eMarketer Insider Intelligence, *Total Media Ad Spending, by Media*, October 2023. Note: 'Transparent media' includes linear TV, directories, magazines, newspapers, out-of-home, radio; TV, newspapers, magazines and directories exclude digital; Radio excludes off-air radio and digital. \*Total U.S. ad spend includes digital (desktop/laptop, mobile, and other internet-connected devices), directories, magazines, newspapers, out-of-home, radio, and TV.

# To opaque walled gardens which have been plagued by brand safety scandals

## Major 'Walled Garden' Global Advertising Revenues

Aggregated Alphabet & Meta Revenues (in billions)



## In their own words: Even though marketers don't believe the 'Big Tech' walled gardens would dare to engage in fraudulent activity



“For large entities (Google and Facebook) that incentive is still theoretically there, **but they would have to be very foolish to engage in outright fraud at this point. So, I think you're less at risk if you're running on those** versus syndicating your content out to thousands or millions of different smaller sites.”

CMO, Consumer Electronics Category (Anonymous)

Source: VAB / Advertiser Perceptions 'Marketer Sentiment on Ad Fraud' Survey, based on in-depth interviews, fielded October 2023. Survey base: Marketer and agency contacts from the Advertiser Perceptions 'Senior Marketer' and 'Streaming Video' online communities.

Marketers can move the industry forward and enact real change by **asking questions about their ad placements and demanding transparency across all their media & verification partners**




Also, the FreeWheel Council for Premium Video and the VAB have partnered to advocate for the value of premium standards. **Click below to download and learn more!**

**Buying Premium Video:  
A Definitive Checklist**

# Key Marketer Takeaways

- ▶ Despite strong consumer and marketer concern around ad context and environment, many decision makers are still prioritizing cost over brand safety
- ▶ Ads placed in brand-safe environments perform significantly better, driving much higher conversion rates compared to those in non-brand-safe settings
- ▶ Maintaining brand safety is crucial for long-term profitability, as a significant portion of consumers are likely to abandon brands that place ads alongside objectionable content

# Download our full guide **'Exposed'** to learn more about all five of the inconvenient truths we learned from marketers through our custom survey



**Transform**

**Marketer's Guide**  
Innovative thinking to make a lasting impact on your business growth.

**Exposed**  
5 Inconvenient Truths We Learned From Marketers

**VAB** Insights. Inspiration. Impact.

## 5 Inconvenient Truths We Learned From Marketers

<b>1</b> <b>Don't Blame Me</b> The lack of culpability means no single party is willing to assume responsibility for addressing ad fraud	<b>2</b> <b>Lose Control</b> Marketers face persistent ad fraud with little recourse or power to address it	<b>3</b> <b>Under Pressure</b> By prioritizing low costs in campaigns, quality and brand safety are put at extreme risk	<b>4</b> <b>Hazy Shade of Winter</b> A lack of transparency prevents marketers from understanding and identifying where the many risks of ad fraud exist	<b>5</b> <b>Smooth Criminal</b> Marketers are unaware that digital ad dollars are being inadvertently funneled to 'bad actors' who fund illegal operations, extremist content and other harmful activities
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PAGE 10 This information is exclusively provided to VAB members and qualified marketers. VAB

[Click here to download 'Exposed'](#)

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Check out this related VAB content

To learn more about the methodology of our custom study, download the full report

**[Exposed: 5 Inconvenient Truths We Learned From Marketers](#)**



Who is responsible for monitoring ad fraud within my campaign?



How can I effectively address ad fraud within my campaign?



What are the misconceptions about ad fraud across media platforms?



Does ad fraud pose any risks beyond affecting my campaign metrics?

# About VAB

VAB plays a dual role in the video advertising industry. We are leading the change to bring about a more innovative and transparent marketplace. We also provide the insights and thought leadership that enables marketers to develop business-driving marketing strategies.

Drawing on our marketing expertise, we **simplify** the complexities in our industry and **discover** new insights that **transform** the way marketers look at their media strategy.



We are committed to your business growth and proud to offer VAB members, brand marketers and agencies ***complimentary access*** to our continuously-growing Insights library. **Get immediate access at [theVAB.com](https://theVAB.com).**



# To learn what marketers think about advertising transparency, ad fraud and brand safety we conducted independent research



VAB's custom study results are based on responses from **senior brand marketers** and **high-level agency professionals**. These individuals are part of Advertiser Perceptions' Insights Community, a **distinguished panel of industry experts** who are deeply experienced and constantly tuned into the latest trends and developments.

**Their keen awareness and understanding of the ever-evolving advertising landscape make them uniquely positioned to identify the industry's most pressing challenges.**

- ▶ Part I: in-depth interviews of 5 select respondents
  - ▶ September 26 – October 2, 2023
- ▶ Part II: quantitative survey of 39 respondents
  - ▶ November 10 - 14, 2023

## **Respondent Qualifications:**

- ▶ Senior level decision-makers involved in digital video, CTV and / or linear TV campaigns
- ▶ Mix of category verticals
- ▶ Mix of annual media spend levels
- ▶ Senior job level / title