

Are Viewable Ads Actually Effective for Marketers? 10,000-Person Study Sheds Light

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A New Study Aimed To Study This Vital Question

IPG Media Lab, [Integral Ad Science](#) and [Cadreon](#) set out to answer a very simple question, with a 10,000-person sample size: Is a "viewable" ad actually effective for marketers?

The study, which the companies said involved 189 different ad scenarios, found that "viewability is highly related to ad effectiveness," not a major surprise, but also that some ads that don't meet the Media Rating Council's standards for viewability can still be effective and have impact for advertisers.

The researchers tested banner ads, large format ads, and video ads. For standard banners, the MRC defines ads as "viewable" if they are at least 50% in view for at least one second. For large format ads, at least 30% must be in view for at least one second. And for video ads, at least 50% must be in view for at least two consecutive seconds.

Respondents recalled 5% of ads that were below the MRC's thresholds for "percent in view," 4% of ads that were at the standard, 9% that were 75% viewable, and 11% that were 100% viewable.

On the "time in view" question, respondents recalled 1% of ads that were below the MRC's standards for that variable, 3% of ads that were at the standard, 8% percent that were viewable for four seconds, and 17% that were viewable for seven seconds.

Ads must satisfy both the "percent in view" and "time in view" requirements, though the study found that ads can have a significant impact (10.4% ad recall) if, for example, the "percent in view" falls below the standard but "time in view" exceeds it. It doesn't work the other way around, though, as the study concluded that "time in view" is "a much better predictor" of whether a consumer will be able to recall an ad.

While enhanced viewability certainly increases effectiveness, the study concluded that "consumer attention does not necessarily correlate well with ad effectiveness. Even though more people may glance at an ad, it does not guarantee that it is being internalized."

For example, for ads that met the MRC standards, only 51% of respondents looked at the ad, and 17% remembered it. For ads that didn't meet the standards, 25% saw them and 17% recalled them, the same figure.

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