



Marketer FAQs

What are the misconceptions about ad fraud across media platforms?



Many marketers underestimate the prevalence of ad fraud on digital platforms

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 a lack of transparency that marketers struggle to understand and identify the various risks of ad fraud?

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

More than half of marketers believe the cost of their ad placements has no bearing on the likelihood of ad fraud

% of respondents who feel lower cost and premium-priced digital ad platforms are equally at risk for fraud



Brand Marketers

54%



Agency Professionals

55%

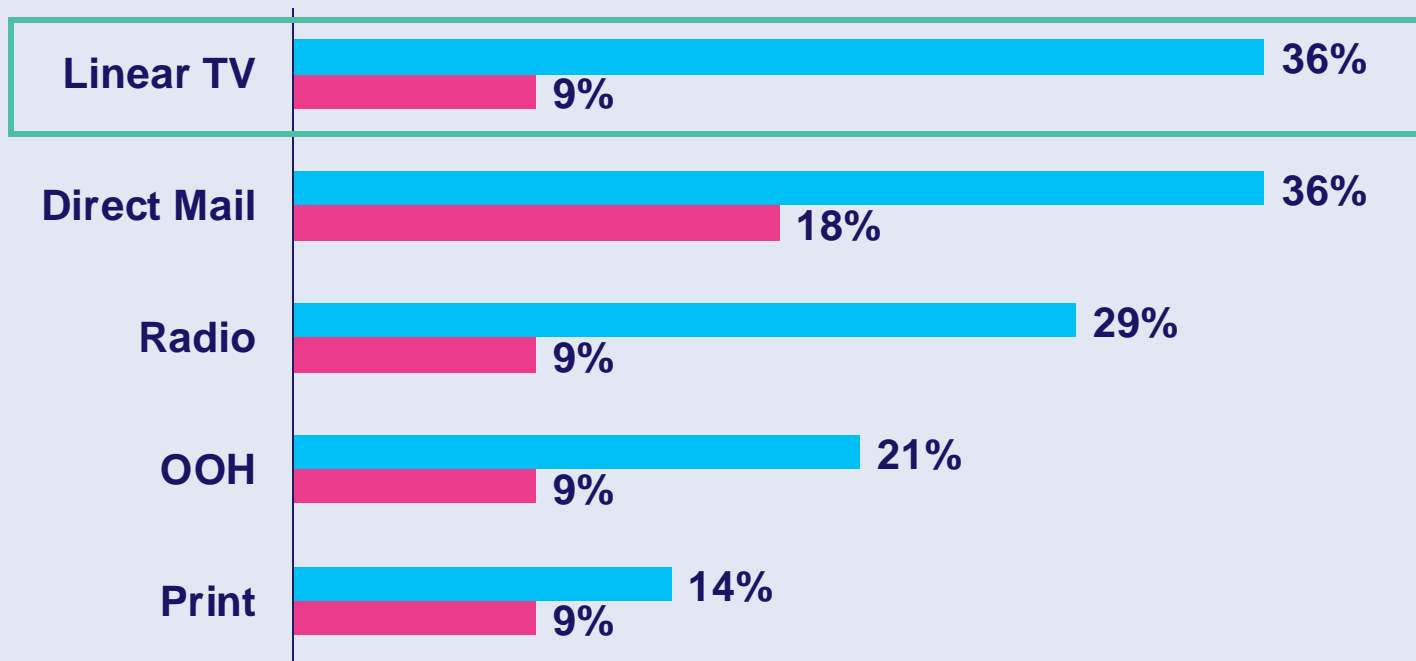


Source: VAB / Advertiser Perceptions 'Marketer Sentiment on Ad Fraud' Survey, November 2023. Survey base: Marketer and agency contacts from the Advertiser Perceptions 'Senior Marketer' and 'Streaming Video' online communities. Q2A. Which of the following statements do you agree with most? (Lower cost digital advertising platforms and premium-priced digital advertising platforms are equally at risk for ad fraud). Base = Total Respondents.

Misunderstandings regarding the extent of ad fraud were prevalent in 'traditional channels' typically managed by an advertising agency

% of respondents who think traditional platforms are just as vulnerable to ad fraud than digital media

■ Brand Marketers ■ Agency Professionals



Brand marketers are

4x

more likely to believe linear TV is vulnerable to fraud compared to agency professionals who have greater visibility into campaign details

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. Q1. Are these traditional media channels more vulnerable, just as vulnerable or less vulnerable to ad fraud than digital media channels? Base = Total Respondents.

Those who believe linear TV is vulnerable to ad fraud are equal to those who see social media as being least prone to digital ad fraud

36%

of brand marketers believe **linear TV is just as vulnerable** to ad fraud than digital media

39%

of brand marketers believe **social media platforms are least prone** to digital ad fraud*

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. Q1. Are these traditional media channels more vulnerable, just as vulnerable or less vulnerable to ad fraud than digital media channels? Base = Total Respondents. *Q2. Please rank the following media platforms in order of which are the most to the least prone to digital ad fraud? Based on rank 1. Base = Total Respondents.

Despite understanding the dangers of longer-tail, lower-priced inventory, the advantages of premium placements are not fully appreciated or valued

“Where you go out further on the reach curve, that's where you get the problems. There isn't a lot of risk of fraud where most people are "gathering" online. **The more obscure the publisher, the bigger the risk.**”

VP, Brand & Media, DTC e-commerce Category
(Anonymous)

only

18%

of brand marketers believe that **premium priced** digital ad platforms are **less prone to fraud***

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. *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. Q2A. Which of the following statements do you agree with most? (Premium-priced digital advertising platforms are less prone to ad fraud). Base = Total Respondents.

Long-tail websites, which are frequently included within ‘walled gardens’ audience network extensions, can raise brand safety and fraud concerns

Audience Networks (aka Audience Extensions)

A way to expand the reach of a digital campaign with a single publisher by using cookies to identify and track user’s activity on other websites/apps and then serving ads to the same audiences on those 3rd party websites/apps.

Examples of Audience Networks



Google Video Partners Network

‘Partners are publisher websites and mobile apps where you can show your video ads to viewers beyond YouTube’



Meta Audience Network

‘Extends Meta’s people-based advertising beyond the Facebook app’



Pangle (TikTok)

‘Gain access to Pangle’s vast network of mobile apps’



LinkedIn Audience Network

‘Delivers ads beyond the LinkedIn feed to members on trusted third-party apps and sites’



Microsoft Audience Network

‘Ad placements are cross-device and include premium sites like MSN, Outlook.com, Microsoft Edge, and other partners’

Source: Google Ads Help, *About Google video partners*; Meta Business Help Center, *How Meta Audience Network works*; Pangle, *How to level up your ad campaign on Pangle*; LinkedIn Help, *LinkedIn Audience Network FAQs*; Microsoft Advertising Help, *About Microsoft Audience Ads*; To learn more about terminology and facts around digital advertising, click the link to download [‘What Is Digital Ad Fraud?’](#)

Audience networks can also include many ‘Made for Advertising’ websites, which create negative brand associations and wasted ad dollars

“The most problematic are going to be display ads shown on a variety of third-party websites. All of those individual website owners, **publishers are actually incentivized to engage in fraudulent activity.**”

CMO, Consumer Electronics Category
(Anonymous)

4,500+

projected number of existing
‘Made for Advertising’ Sites*

**\$10B estimated annual
global advertising spend**

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. *ANA (Association of National Advertisers), *Programmatic Media Supply Chain Transparency Study – Complete Report*, December 2023. To learn more about terminology and facts around digital advertising, click the link to download [‘What Is Digital Ad Fraud’](#)

Most concerning, the ‘solve’ for these issues - industry-wide campaign transparency standards - isn’t a top concern among marketers

% of respondents who are concerned about the lack of transparency on campaign details and placements

Ranked within top 3 digital ad fraud concerns for the advertising industry overall



Brand Marketers

45%



Agency Professionals

29%



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. Q3B. What are your top 3 concerns surrounding digital ad fraud regarding the advertising industry overall? Base = Total Respondents. Brand Marketers = ranks tied for #3 behind ‘click fraud’ (82%), ‘inflation of campaign metrics’ (55%), ‘misrepresented ad placements’ (45%). Agency Professionals = ranks #5 behind ‘click fraud’ (68%), ‘misrepresented ad placements’ (39%), ‘inflation of campaign metrics’ (36%), ‘unknowingly appearing on ‘Made for Advertising’ (MFA) websites’ (32%).

Brands, often isolated from the center of the advertising community, believe a lack of transparency is their issue and not an industry-wide one

% of brand marketers who are concerned about...
Ranked within top 3 digital ad fraud concerns

Their Business / Client's Businesses

The Advertising Industry Overall*

Lack of transparency on campaign details and placements

43%

29%

Unknowingly appearing on websites that deliberately serve disinformation / misinformation

32%

25%

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]? *Q3B. What are your top 3 concerns surrounding digital ad fraud regarding the advertising industry overall? Base = Total Respondents.

Marketers can move the industry forward and enact real change by **making transparency a priority across the advertising industry along with all their media & verification partners**

A graphic with a pink and red geometric pattern on the left and a dark blue background on the right. The word "Know" is written in white on the pink background.

Know ▶

Know precisely where your video ad campaign is running and exactly who is watching it.

A graphic with a yellow and blue geometric pattern on the left and a dark blue background on the right. The word "Stop" is written in white on the yellow background.

Stop ▶

Stop considering any ad video "premium" that lacks a fully transparent ad process.

A graphic with a teal and blue geometric pattern on the left and a dark blue background on the right. The word "Insist" is written in white on the teal background.

Insist ▶

Insist on campaign transparency from all your video ad partners.

A graphic with a light blue and dark blue geometric pattern on the left and a dark blue background on the right. The word "Trust" is written in white on the light blue background.

Trust ▶

Trust multiscreen TV to always be fully transparent, accurate and accountable.


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

- ▶ Many marketers believe the cost of ad placements does not influence the risk of ad fraud, indicating a widespread misperception of equal vulnerability across platforms
- ▶ There is a significant misunderstanding among brand marketers about the susceptibility of traditional media to ad fraud compared to digital platforms
- ▶ The use of audience networks and long-tail websites within walled gardens can heighten issues around brand safety and fraud
- ▶ Marketers' concerns about transparency and fraud are not always aligned with the broader advertising industry's standards, highlighting a gap in unified strategies and the need to prioritize transparency across the entire ad industry

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

1 Don't Blame Me The lack of culpability means no single party is willing to assume responsibility for addressing ad fraud	2 Lose Control Marketers face persistent ad fraud with little recourse or power to address it	3 Under Pressure By prioritizing low costs in campaigns, quality and brand safety are put at extreme risk	4 Hazy Shade of Winter A lack of transparency prevents marketers from understanding and identifying where the many risks of ad fraud exist	5 Smooth Criminal 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'](#)

Creators

Danielle DeLauro

Executive Vice President
danielled@thevab.com

Jason Wiese

SVP, Director of Strategic Insights
jasonw@thevab.com

Leah Montner-Dixon

Director, Audience & Behavioral Insights
leahm@thevab.com

Karolina Guillen

Associate Director, Insights, Strategy & Analytics
karolinag@thevab.com

Discover more

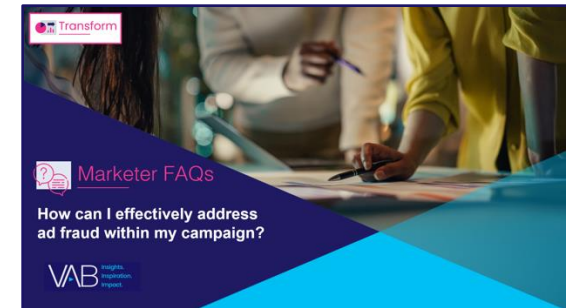
Looking for more data, insights and takeaways?
Check out this related VAB content

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?



Will prioritizing cost over quality impact my ad campaign outcomes?



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.



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