Viewability
the essentials
IAS Integral Ad Science
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When you look at the evolution of digital advertising, it makes sense that viewability has become a top concern for marketers. The entire ecosystem exists to support brands and their efforts to reach and influence consumers.
However, when as much as 50% of digital ads never have a chance to be seen by the targeted consumer, challenges arise for both the buy and sell sides of the media business. After all, advertising has no chance of working unless consumers have the opportunity to see the ads.
So, what exactly is viewability?

**Viewability** is the ability for a digital ad to be seen by an actual consumer. To be considered viewable, an ad must meet the minimum guidelines set by the industry, and illegal bot traffic and other forms of ad fraud should never be included in the number of viewable impressions. Viewability does not describe how effective an ad was, whether it was seen by target audiences, or even if it was seen at all.
The Media Rating Council is an independent industry organization that aims to secure audience measurement that is valid, reliable, and effective for the media industry. The MRC has established criteria for viewable impression reporting, and administers an audit and accreditation system to inform the industry as to whether measurement services meet the established criteria.

The MRC guidelines define a general standard for measuring viewable impressions on desktop and mobile, web and in-app, for display and video formats. Recognizing technical differences, they created separate guidelines for mobile. For more information, download the Viewable Ad Impression Measurement Guidelines and the Mobile Viewable Ad Impression Measurement Guidelines.

Since the digital market continues to evolve with new advertising opportunities, and technology, the MRC is always re-evaluating their guidelines.
What exactly are the industry guidelines for viewability?

A lot can happen between fetching an ad and the ad displaying, however. Even after the ad is loaded, environment or consumer elements can interfere with the visibility of the ad.

**Video**
- 50% of the ad placement in view, for at least **2 continuous seconds**

**Display**
- At least 50% of the ad in view, for at least **1 continuous second**

**Large format**
- At least 30% of the creative in view, for at least **1 continuous second**
Why would an ad not be viewable?

**Environment**

1. Ad loads in an area outside of the consumer’s browser
2. Multiple ads are stacked on top of each other (called ad stacking)
3. Multiple ads are stuffed within the same pixel (called pixel stuffing)
4. Pages are frequently refreshed
Why would an ad not be viewable?

Consumer interaction

- Takes an action before the ad can load
- Takes an action before the minimum time requirement is met
- Minimizes browser
- Opens multiple tabs, and the ad is displayed in a tab that’s not currently open
- Isn’t a real person
How are we doing as an industry?

According to our H2 2016 Media Quality Report (MQR), 53% of US display ads were in view per the MRC standard.

To check out the entire report, download it here.

How do we match up on a global scale?

- **AUSTRALIA**: 51.9%
- **CANADA**: 58.9%
- **FRANCE**: 50.5%
- **GERMANY**: 57.8%
- **UNITED KINGDOM**: 49.9%
- **UNITED STATES**: 53.0%

Note: this is based on display on desktop and mobile web.
Digital offers a wealth of consumer insights that are extremely valuable to the advertising ecosystem. However, there are several challenges in reaching better measurement for all parties involved.

### Core challenges in viewability

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<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quote</th>
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<tr>
<td>Not all impressions are measurable</td>
<td>Different brands and agencies have different viewability requirements, putting more burden on publishers and ad tech companies</td>
<td>“We must have uniform standards. Agencies should not have their own, and vendors should not support them.” – Seller at a Publisher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companies measure viewability differently, leading to discrepancies in the reports for brands and agencies</td>
<td>Despite being different technologies and platforms, the current parameters for mobile web and in-app viewability and display are similar</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vendors measuring from the publisher side may calculate viewability differently than those measuring from the advertiser side</td>
<td>Not all vendors have the same measurement capabilities</td>
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Only 51% of the digital advertising ecosystem feels that the industry standards for viewability are sufficient, according to our year-end survey.

They're fine in that they set a standard baseline. They don't set a standard for excellence, and I think we all can acknowledge that.

- Media planner at a media agency

It feels completely arbitrary, and not supported by data.

- Media planner at an ad tech company

We're held to a higher standard than any other media type already.

- Media planner at a media agency

Stronger value exchange for both buyer and seller. Weed out the rogue actors who diminish the digital advertising ecosystem.

- Sales at a publisher

Viewability should be used as a guide to deliver ads more effectively but campaign performance should not be held to.

- Client services/account manager at a network/exchange

For now it makes sense, but hopefully we move towards higher standards of viewability within the digital landscape that wouldn't require us to buy against viewable impressions.

- Media buyer at a media agency

Yes, but industry needs to come to terms on transaction principles and standards. Can't continue to do one-off agreements based on specific client asks.

- Client services/account management at a publisher
Digital is expected to prove its worth for one simple reason: **because it can.**

The industry is moving in the same direction, slowly but surely. Brands, agencies, publishers, and ad tech companies alike know we need to keep evolving. Whether it’s as new ad formats and technologies emerge, or simply as we smooth out operational snags (such as reporting discrepancies), most feel that we could reach a better “standard” that would allow all parties to be satisfied. (It’s just a matter of figuring out what that standard should be.)

It’s important to remember the purpose of the industry viewability standards: to ensure ads have an opportunity to be seen. Not to guarantee that the ad was seen, or to ensure ad effectiveness. We’ll discuss the relationship between viewability and ad effectiveness in a [later section](#).
This section breaks down the different channels, environments, and formats based on how viewability is measured. For instance, display and video ads are measured the same way on desktop and mobile web, but are handled differently in-app. Social media is not fully defined, as each platform offers some unique ad formats that present different measurement needs.
Desktop and mobile web

Display and video impressions within web browsers act similarly enough across both desktop and mobile devices that they can be measured using the same methods.

Display

Industry guidelines: At least 50% of the pixels are viewable for one continuous second.

- **Standard banner ads**
  At least 50% in view for at least 1 second

- **Large format ads**
  At least 30% in view for at least 1 second

- **Video ads**
  At least 50% in view for at least 2 seconds
According to our H2 2016 MQR, only 53% of US display ads were viewable. Here’s how that breaks down by ad format:
How can you measure display viewability on desktop and mobile web?

Geometric methodologies

- Measure the position and size of the ad relative to the position and size of the viewport
- Calculate the overlap to assess percentage of an ad in view

Browser optimization and simulated event methodologies

- Analyze ad processing on-screen versus off-screen

The methods change depending on the browser. Currently, there are technical differences between Internet Explorer, Chrome, and Firefox that determine which method can be used. However, most of the major browsers are working towards a more consistent approach.
According to our H2 2016 MQR, 58.2% of global video ads were viewable.
How can you measure video viewability on desktop and mobile web?

Video in browsers uses the same measurement methodologies as display. However, for geometric methodologies, there are two additional video components involved: VAST and VPAID.

VAST (Video Ad-Serving Template) is a script that gives video players information about which ad to play, how the ad should show up, how long it should last, and whether consumers are able to skip it. VAST helps keep communications between publishers and the ad servers consistent, standard, and streamlined. It’s helped the video advertising market become more sophisticated, with a demand for increasingly advanced functionality and increased reporting.

VPAID (Video Player Ad-Serving Interface Definition) is a video format that allows a rich interactive consumer experience with video ads. VPAID communicates a set of instructions that informs a video player of the length of the ad, tells it when to play, when to disappear, and also captures and reports how the consumer interacts with the video ad. Through VPAID, advertisers can easily see how individual ads perform and devise ways of improving engagement and interaction with the ad. The signals it captures help third-party measurement companies more easily measure the ads’ viewability. However, widespread measurement depends on widespread adoption of VPAID within the industry.

One upcoming change for video is the transition from Flash to HTML5. While Flash was instrumental in delivering video and gaming content on the web, the industry found it had issues with stability, performance, security, and power consumption. And using Flash to measure viewability of video ads was unreliable. The first iteration of VPAID was Flash-based; the second iteration is HTML5-based. All major desktop browsers plan to default to HTML5 instead. The goal is to eliminate Flash video ads in 2017.
Mobile in-app

Mobile is an increasingly important channel for advertising, as people now spend at least three hours a day on mobile devices.

It’s no surprise, then, that mobile is projected to represent nearly 80% of digital ad spending by 2020, according to eMarketer.

While the current guidelines for mobile are similar to those of display, many people find this to be inconsistent with the very different nature of mobile advertising technology, especially in-app.
In mobile web environments, the container in which an ad is rendered (the iframe) speaks the same languages as the web browser, enabling JavaScript tags to communicate outside the container and access the information needed to evaluate whether the ad is in view.

In-app, however, the container (webview) speaks different languages than the mobile app. As a result, JavaScript tags are limited to accessing only the information available in the webview, which creates limitations for measuring viewability. For instance, it’s possible for the ad to be in view within the container but for the container itself to be out of view.
**MRAID (Mobile Rich Media Ad Interface Definitions)** is the industry standard set of commands mobile developers use to communicate how rich media ads behave within the apps into which they are being served. MRAID can be used for measuring display viewability and has broad reach, but it isn’t accredited and has limitations. MRAID produces a binary signal – either the ad is in view or not in view – so there is no indication of time in view or pixels in view, which are parameters in the industry guidelines.

Current accredited mobile in-app viewability measurement solutions leverage software-development kits (SDKs), which are libraries of code that enable an application to communicate with a mobile device and with services outside of the device. Previously, measurement on mobile in-app with proprietary SDKs was a black box, with less transparency, lack of standards, data discrepancies, and operational inefficiencies.

There is now an open source SDK in the market, managed by the IAB Tech Lab Coalition for Open Measurement, which will enable widespread adoption of the open source SDK as a single, standard solution.

For more on this open source initiative, check out our white paper, *Transparent, efficient, and universal: making the case for open sourcing software*, by our GM of mobile, Jason Cooper, and Senior Product Manager, Joseph Ranzenbach.
Social media platforms

Social media is defined as “websites and applications that enable users to create and share content to participate in social networking.” It’s a pretty general definition, but that’s because it has to be. The concept of social media rapidly evolves as new platforms pop up, and existing platforms find new and unexpected ways for people to connect with friends, families, influencers, celebrities, brands, and more.

With Nielsen estimating that U.S. adults spend 22% of their media time on social media, it’s no wonder that buyers are in hot pursuit. eMarketer estimates that $20.31 billion will be spent on social network advertising in 2017.
Here's a quick breakdown of the different ad environments each of the top social platforms provide:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FORMAT TYPES</th>
<th>Facebook</th>
<th>Twitter</th>
<th>Snapchat</th>
<th>YouTube</th>
<th>Instagram</th>
<th>Pinterest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Display and video</td>
<td>Display and video</td>
<td>Display and video, geofilters, lenses</td>
<td>Display, video, and search</td>
<td>Display and video</td>
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<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>In-app, desktop and mobile web</th>
<th>In-app, desktop and mobile web</th>
<th>In-app only</th>
<th>In-app, desktop and mobile web</th>
<th>In-app only</th>
<th>In-app, desktop and mobile web</th>
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<tr>
<th>ALWAYS FULL SCREEN?</th>
<th>✗</th>
<th>✗</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>✗</th>
<th>✗</th>
<th>✗</th>
</tr>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>ARE ADS SKIPPABLE?</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>✓</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOES VIDEO AUTOPLAY?</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>Yes, except for Instagram Live</th>
<th>✓</th>
</tr>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>IS AUDIO AUTOMATICALLY ON?</th>
<th>✗</th>
<th>✗</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>✗</th>
<th>✗</th>
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As these platforms offer different types of ad experiences, it's not surprising then that they may have different ways of describing and measuring those experiences. For example, there are different definitions of what constitutes a video view. Pressboard and Buffer provide a comprehensive overview of what these platforms count as a video view.

Why does this matter? Billing. For example, one platform may charge only for videos that are 50% in view for at least 3 cumulative seconds, while another may simply charge for all impressions served.
CHAPTER THREE:

Programmatic vs. direct

The viewability of inventory sourced directly from publishers has historically been better than impressions sourced programmatically, and understandably so. The efficiency of programmatic buying often comes at the price of transparency, which makes it harder for buyers to know exactly what media they’re getting, and the quality of that media.
However, predictive targeting within all major demand-side platforms (DSPs) has given advertisers the ability to regain quality control. For both display and video ads, buyers are able to apply predictive data right from their DSP platform to target impressions that are more likely to be viewable. Robust samples of historical information of web pages are dynamically fed into the predictions, in order to ensure accuracy.
The relationship between ad fraud and viewability

If an impression was served to a bot, then it had no opportunity to be seen.

Most industry players agree that fraudulent traffic shouldn’t count as impressions. It’s just a matter of preventing that fraudulent traffic in the first place, and removing any fraudulent impressions that manage to occur from campaign reports. After all, an ad seen by a bot wasn’t seen at all.

For mobile in-app, however, fraud may not necessarily be from bots. It likely also includes geo-spoofing.

For more on the different types of ad fraud, check out our guide, Ad fraud: the essentials.
Blocking impressions from being served to fraudsters (bots or otherwise) is particularly critical for video, as it typically attracts more fraud than other types of ads due to its higher CPM.

So, it’s critical that all companies in the digital advertising ecosystem leverage both viewability and ad fraud solutions, as part of a holistic approach to protecting digital media, advertising spend, and revenue.
Steps to improve your viewability for brands

- Follow industry standards for viewability
- Have fraud detection and prevention in place, as well as blocking technology, so you’re only sending ads to real people – and paying for safe, viewable impressions
- Leverage predictive targeting for viewability
- Reallocate spend to formats that are performing better during your campaigns
- Look out for new ad formats that may result from publishers trying to optimize their sites
Steps to improve your viewability for publishers

- Experiment and continually test different ad positions to identify the premium positions to deliver the best ad viewability.
- Consider using ad sizes that are long and skinny – like skyscrapers – that tend to get higher viewability.
- Placements that are above the fold, but closer to the fold, get higher viewability since they take longer to scroll off-screen.
- Top-of-the-page placements often get very low viewability. Moving those placements down even a few pixels can greatly increase viewability.
- Sticky ads, outstream video, and interstitials can have excellent viewability. However, use those formats judiciously as they can negatively affect consumer experience.
- Keep in mind the balance between consumer experience and ad performance.
- Transparency into ad performance is key.

For more specific recommendations on meeting brand viewability demands, check out this blog post by Paul Astbury, our Business Development Director, Publisher Solutions.
Buyer vs. seller perspectives

Everyone can agree to disagree. It’s clear that the industry guidelines for viewability – as well as the potential to transact on viewability – prompt a wide range of reactions and opinions from all industry players.

In general, buyers feel that all impressions should be viewable. Sellers get it, but don’t always agree that the definition of “viewable” is accurate or based on consumer behavior.
Here are just some of the reactions we heard in our year-end survey:

**Buyers**

They are too “standard” and don’t account for nuances by objectives and ad format enough.
– MEDIA AGENCY

They are manageable standards. If the standards are any more stringent, we would need a major overhaul of how brands and publishers buy/price.
– MEDIA AGENCY

They still seem pretty lax in regards to ensuring opportunity for an ad to be seen but given the limited regulation on “viewability” in non-digital channels I do think it’s a fair standard.
– MEDIA AGENCY

They are not sufficient until the standard is 100%.
– BRAND

Viewability standards of 50% in-view for 1 second is hardly enough time to get a brand message across.
– MEDIA AGENCY

The standards are often lower than our internal standards.
– MEDIA AGENCY
Should potentially be stricter, but it is a good starting point because of the numerous players who cannot even reach the MRC standard.
– NETWORK / EXCHANGE

Viewability is subjective and the MRC’s guidelines often fall short of marketers’ expectations.
– PUBLISHER

No other medium is scrutinized in this way, any measure of viewability is sufficient.
– PUBLISHER

For defining viewability, they are sufficient. For reconciliation and billing, there are numerous black holes.
– PUBLISHER

There are too many third party uncontrollable factors that make it hard to guarantee viewability.
– PUBLISHER

It’s clear that a major point of contention here is the billing and reconciliation process. In other words, transacting on viewability. This is currently more of a concern in the U.S., as other markets have not quite reached the point where this is a factor for consideration, due to differing levels of market maturity.
The Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) encourages the industry to use a 70% viewability threshold, meaning that 70% of measurable impressions must meet the industry viewability standards.

According to our 2016 year-end survey:

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<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>68%</td>
<td>Of industry players said they are currently transacting on viewability, at least on a case-by-case basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Said they would like to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48%</td>
<td>Said that transacting on viewability should be common practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>Said that it shouldn't.</td>
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Not all buyers feel that viewability should be a key KPI. Not all sellers think that viewability will drown them in needless extra work. But there are some general perspectives we've heard from the two sides.

Buyers

Many agencies and brands think they should only have to pay for 100% viewable ads. However, they know that there are practical limitations to this, and so they are willing to compromise to a viewability level that they’re comfortable with.

You shouldn’t have to pay for something that can’t even be seen.
– FULL SERVICE AGENCY

Viewability is important, but it shouldn’t dictate the entire media plan. There is a point of diminishing returns when evaluating vCPM, sales lift, awareness, etc.
– BRAND / MARKETER

For now it makes sense, but hopefully we move towards higher standards of viewability within the digital landscape that wouldn’t require us to buy against viewable impressions.
– MEDIA AGENCY

All publishers should work to only offering viewable experiences so that transacting on viewability becomes moot. Transacting on viewability only creates scarcity and drives up pricing...bottom line is all inventory should be viewable.
– MEDIA AGENCY
Sellers

There are so many different standards of viewability – from industry groups to agencies who are coming out with their own – and these often change across display, video, and more. And as we’ve seen from our 2016 year-end survey, it often changes on a campaign-by-campaign basis, depending on the goals of the campaign. All of this makes it more challenging – and a lot more work – for publishers to transact on and forecast their own inventory using all these different standards.

Most publishers agree that viewability is a fair ask – and, in fact, ensuring better viewability and reporting helps them cut ad serving costs and over-delivery costs. Viewable impressions can be a differentiator for publishers, creating more value and therefore generating more revenue for publishers with high quality inventory.

Many are investing in:
- Site optimization
- Doing research into what will truly make ad units effective

For more on these two perspectives, watch our video on viewability with executives from IPG Mediabrands, GroupM, Guardian News & Media, and Business Insider.

Stranger value exchange for both buyer and seller. Weed out the rogue actors who diminish the digital advertising ecosystem.
- PUBLISHER

Viewability should be used as a guide to deliver ads more effectively but campaign performance should not be held to.
- NETWORK OR EXCHANGE

Yes, but industry needs to come to terms on transaction principles and standards. Can’t continue to do one-off agreements based on specific client asks.
- PUBLISHER

Advertisers deserve to pay only for impressions that were displayed... everyone just needs to understand that supply will decrease and prices will rise.
- NETWORK OR EXCHANGE

We have to “burn” impressions to deliver the % expected by agencies (advertisers) when that doesn’t necessarily mean customers will buy the product. There are other variables that contribute to the success, or lack thereof, of any campaign... such as the product... the offer... the creative... the call to action... etc.
- PUBLISHER
Transacting based on viewability comes with pain points for everyone involved. Both sides of the equation agree on these pain points:

- Lack of standard methods
- Discrepancies between measurement
- Creative waste
- Negotiating contracts and rates
- Infrastructure and systems

The market tends to move faster than we can handle it operationally.

– Joe Barone, Managing Partner, Digital Ad Operations at GroupM

Training was arduous…. Agencies all choose different systems, so publishers have to follow and know it all.

– Jen Soch, EVP, Commercial Delivery, Guardian News & Media
There's another idea in town that's starting to take hold: transacting based on time.

I’d prefer transacting on time spent, if we’re talking about novel cost structures.

– MEDIA PLANNING, MEDIA AGENCY

We should start moving beyond viewability to transacting on attention metrics, aka [viewable] time spent.

– ANALYTICS, PUBLISHER

I think time-based selling is a far more efficient and mutually beneficial alternative to viewability.

– MEDIA PLANNING, PUBLISHER
Agencies, brands, and publishers are starting to look into its worth and operational feasibility. But they need:

- Research proving it’s worth it
- The ability to set up campaigns properly from the start, to use proper metrics and get accurate data
- A way to make sure reconciliation isn’t an issue
- More demand from brands before publishers invest in this
CHAPTER SIX:

The relationship between viewability and ad effectiveness

As a starting point, it makes sense that the industry has been focused on viewability through a media-centric lens, determining whether specific ads are in view and which ad units and pages offer the greatest chance for being seen. The goal then becomes to only buy ads that are viewable. After all, advertising has no chance of working unless consumers have the opportunity to see the ads.

But the entire digital advertising ecosystem exists to support brands and their efforts to reach and influence consumers. And although brands want their ad campaigns to have high viewability rates, more importantly, they want to ensure that their messages have an impact on targeted consumers.
Check out what our CEO, Scott Knoll, has to say about viewability’s evolution in:

- This interview with The Drum
- This op-ed originally published in AdExchanger
- This podcast on the unfolding ad quality revolution in AdExchanger

Let’s take a step back. The industry guidelines are just that – guidelines. They are a starting baseline. Remember the definition of viewability: whether ads have the opportunity to be seen by a consumer. Not to guarantee that the ad was seen, or to ensure ad effectiveness. That’s our job – the jobs of creative agencies, media agencies, publishers, and ad tech companies alike.

So, we conducted a joint research study with IPG Mediabrands, and Cadreon to see how and when you should use the guidelines and what the impact was on consumers. Check out the full report here, which looked at a total of 189 scenarios and involved nearly 10,000 participants, and the presentation of its results by Mitch Weinstein, SVP Ad Operations at IPG Mediabrands, at our Viewability Breakfast.
What did we learn? There is a strong correlation between viewability and ad effectiveness and ad recall. It sounds intuitive, but it’s now confirmed by research.

Furthermore, time in view is king

Time in view was responsible for most of the variance in ad effectiveness metrics. It’s a much better predictor of whether or not a consumer will be able to remember the ad compared to what percent of the ad was in view. Also, consumers’ attention increased only with the time the ad was in view – not the percent visible.
Conclusion

Viewability – the ability for a digital ad to be seen by an actual consumer – is a key component of digital media quality. The industry guidelines provide a baseline to help everyone in the digital advertising ecosystem make sure ads are served and rendered in a way that makes sure it has a chance to be seen, by a real person.

It can also be used to better inform media plans, improve publishers’ sites, and potentially provide a more effective way to transact.

However, there are several core challenges in addressing viewability, primarily around differing opinions, technologies, and capabilities. To add more complexity to the situation, some of these challenges change depending on the channel, environment, or format of digital advertising. Not to mention that the digital landscape is constantly changing with new innovations.

All of these factors create operational roadblocks for brands, agencies, publishers, and ad tech companies alike. And ultimately impact their ability to focus on what really matters: reaching and influencing consumers.

We as an industry can – and should – solve the concerns around viewability. Once we do, we can focus more on consumer attention and what’s going to influence their behavior.
Glossary

**Ad fraud:** Also known as fraudulent traffic. Any deliberate activity that prevents the proper delivery of ads to the right people at the right time, in the right place. Typically refers to online traffic generated from machines or other bot activity that interacts with digital ads.

**Ad stacking:** Placing multiple ads on top of each other in a single placement, with only the top ad being viewable.

**Above the fold (ATF):** Ads that are placed on a web page where they are immediately viewable (no need to scroll down further).

**Ad exposure time:** The time an ad was in view.

**Below the fold (BTF):** Ads that are placed further down a page that require a consumer to scroll down in order to see it.

**Click-based metrics:** Measurement based on the number of consumers who click on digital content. Includes metrics like click-throughs, click-through rates.

**Home page takeover:** An advertising campaign that uses all available ad space, and potentially other specialized inventory, to “take over” a website’s index page. “Takeover” is a bit misleading because it’s rarely every ad slot on a page; it’s often a masthead or rich media creative plus a companion or two. This is also known as roadblocking.

**Iframe:** An in-line frame containing an ad within a web page. An iframe can be friendly or unfriendly (cross-domain).

**Friendly iframe:** An iframe that shares the same domain as the main page it’s hosted on.

**Cross-domain iframe:** An iframe where the iframe and the parent page have a different domain. This is also known as an unfriendly iframe.

**Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB):** An advertising business organization that develops industry standards, conducts research, and provides legal support for the online advertising industry.

**In-app:** In mobile advertising, in-app refers to ads that are delivered to a consumer through an app on their mobile device (phone or tablet).

**In-browser:** In mobile advertising, in-browser refers to ads delivered to a consumer through the mobile browser (Chrome, Safari, etc.) rather than an in-app environment.
In-stream video ads: Video ads that play before (pre-roll), during (mid-roll), or after (post-roll) the publisher’s video content.

Interstitial ad: Full-screen or pop-up ads that cover the interface of their host application or a web page. They’re typically displayed at natural transition points in the flow of an application or web page, such as between activities or during the pause between levels in a game. When an app or web page shows an interstitial, the consumer has the choice to either tap on the ad and continue to its destination, or close it and return to the app or web page.

Measurability rate: The rate at which a given vendor can measure ads for viewability.

Measurable impressions: Impressions that can be measured for viewability. Not all ads served can actually be measured for viewability. This is because some ad environments can prevent measurement technology from accessing the information needed.

Measurement tag: A piece of code added to the creative in order to send data to the measurement provider so viewability can be determined.

Media Rating Council (MRC): An independent industry organization that aims to secure valid, reliable, and effective measurement services for the media industry. The MRC has established criteria for viewable impression reporting, and administers an audit and accreditation system to inform consumers as to whether measurement services meet the established criteria.

Mobile Rich Media Ad Interface Definitions (MRAID): A common API developed to enable rich media advertising in mobile in-app environments. MRAID is a standardized set of commands, designed to work with HTML5 and JavaScript, that developers creating rich media ads use to communicate what those ads do with the apps they are being served into - expand, resize, get access to device functionalities such as calendar events, etc. MRAID is only relevant for mobile rich media creatives that run in an in-app environment, not mobile web.

Out-stream video ads: A video ad that autoplays whenever a consumer navigates to it within text content. It’s known as out-stream because the ad exists outside of online video content. Instead of running within a standard video player, these high-quality impressions can run within standard ad placements, on the corner of the page, or even within the content of a written article. Also known as in-read or native video.

Pixel stuffing: The process of serving one or multiple ads in a single 1X1 pixel frame. It’s a kind of ad fraud because served ads are invisible to the naked eye.

Placement: The location where an ad will be placed. Different ad placements will have different viewability rates based on consumer activity, such as above the fold vs. below the fold.
Pre-bid: Occurring before the advertising media purchase takes place. In some programmatic environments, ad buying resembles an auction in which potential buyers place “bids” on desirable advertising inventory. A brand or agency may want to know the likelihood that inventory will meet certain criteria (such as viewability) before bidding on it – that is, pre-bid. Pre-bid viewability is a best estimate that an ad will be viewable but does not guarantee it.

Rich media: An ad that includes advanced features like video, audio, or other elements that encourage viewers to interact and engage with the content. The ad can expand, float, peel down, etc.

Run of channel: Type of buying campaign where ad will appear on any channel of the publisher’s site.

Run of network: Type of buying campaign where ad appears on any site within the ad network.

Run of site: Type of buying campaign where ad appears on any page within the targeted website.

Video Ad Serving Template (VAST): A script that gives video players information for serving ads.

Video Player Ad-Serving Interface Definition (VPAID): A definition that establishes a common interface between video players and ad units, enabling a rich interactive ad experience.

Viewability: The ability for an ad to be seen by a consumer. In order to be considered “viewable,” an ad must meet the minimum requirements in the MRC guidelines.

Viewport: The consumer’s visible area of a web page. It varies by device.
About IAS

Integral Ad Science (IAS) is a global technology and data company that builds verification, optimization, and analytics solutions to empower the advertising industry to effectively influence consumers everywhere, on every device. We solve the most pressing problems for brands, agencies, publishers, and technology companies by ensuring that every impression has the opportunity to be effective, optimizing towards opportunities to consistently improve results, and analyzing digital's impact on consumer actions. Built on data science and engineering, IAS is headquartered in New York with global operations in thirteen countries. Our growth and innovation have been recognized in Inc. 500, Crain’s Fast 50, Forbes America’s Most Promising Companies, and Business Insider’s Hottest Pre-IPO Ad Tech Startups.

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