

Ad Content Guidelines

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Ad Content Guidelines

The Trade Desk ensures that all advertisers meet a high standard of ad quality and brand safety to protect both advertisers and publishers.

Ads must meet the following requirements:

- Have a visible border of a contrasting color to the majority background color of the creative.
- Comply with ad guidelines and specifications.
- Be declared under the correct creative category.

For background information on ad standards, see the [IAB Display Advertising Guidelines](#) and [Coalition for Better Ads](#). The following sections provide additional information on specific requirements and restrictions.

IMPORTANT

The Trade Desk reserves the right to remove any ads deemed intrusive or inappropriate.

Banned Characteristics

Creatives and landing pages featuring the following content may not run on The Trade Desk:

- Unbranded ads.
- Pornographic or highly suggestive content or images, nudity or suggestive content or images.
- Promoting adult products, including sex toys and sexual enhancers.
- Promoting adult-themed dating, escort services, "mail-order brides," or similar services.
- Sales of weapons or ammunition.
- Peer-to-peer file sharing, torrents, or anything that facilitates or promotes copyright infringement.
- Incitements to, threats of, advocacy for, or calls for acts of violence against any individual or group.
- Extreme violence or incitement of hatred of any race, religion, creed, class, or ethnic group or of any individual or group.
- Hate content, including sites that advocate the superiority of a specific race or ethnic group.
- Promotion of illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia (including marijuana).
- Promotion of black-hat hacking, cracking, or warez.
- Any other content that is illegal, promotes illicit or harmful activity, or infringes on the rights of others. This includes sites that provide "how-to" information on bomb-making, lock-picking, and similar topics.
- Defamatory or libelous content.
- Distribution of viruses, malware install spyware, trojans, viruses, or other malware.
- Graphic or gratuitous depiction or glorification of pain, torture, or violence against humans or animals.
- Descriptions, depictions, or glorification of pain, suffering, torture, violence, or death of or against humans or animals.

- Sales or promotion of firearms, ammunition, bombs or other weapons, or related design materials.
- Automatic redirections of the user to a new page or app; pop-ups on a webpage upon banner open or upon page exit.
- Anything misleading or containing content that is not reflective of what the user finds on the clickthrough URL.
- Violent language, gruesome or disgusting imagery, or graphic images or accounts of physical trauma.
- Gratuitous portrayals of bodily fluids or waste.
- Obscene or profane language.

Content Accuracy

IMPORTANT

Ads should not be misleading, inaccurate, or deceitful.

Relevant, Accurate, Clear Content

Make sure your ads meet the following accuracy requirements:

- Your ads and keywords must directly relate to the content on the landing page for your ad.
- Your ads cannot simulate email inbox notifications.
- Your ads may not resemble Windows, Unix, or Mac dialog boxes.
- Ads may not contain fake hyperlinks.
- Ads may not include misleading content.
- Brand in platform creative preview must match the brand being served upon impression.

Advertiser Claims

Advertiser claims include but are not limited to competitive claims, superlatives, offers, discounts, and pricing. This policy also covers unverified offers and claims that are either scientifically impossible or otherwise misleading to users.

- All advertising claims must be factually supportable.
- All discounts and offers must be up-to-date and match the content on your website.
- All advertised products, prices, offers, and discounts must be available on your site within two clicks away from your landing page (at most) or through a basic site search.
- Users must be able to perform the ad's call-to-action (if any) on the site within two clicks of the landing page.
- Any pricing information in ads must comply with local regulations around the inclusion of tax and other applicable charges.
- Ads may not advertise competitive content.

User Safety and Security

Advertising should be safe for all users. The following are prohibited:

- **Phishing:** "Phishing" is an attempt to obtain users' personal information by disguising a website to look like another website.
- **Sale of free items and official services:** Sale of items or services that are otherwise available for free is prohibited. We also do not allow the sale of government forms or services that are available for free or for a lower price on the official or government site.
- **Malware:** Malware, short for "malicious software," refers to any software specifically designed to harm a computer or the software it is running. Malware can steal sensitive information (like credit card numbers or passwords) or even send fake emails from a user's email account, often without the user's knowledge. Malware includes viruses, worms, spyware, and Trojan horses.
- **Compromised user safety:** Ads cannot make misleading claims ("get rich quick," for example) and must display relevant disclaimers or other information required by law.
- **Spam techniques:** Ad spam techniques (exploiting online advertising systems like AdWords for financial gain), affiliate spam techniques (conducting affiliate campaigns on AdWords in violation of the applicable affiliate program rules), and bulk marketing techniques (distributing spam to large audiences) are not allowed.

Additionally, ads must not simulate fake interactivity or initiate downloads.

Non-Disruptive Experience

Advertising should not disrupt content consumption or intrude into the content. The following guidelines identify disruptive ad experiences that must not be used.

- **Pop-up ads:** These are ads that cover or overlay the content or obstruct users from viewing the content. It includes all ads that pop up on the user's screen and cover the content as well as ads that "float in," "slide in," or "fly in" to the screen, and obstruct the full view or partial view of the screen's primary content. This also includes any ads that automatically take the user to an interstitial or overlay ad without user initiation or user action to navigate content.
- **Auto-expansion:** Ads that expand from their original size to a bigger size without user initiation must not be used. Expansion while scrolling is allowed.
- **Hover or rollover expansion:** For the purpose of ad expansion, hover must not be considered a substitute for a click. On hover, no ad function that changes the form or size of the ad from its original size—for example, expansion—is allowed.
- **Sideways ad expansion that overlays content:** No directional or sideways expansion of an ad is allowed. All ads must expand to cover the full screen. If the expanded creative size is not full screen, it must be placed in the center of the screen.
- **Auto-play video with audio:** Auto-play defines automatic initiation of media by the ad. These ads auto-play audio on desktop and mobile devices. Video play is defined as the execution of specific files (for example, .mp4s) that are used to play video. Audio is allowed to auto-play only under specific conditions.
- **Forced countdown:** Forced countdowns to dismiss or skip ads (either interstitials or an expanded part of the ad) must not be used. The user should immediately have the option to "Close" or "Dismiss" the ad from the beginning of the ad experience.
- **Pages with high ad density:** Pages that have ads covering more than 30% of pixels are considered high ad density pages. Pages should have less than 30% ad density. An ad may sometimes

have more than 30% of pixels in the user's viewport, but not more than 30% of pixels on the page. Such ads are allowed under the following guidance:

- An ad is allowed to occupy more than 30% of the viewport at a time (for example, a 1:1 ad on a mobile phone), but the combined ads on the overall page (as the user scrolls down) must not have more than 30% of pixels.
- If an ad has more than 30% ad density of the viewport where it is to be shown, it must start with partial viewability (no more than 30% of height screen) on screen and gain full viewability as the user scrolls through the page.
- **Scroll-over or scrolling overlay:** These are ads that appear while scrolling and auto-expand to cover the content or screen, ads that do not expand inline but overlay the content, or ads that expand against the user's scrolling direction.
- **Flashing animation:** Flashing animation has content with one or more of the following: high contrast colors, very bright colors, or fast-moving images or content.
- **Audio:** Ads may not contain audio, except for user-initiated rich media ads, pre/post/mid-roll video, and audio channel ads conforming to our audio creative specifications.

Restricted Products and Services

Advertising should comply with applicable laws and regulations. If you participate in the Reseller Program, see also [Reseller Program Policies](#).

The following products and services are restricted:

- **Abortion:** No ads related to abortion that use violent language or gruesome imagery. Abortion-related services are allowed, depending on the country. Consult with your Account Manager for details.
- **Alcohol:** The Trade Desk allows alcohol advertising in limited circumstances. Contact your representative at The Trade Desk for country-specific guidance.
- **"Anti" and violence:** The Trade Desk does not allow the promotion of "anti" or violent concepts, such as the following:
 - Ad text advocating against an organization, person, or group of people.
 - Ads and associated websites advocating against a protected group. A protected group is distinguished by one of the following: race or ethnic origin, color, national origin, religion, disability, sex, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
 - Ads or targeting strategies that discriminate, disadvantage or encourage discriminatory activity against people or groups of people on the basis of any personal attributes, including, but not limited to, race or ethnic origin, color, nationality, religion, disability, sex, age, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity.
 - Attempts to revise history against the interests of a protected group.
 - The promotion of self-harm and violence against people or animals.
 - Any ads that link to Scientology content must clearly indicate that the website is related to the Church of Scientology. For example, the ads should refer to "Scientology," "Ron Hubbard," or "Dianetics."
- **Casinos and Gambling:** Content that falls under one of the listed categories is allowed, in limited circumstances:
 - Online gambling content
 - Gambling-related products

- Brick-and-mortar casinos
- Contests, sweepstakes, and raffles
- Sale of physical scratch cards
- National or state lotteries
- Fantasy sports contests
- Physical gambling equipment

Contact your representative at The Trade Desk for more information.

- **CBD:** Content promoting products containing cannabidiol (CBD) is permitted, but no health claims for the product can be made.
- **Cryptocurrency:** The Trade Desk allows the promotion or advertising of cryptocurrency or cryptocurrency-related products in limited circumstances. Contact your representative at The Trade Desk for more information.
- **Endangered species:** The Trade Desk does not allow the promotion of products obtained from endangered or threatened species.
- **Fake documents:** The Trade Desk does not allow the promotion of fake documents such as fake IDs, fake passports, and fake invoices.
- **Financial services:** All advertisers, advertising products, and services related to financial services must do the following:
 - Operate in compliance with state and local regulations (for example, include specific disclosures required by local law).
 - Disclose associated fees.
 - Include links to third-party accreditation/endorsements where affiliation is implied, particularly when it serves to improve the reputation of the site. Examples include (but are not limited to) verification of government affiliation and third-party ratings.
 - Provide legitimate physical contact information for the business being promoted.
- **Firearm safety and education:** The Trade Desk allows firearm safety and firearm education campaigns, but no gun or weapon imagery is allowed in the creatives.
- **Fireworks:** The Trade Desk does not allow the promotion of fireworks and pyrotechnic devices.
- **Illegal drugs:** The Trade Desk does not allow the promotion of illegal drugs, legal or synthetic highs, herbal drugs, chemicals and compounds with psychoactive effects, drug paraphernalia, or aids to pass drug tests (this includes marijuana).
- **Illegal hacking:** The Trade Desk does not allow ads or websites that promote hacking by providing instructions or equipment to illegally access or tamper with software, servers, cell phones, or websites.
- **Illegal products and services:** The Trade Desk does not allow the advertising of illegal products and services.
- **Political advertising:** [Political Advertising Policies](#)
- **Sexually-explicit content:** The Trade Desk does not allow ads that promote graphic depictions of sexual acts, promote content with underage or non-consensual sexual themes (including child sexual abuse content), or promote services that may be interpreted as providing sexual acts in exchange for compensation.
- **Solicitation of funds:** The Trade Desk does not allow the solicitation of funds (donations) unless they are for tax-exempt organizations.

Restricted Products and Services: Reseller Program Policies

In addition to the [general guidelines](#), the following are standards specific to clients enrolled in the Reseller Program. For more information on the Reseller Program, contact your Account Manager.

- **Alcohol:** The Trade Desk allows alcohol advertising in the US under its reseller programs in alignment with our policy.
- **Casinos and Gambling:** The Trade Desk does not accept ads for gambling-related content, including but not limited to online gambling content, gambling-related products, brick-and-mortar casinos, contests, sweepstakes, raffles, sale of physical scratch cards, fantasy sports, physical gambling equipment, or national or state lotteries.
- **CBD:** Content promoting products containing cannabidiol (CBD) is not permitted.
- **Financial services:** All advertisers, advertising products, and services related to financial services or providing any financial services offers must do the following:
 - Operate in compliance with state and local regulations (for example, include specific disclosures required by local law).
 - Disclose associated fees.
 - Include links to third-party accreditation/endorsements where affiliation is implied, particularly when it serves to improve the reputation of the site. Examples include (but are not limited to) verification of government affiliation and third-party ratings.
 - Provide legitimate physical contact information for the business being promoted.
- **Health conditions:** The Trade Desk does not allow campaigns that involve the use of any health-related information or the marketing of any health-related products or patient services including (but not limited to) the advertising of any pharmaceutical products, OTC medications, and specialty medical services.
- **Payday loans:** The Trade Desk does not allow the advertising of payday loans or services.
- **Political advertising:** The Trade Desk does not allow political advertising under the Reseller Program. Political advertising is defined as an advertisement for a political candidate, ballot measure, or other election issue.

Political Advertising Policies

The Trade Desk believes that online advertising should help to power an open marketplace of ideas, including political advertising. Our goal is to best enable candidates to address the substantive issues that voters care about, while protecting user privacy, curbing malicious activity, and preventing inappropriate use of targeting and data. This policy applies to any Political Ad (as defined below).

Political Ads are ads that include, but are not limited to the following:

- Ads featuring a current officeholder or prospective candidate for an elected federal office (e.g., President, Vice President, Congress, Parliament, etc.) or a state-level elected office (e.g., Governor, state or territory-level legislature, etc.);
- Ads featuring a federal, state, or territory-level political party;
- Ads featuring a state-level ballot measure, initiative, or proposition, including "get out the vote" or related election information campaigns;
- Ads featuring a referendum or plebiscite conducted by the federal or state electoral commission or equivalent governing body;
- Ads advocating for the outcome of an election to public office;

Or

- Any ad made by, on behalf of, or about:
 - A candidate for public office,
 - A political figure,
 - A political party,
 - A political action committee,

All Political Advertising

- The Trade Desk does not allow Political Ads where prohibited by law.
- Political Ads must comply with all applicable local, state, and national laws, rules, and regulations, including communications, campaign finance, “silence periods,” and any other election-related regulations.
- The Trade Desk follows self-regulatory guidelines of industry organizations such as the DAA and expects advertisers to uphold these standards.
- Political Ads must adhere to all other portions of The Trade Desk's Ad Content Guidelines including our policies related to violence and derogation, accuracy in ads, and anti-solicitation of funds.
- Political Ads must be categorized as “News and Politics” with subcategory options of “Elections” or “Political Issues”, if applicable.

US Political Advertising

- The Trade Desk does not allow Political Ads for state or local ballot measures and candidates in the State of Washington.
- Political Ads may use only data segments comprised solely of users capable of legally voting in US elections.
- Clients running Political Ads are subject to approval by The Trade Desk and must agree to The Trade Desk's US Political Advertising terms and conditions and must provide all information required by The Trade Desk's campaign setup process.

Verification

The Trade Desk requires verification, including verification of the entity paying for a Political Ad. Advertisers and/or the entity paying for the ad must provide the following information before serving Political Ads:

- For US federal elections, a valid Federal Election Commission ID (FEC ID).
- For US state or local elections, a valid Employer Identification Number (EIN).
- The advertiser's address, which must match the address used in the FEC or EIN submission.
- Such other information that The Trade Desk may deem necessary and sufficient for Advertiser verification.
- Any client wishing to serve US political ads must be based in the US.

Targeting

- The Trade Desk prohibits microtargeting for Political Ads. Specifically, the size of an advertiser's final audience, after applying all targeting qualifiers and refinements, must be larger than 1,500 targeted users for all ad groups.

- For Political Ad Campaigns, The Trade Desk also prohibits the use of Dynamic Creative Optimization (DCO), a tactic where an ad creative is customized based on data available at the time of ad serving, or similar creative swapping techniques.
- Political Ads must abide by the guidelines of our inventory partners. In addition, our inventory partners may have discretion regarding what ads run on their sites, apps, and channels.

Transparency

- Political Ads should always contain a disclosure (ex: Paid for by the XYZ PAC, www.XYZ.org) that identifies who paid for the ad where required by applicable law or self-regulatory guidelines. Advertisers are responsible for including a "Paid for by" disclosure directly in all Political Ads, regardless of the ad format, along with any other disclosures required by law.
- The Trade Desk follows the self-regulatory guidelines of the DAA, including its Self-Regulatory Principles for Political Advertising. The Trade Desk facilitates the ability to place the DAA's political icon on candidate political advertising creatives. This icon links to a disclosure page where the following information will be made available for public viewing:
 - Name of the paying entity (the advertiser).
 - Advertiser contact information.
 - Name of the executive designated by the advertiser.
 - Link to the DAA website page with access to state government and FEC databases.
 - Any other information required by applicable federal or state law to be included in a disclaimer notice.
 - The Trade Desk will also include links to fact-checking organizations on the disclosure page to give users the opportunity to research any claims made in the ad.
- Artificial Intelligence: The Trade desk requires that any creative content (visual, audio, or otherwise) that is generated using artificial intelligence (AI) must clearly and conspicuously feature a notice and disclosure to users explicitly indicating that AI was used to generate the creative content. This requirement does not apply to portions of the creative unrelated to the core imagery or claims asserted by the creative itself (including, but not limited to edits to backgrounds that do not modify the messaging of the creative or alter the depiction of actual events), nor does this requirement apply if AI is leveraged for editing purposes, including for image resizing, cropping, brightening corrections or defect corrections (e.g. removal of "red eye").

Violence

Political Ads often involve the advocacy of one point-of-view, or policy position, over another. Candidates frequently produce Political Ads that express disdain of or disagreement with the opponent's policies or opinions. In doing so, those ads may include violent images or videos in an effort to make a point to voters about important issues like policy, public safety, or change. While such heated debates and imagery are part of an open democracy, the following restrictions apply:

- Ads may not incite, threaten, advocate, or call for acts of violence.
- Ads may not promote or glorify acts of violence.
- No imagery of weapons being fired or being pointed at a person or animal.
- No imagery of an individual being beaten, punched, kicked, or attacked.
- No imagery of gratuitous human suffering.

Voter Suppression

Political Ads often represent the opinion of a certain candidate or party. As a politically neutral technology platform, The Trade Desk does not aim to determine the accuracy of the opinions and claims made

by politicians or groups in these Political Ads. We do provide links to several independent fact-checking organizations directly to voters so they can verify these claims for themselves. The Trade Desk does, however, prohibit ads that are aimed primarily at suppressing voters or voting activity, or delegitimizing the election process.

Global Tobacco Policy

The Trade Desk strictly prohibits digital ads for tobacco, e-cigarette, nicotine-based vaping products, and related devices and products, unless expressly allowed by The Trade Desk. Where allowed, clients must follow the restrictions listed.

General Restrictions

- Clients are responsible for complying with all local and regional laws, regulations, and self-regulatory restrictions.
- If The Trade Desk allows such tobacco, e-cigarette, nicotine-based vaping products, and related devices, clients must comply with The Trade Desk's country-specific restrictions.
- Clients must comply with all inventory provider guidelines.
- When allowed, in addition to the above restrictions, The Trade Desk does not permit any managed services, including but not exclusive to the creation of any custom audiences and segments. These campaigns are only offered on a "self-service" basis.

Targeting

- Ads must not target users under the age of 18 or the age legally allowable in a country, whichever is older.
- Ads must not target pregnant women.
- All advertising campaigns must adhere to any additional targeting policies set by SSP partners and/or publishers.

Ad Creatives Tobacco

Ad creatives and corresponding landing pages for campaigns in this category must:

- Not make claims about the product's nutritional, cosmetic, health, social or therapeutic benefits.
- Not appeal to a young audience, including the use of cartoon characters, celebrities, and youth role models.
- Not depict imagery of people smoking.
- Not depict pregnant women or minors as models.
- Not include information to trigger product sales like offers, discounts, gifts, lucky draws, and so on.
- Include all necessary and applicable health warnings.

Ads must include all necessary disclaimers, including any necessary health warnings or age-related disclaimers indicating that such products are only to be used above the legal usage age (for instance, clearly showing an "18+" disclaimer, where required).

These restrictions do not apply to smoking-cessation or smoking-harm awareness campaigns. Please contact your account manager with any questions.

SSP-Specific Guidelines

In addition to our own ad content policies and guidelines, The Trade Desk also upholds the policies of our partner SSPs, including but not limited to the following SSP-specific guidelines:

- [Adswizz](#)
- [Beachfront Media](#)
- [Bidswitch](#)
- [Disney+](#)
- [Fyber](#)
- [Google AdX *](#)
- [GumGum](#)
- [Hulu](#)
- [Index Exchange](#)
- [inMobi Exchange](#)
- [Kargo](#)
- [LiveIntent](#)
- [LoopMe](#)
- [Magnite CTV](#)
- [Magnite DV+](#)
- [Nativo](#)
- [NBC Universal](#)
- [Netflix](#)
- [ONE Display](#)
- [OpenX](#)
- [Outbrain](#)
- [Pangle](#)
- [Pubmatic](#)
- [RhythmOne](#)
- [Sharethrough](#)
- [Smaato](#)
- [Smart Ad Server](#)
- [smartclip Outstream](#)
- [smartclip Instream](#)
- [SpotX](#)
- [Ströer](#)
- [Taboola](#)
- [Teads](#)
- [TripleLift](#)
- [Triton a2X](#)
- [UCFunnel](#)
- [Xandr](#)
- [Yahoo Exchange](#)
- [YieldLab](#)
- [Yieldmo](#)
- [YieldOne \(in Japanese\)](#)

* In addition to their listed policies, Google AdX also enforces the following limits:

- 5 MB or smaller download size on display ads
- 25 or fewer cookies
- 100 or fewer HTTP calls