

Alejandro Borgia – 2022 Ads Safety Report Training

Agenda – Thursday, February 23, 2023

- Review Key Messages for Ads Safety:
 - It is our responsibility to develop and enforce policies that help keep people and our partners safe when using our advertising products.
 - Transparency breeds trust with people and our partners.
 - Digital advertising has been a positive force for decades. We think our approach to safety and transparency is a model for our entire industry and is a crucial point to preserving the economic model that has powered the open internet for decades.
 - We work incredibly hard to stay nimble and use all of the tools at our disposal to prevent bad actors who seek to take advantage of or misinform people
- FAQ's
- What's ahead:
 - Tuesday, 2/28 @ 9:30 AM PT – Deck Presentation
 - Tuesday 3/7 @ 9:30 AM PT – Dry Run with Dan Taylor
 - Tuesday 3.14 @ 9:30 AM PT
 - Monday 3/20 & Tuesday 3/21 (TBC) - Reporter Roundtables
- Your thoughts/concerns
- If there's time: review of [deck](#)

Q&A

Responding to 3rd party reports:

- When 3rd party groups flag content that they believe violates our policy, we always review it.
- Sometimes that content does violate our policies, and was missed by our enforcement systems. And we take action on it.
- Other times though, that content may not violate our policies.
- There is often some level of difference between what a 3rd party believes violates our policy and what is actually violating as defined by our policies.
- These reports often represent a mix of some misses on our part, because our systems are not perfect, and some things that are not in scope of our policy.
- That said, we do take feedback about our policies seriously, and have made changes based on feedback we've heard about the clarity or scope of our policies in the past.

RU/UA FAQ

TOP LINE:

- We moved swiftly after the war began to demonetize state funded media across our platform and we instituted a Sensitive Event to block millions of ads that sought to exploit the conflict.
- These were not singular actions, and we continue to monitor our network for harmful content related to the conflict and remove it when it's detected.

Q: The war in Ukraine is front and center, can you discuss a bit about the impact on Ads and your future in Russia?

In light of the war in Ukraine, we have taken several actions for our advertising products and services. This includes:

- We instituted a Sensitive Event that blocks ads globally related to the conflict that seek to take advantage of the situation.
- A pause of all Google ads in Russia, including Search, YouTube, and Display
- A pause of ads on Google properties and networks globally from advertisers based in Russia.
- Pausing Google monetization of **275** Russian state-funded media across our platforms. This update applied to Russian state-funded publisher sites, apps, and YouTube channels, as well as advertisers.
 - With this, we do not allow content that incites violence or denies the occurrence of tragic events to run as ads or to monetize on our properties.

Q: There have been several reports recently from NewsGuard and Check My Ads that show Google is still monetizing Russian propaganda about the War in Ukraine. Why?

We have policies in place prohibiting content that incites violence, promotes hate, or denies the existence of tragic events, and we've been enforcing these policies vigorously with respect to the War in Ukraine. Following Russia's invasion, we also took additional steps to further clarify and in some instances expand the scope of these policies as they relate to the conflict, prohibiting content that exploits, dismisses, or condones the war. Additionally, In 2022, we've demonetized more than 275 Russian State funded media sites and have blocked more than 17 million ads under our sensitive for content related to the conflict. Our teams continue to evaluate sites and ads across our network and take appropriate enforcement actions as they detect additional state-funded media and violating content.

Q: These reports also show that some of these sites are state-funded. Didn't Google demonetize these publishers?

Our teams continue to evaluate sites and channels across our platforms and will take appropriate action as we detect additional state-funded entities or new information.

If Pressed on Pravda: It's also important to note that Pravda has been subject to regular reviews in accordance with our standard practices for all sites in our network, and we have previously removed ads from pages where we've found violations.

If pressed on Check my Ads list: Based on our review of these sites our teams did not find any connection to state Russian state-owned entities. If we receive any new information regarding these sites, we'll take action.

Q: Did Google take action against Russian advertisers and SSM in response to sanctions?

While we do comply with global sanctions, we made the decision prior to pause monetization of state-funded media across our platforms in response to the extraordinary circumstance in Ukraine.

Q: There have been reports Google is not complying with sanctions and may be allowing Russian companies access to consumer data (via RTB)?

- Google is committed to complying with all applicable sanctions and trade compliance laws and has taken appropriate action with regards to sanctions put in place related to the war in Ukraine. We maintain various measures to prevent, detect, and remediate unauthorized abuses of Google's services that violate our policies, including sanctions policies. As it relates to RTB and consumer privacy, we employ a number of privacy protections to keep user data safe. We do not share personally identifiable information in bid requests nor do we share sensitive user data. We also apply data minimization practices and don't share what type of content is on a specific page, website or app.

CLIMATE

TOP LINE:

- In 2021 we launched an industry-leading policy that explicitly prohibits ads promoting climate change denial.
- We worked with a range of experts and authoritative sources on the topic to create this policy.
- It's important to note that our policy focuses specifically on claims that deny the existence and the causes of climate change. And we do allow ads and content that discuss or promote green initiatives as well as debates about climate policy and the impacts of climate change.

Q: Is Google funding climate denial content?

In 2021, we launched an industry-leading policy that explicitly prohibits ads promoting false claims about the existence and causes of climate change. We worked with and consulted a range of experts and authoritative sources on the topic of climate science to create this policy. When we find content that crosses the line from policy debate or a discussion of green initiatives to promoting outright climate change denial, we remove those ads from serving. We've also been clear that we continue to allow ads and monetization on other climate-related topics, including public debates on climate policy, the varying impacts of climate change, new research and more. As always, we continue to work with and listen to experts and our advertising partners to review our policies to ensure they are working as intended and capturing the right content.

Q: There have been several reports from CCDH that shows Google is not living up to it's climate change denial policy - can you comment?

Some of these reports were published immediately after the policy was launched in 2021. And as with any new and significant policy update, it takes time for systems to fully ramp up enforcement. Since then our enforcement of this policy has gotten stronger. It's also important to note that what one third party organization defines as climate change denial may not always match the scope of our policy. Right now, our policy focuses specifically on claims that deny the existence and the causes of climate change. But we do allow ads and content that discuss or promote green initiatives as well as debates about climate policy and the impacts of climate change. As always, we continue to work with and listen to experts and our advertising partners to review our policies to ensure they are working as intended and capturing the right content.

Q: Does Google have a policy against Greenwashing?

Our climate change policy focuses specifically on ads that contradict authoritative scientific consensus on the existence of and causes behind climate change. And we've been clear that we continue to allow ads and monetization on other climate-related topics, including public debates on climate policy, the varying impacts of climate change, new research and more. Generally speaking, this policy (as with most of our policies) does not block specific types of advertisers on our platform, provided their ads comply with all of our policies. This includes ads from the companies that promote green initiatives or questioning climate policy. At the same time, we have robust ad policies that expressly prohibit ads/advertisers from using misrepresentation. This includes advertisers fraudulently claiming that they or their product or services hold certain certifications or licenses relating to sustainability or green practices. When we find ads that violate this policy we remove them from serving.

ELECTIONS**TOP LINE:**

- Political advertising is an important component of democratic elections — candidates use ads to raise awareness, share information and engage potential voters.
- We want to do our part make sure people have trust and confidence in the political ads they see.

- We've invested significantly in a range of transparency features, targeting restrictions and content policies around election advertising, to ensure voters know who is behind the ads they're seeing, why they are seeing that ad, and to safeguard our platforms from false claims that could undermine trust in our elections.

Q: Why stay in the political ads business, given all the scrutiny?

Political advertising is an **important component of democratic elections** — candidates use ads to raise awareness, share information and engage potential voters. And we want to do our part to ensure people have trust and confidence in the political ads they see. That's why over the years, **we've invested significantly in a range of transparency features, targeting restrictions and content policies around election advertising.**

Q: Did you see a lot of abuse around election ads in the lead up to the 2022 midterms?

Last year, we really doubled-down on our enforcement of our existing policies — investing heavily in teams of experts and enforcement technology to stay ahead of potential threats. And as a result, we did not see a significant amount of abuse in this space. To start, we expanded our verification and transparency efforts for election ads, verifying nearly 6,000 new advertising accounts in the U.S. We also maintained strong investments in our ads policies and enforcement systems, and we were able to continue to detect and remove ads on our platforms that violated our policies, including false or misleading claims around elections and voting procedures, as well as threats to election workers. We also removed ads from more than 300,000 pages that violated our unreliable claims policies and blocked 24.1M ads.

Q: How was your approach in 2022 different from in 2020?

2020 was an unpredictable year for our electoral system in a number of ways. And we adapted our enforcement to

help address this uncertainty. We launched a Sensitive Event at the end of October because of the unprecedented amount of votes that would be counted after election day. This blocked more than 5 million ads referencing the U.S. 2020 election¹, the candidates, or its outcome as election results were certified. The pause was lifted on December 10 and then reinstated following the Capitol riots before being lifted again in February.

Since 2020, we've continued to scale our enforcement systems and educate our advertising partners about our policies. We've also continued to vigorously enforce our election advertiser verification policies, requiring all political advertisers to verify their identity before running ads and include disclosures in their ads, and restricting targeting options for political advertisers globally.

Q: Why didn't you reinstate the Sensitive Event ahead of 2022?

It's important to note that we have a lot of tools at our disposal to enforce our policies at scale aside from sensitive events, including robust automated and human enforcement systems. Leading up to the 2022 election, we did not see the same level of unpredictability, nor did we see any significant upticks in violations or abuse trends. We relied on our existing and robust enforcement systems to ensure a safe and trustworthy election advertising experience for our users. In fact, leading up to the 2022 midterms, a 3rd party report found that we led the industry in blocking ads with false election claims from running.

Q: Some conservative outlets say their content is being blocked or demonetized, is that true?

Google has clear [publisher policies](#) designed to ensure a positive experience for users and to protect brands from having their ads run alongside inappropriate or harmful content. These policies are enforced consistently and without bias, regardless of a publisher's political affiliation or perspective. We often start by enforcing those policies at the page level and we try to work with our publishing partners to give them clear guidance on how to address their violations. When publishers persistently breach our policies we

¹ Google Election Metrics Data Site, Global, December 2020. [Source](#), [Approvals](#).

stop serving Google ads on their site. Sites always have the option to apply for reinstatement once they comply with our policies.”

Q: Will Trump’s 2024 campaign be allowed to advertise on google?

Assuming Trump’s campaign or his PAC are verified election advertisers and their ads comply with those aforementioned policies, they would be eligible to run ads on Search and Display.

As we’ve said, all ads that run on our platform must adhere to our [ads policies](#), which expressly prohibit hate speech, misrepresentation, (among others). This is true for all ads, election or not. This includes demonstrably false content that could significantly undermine participation or trust in an electoral or democratic process, such as claims that the vote-by-mail processes can’t be trusted, that the election was stolen or that there was wide-spread voter fraud.

If asked about YT: in order to run ads on YouTube, any advertiser, including one affiliated with the Trump campaign, would need to create a YouTube channel. Any update to Trump’s channel would be a decision made entirely by YouTube.

Q: Brazil:

Last year, we were pleased to bring Election Advertiser Aerification and our Political Ads Transparency Report to Brazil, ahead of their 2022 Presidential Election. As part of that process, we saw nearly 2,400 election advertisers complete the certification program in order to run election ads. This means their ads carried our disclosures and appeared in the transparency report, which is publicly available to all. At the same time, we also invested heavily in enforcing our policies against ads promoting election misinformation as well as election-related violence. A [3rd party report](#) recently found that our efforts to prevent these ads on our platform have been successful.

ABORTION

TOP LINE:

- In order to run ads that target keywords or phrases related to abortions on Search, advertisers in the US (and also UK and Ireland) must complete our [certification](#), verifying whether they do or do not provide abortions.
- In-ad disclosures then appear in these ads that show clearly “Provides abortions” or “Does not provide abortions.”
- While we allow ads that promote different services or perspectives, our top priority is always to protect users from misleading or harmful ads. Our goal is to ensure that abortion related ads transparently provide basic information users need to make informed decisions.

Q: What are Google’s policies related to abortion advertising and crisis pregnancy centers?

We have clear and longstanding [policies](#) that govern abortion-related ads on our platforms. In order to run ads that target keywords or phrases related to abortions on Search, advertisers in the US (and also UK and Ireland) must complete our [certification](#), verifying whether they do or do not provide abortions. If an advertiser is not certified, they are not able to run ads using keywords related to getting an abortion. As a result of this process, an in-ad disclosure will show clearly: “Provides abortions” or “Does not provide abortions.” Our goal is to help ensure ads transparently provide basic information users need to decide which abortion-related services are most relevant to them and we recently updated these disclosures to make them more visible for people seeking this information.

Q: Why even let CPCs advertise on your services at all given they use deceptive practices to lure women away from real abortion providers?

While we allow ads that promote different services or perspectives, our top priority is always to protect users from misleading or harmful ads. Our goal is to ensure that abortion related ads transparently provide basic information users need to make informed decisions, which is why we require such

advertisers to complete our certification and display accurate disclosures about whether or not they provide abortion services.

Q: Does Google allow abortion reversal pills?

Under our ads policies, we do not allow ads that promote harmful health claims. The abortion reversal pill is not approved by the FDA and we align with research such as the ACOG's on scope. As such, we do not allow ads promoting these products.

Q: Does Google allow advertisers to promote medication abortion?

Yes, we do allow ads that promote medication abortion pills, provided that the advertisers have successfully completed the appropriate certification processes for abortion ads and for pharmaceutical providers/manufacturers. These ads must also abide by all other existing ads policies.

Q: there have been many reports of abortion ads that do not have the disclosures, why is that?

There are nuances to this policy that are very important. Our abortion ad disclosure policy applies specifically to advertisers targeting queries/terms related to getting an abortion and these advertisers must get certified. However, if an advertiser is targeting general information keyword terms, those ads would not receive the disclosures.

- For example "abortion services near me" may trigger a disclosure, while more general terms, like the name of organizations that provide broader health care services beyond abortion, may not surface a disclosure.
- So when an abortion-related ad does not have a disclosure, that may just mean that a query does not indicate someone is seeking an abortion as opposed to a lapse in enforcement.

Q: there have been reports that Google is allowing CPCs to target low income users, is that true?

- People seeking information on getting an abortion should have full transparency about the types of services being offered by an organization.
- In the US advertisers are required to disclose whether they do or do not provide abortions and we show those disclosures prominently in every ad when a user indicates they are seeking abortion services.
- We made those disclosures even more prominent last summer.
- Finally, our tools don't offer a specific option for an advertiser to target people considered "low income." You can use broad income ranges, but the lowest range average income or below.
- People can easily go into their settings, via My Ad Center, to control whether income is allowed to be used for personalization.

SCAMS/FRAUD/MALVERTISING

TOP LINE:

- We have strict ads policies that govern the types of ads and advertisers we allow on our platforms and we enforce them vigorously. Bad actors often employ sophisticated measures to conceal their identities and evade our policies and enforcement.
- To combat this over the past few years, we've launched new certification policies, ramped up advertiser verification, and increased our capacity to detect and prevent coordinated scams. To provide a sense of the scale of our enforcement efforts in 2021, we removed over 5.4 billion ads, restricted over 4.3 billion ads and suspended over 6.7 million advertiser accounts.

Q: Google says it's committed to protecting users but continues to struggle with scammy ads on its platform. What are you doing about the persistence of ad scams?

Over the past several years, we have invested in our technology and teams to stop bad actors at the account level. And connecting the dots between linked accounts tied to the same bad actor. This approach is more effective than removing ads at the creative level.

We use a combination of human reviews and automated systems to enforce our policies and we are constantly monitoring our network for abuse. A few things we're looking at:

- Introduced multiple new policies and programs including our identity verification program to help us better understand the advertiser behind the ad and catch bad actors at the outset.
- Invested in technology to better detect coordinated adversarial behavior, allowing us to connect the dots across accounts and suspend multiple bad actors at once.
- Improved our automated detection technology and human review processes based on network signals, previous account activity, behavior patterns and user feedback to prevent harmful ads from ever running.

We're seeing progress. This combination of efforts has allowed us to match the scale of our adversaries and more efficiently remove multiple accounts associated with a single bad actor at once. As a result, we suspended more than 6.7 million advertiser accounts in 2022, up by more than 1 million from last year. Over ### million of these suspended accounts were related to behaviors like phishing, cloaking, and misleading advertising.

Q: Is automated tech effective?

Automated technology enables us to operate at scale more efficiently. Human input remains critical to the process. Our automated technology helps us to flag potential violations, where human reviews allow us to check our systems' work and evaluate more nuanced cases.

- For example, when it comes to more sensitive or quickly evolving subjects, the claim made in a video ad may need to be considered in the context it is made to determine if the ad complies with our policies.

There are reports of a rise in scam ads and malvertising. How is Google ensuring a safe experience for consumers?

We have strict ads policies that govern the types of ads and advertisers we allow on our platforms and we enforce them vigorously. Bad actors often employ sophisticated measures to conceal their identities and evade our policies and enforcement. To combat this over the past few years, we've launched new certification policies, ramped up advertiser verification, and increased our capacity to detect and prevent coordinated scams. To provide a sense of the scale of our enforcement efforts in 2021, we removed over 5.4 billion ads, restricted over 4.3 billion ads and suspended over 6.7 million advertiser accounts.

- [If pressed] We are aware of the recent uptick in fraudulent ad activity. Addressing it is a critical priority and we are working to resolve these incidents as quickly as possible.

PUBLISHER CONTENT & MISINFO

TOP LINE:

- We have a range of publisher policies that govern what content can monetize on our platform.
- These policies prohibit a range of things, from election misinfo and climate change denial to hateful or violent content.
- We enforce these policies consistently regardless of the publisher.
- In 2022 we removed ads from 1.57 billion publisher pages and demonetized 143,000 sites.

Q: There have been reports that Google is monetizing misinfo in languages around the world. Is this true?

- We've developed extensive measures to tackle misinformation on our platform, including policies that cover elections, COVID-19 and climate change.
- We work to enforce our policies in over 50 languages.

- In 2022, we blocked or restricted ads on approximately 1.6 billion web pages and 143,000 sites globally.
- We know that our work is not done, and we will continue to invest in our enforcement systems to better detect unreliable claims and protect users around the world.

Q: A report alleged Google has not embraced industry transparency initiatives - via sellers.json file - and therefore no one can be sure where advertising money is flowing (source: [Propublica](#)). How do you respond to that?

Publishers who embrace transparency - via opting out of confidentiality in Sellers.json - represent the overwhelming majority of revenue that flows through our advertising system. That number continues to increase. We want to see more publishers embrace greater transparency, and we conduct regular outreach to our partners to explain the benefits of opting out of confidentiality, especially to small scale publishers where we see the lag in consent. Overall, sellers.json is just one piece of our larger effort to protect advertisers and people from fraud or other inappropriate content. We rely on strong policies and enforcement systems to detect and remove harmful content, while also empowering advisers with robust controls that allow them to decide where their ads run. In 2021 alone, we took action against more than 1.7 billion publisher pages and 63,000 sites for violating our policies.

Q: Several reports were released in 2021 about Google profiting from misinformation and conspiracy theories , why doesn't Google have stricter policies on factually inaccurate information?

When evaluating content that's eligible to monetize, we review the claims against our policies. Our policies prohibit ads from showing on, hateful content, calls to violence, Covid-19 misinformation, false claims that could undermine trust in our election and content promoting climate change denial. We recognize that our enforcement is not always perfect, and when we find content that evades our detection we take immediate action and remove ads from serving. To give you a sense of scale, last year we removed ads from more than 300,000 individual publisher pages for violating our unreliable claims policy.

Q: Why did Google demonetize fewer pages with unreliable claims in 2022 compared to 2021?

This decrease was largely driven by a decline in violations of our harmful health claims policy related to the COVID-19 pandemic. And there are a few reason why we saw this:

- First, the increase in site-level action means that a lot of this content was captured when we demonetized an entire site, as opposed to having been demonetized via individual page level action.
- Second, we have seen a noticeable drop in overall content related to COVID across our monetized network, which means that we are going to see a corresponding decline in content that violates our COVID policies.
- And finally, as is often the case, overtime publishers simply get better at moderating their content and complying with our policies.

Q: Why isn't YouTube data included on videos that were demonetized?

Historically, we've kept YouTube data on monetized content separate, as they have their own reporting processes. We will continue to explore ways to streamline where and how to share additional ad information across our platforms in the future.

ADVERTISER IDENTITY VERIFICATION

Q: How many advertisers has google verified since introducing the program?

We are constantly working to verify new advertisers and are not able to share specific numbers. We can share that we are currently verifying advertisers' identities in over 240 countries and regions. And if an advertiser fails to complete our verification program when prompted, the account is automatically restricted. At this time, most ads seen by consumers will be from a verified advertiser.

Q: Will the next phase of the program be showing account history or policy violations - like an ad library?

We have no specific updates to share at this time. We are continuing to explore new tools and features to

increase transparency around the ads users see and give them more control of their experience.

Q: What is the Ads Transparency Center? - ONLY IF CENTER GETS LAUNCHED

Update - Earlier this month, we launched the Ads Transparency Center - a repository of verified advertisers where users can access basic information about the advertisers as well as other ads they've run.

Q: Does Google allow new advertisers, before they are verified, to run ads? If yes, isn't that a huge risk?

As part of a phased rollout of our transparency efforts, all advertisers will eventually be required to complete our verification program. Google uses a risk-based verification, certification and policy enforcement strategy, applying verification and other controls to manage the risk from new advertisers. Currently advertisers in certain high-risk verticals and regions are required to complete verification before being allowed to serve ads. When an advertiser is prompted to complete verification and fails to do so, their account is automatically restricted.

Q: When will Google have verified "all" advertisers?

We don't have an exact date when all advertisers will be verified but we are constantly working to expand our verification program and verify more new advertisers.

OTHER FAQ

Q: How do you think ChatGPT and Bard will impact Google's ads business?

- It's very early days for Bard and too early to speculate on what form chatbots will take, much less the ad formats and monetization models.
- AI has been foundational to our ads business for the last decade, and we'll continue to bring cutting edge advances to our products to help businesses and users. When it comes to our ads policies and enforcement, we've long-used a combination of human reviewers and automated systems to help us better detect policy violating content and remove it.

Q: There have been reports that Google is supporting the gun industry through advertising, is this true?

- We have strict policies that govern the types of ads we allow on our platforms.
 - We explicitly prohibit sales of dangerous products, including weapons & accessories, for Google Ads.
- We also have several long standing publisher policies in place to prevent or limit ads from running alongside dangerous or harmful content:
 - Dangerous or derogatory content: prohibits content from monetizing that incites violence or promotes hatred against an individual or group.
 - Shocking content: prohibits graphic images, accounts of or calls for violence or profane language from monetizing
 - Weapons: restricts ads on content promoting the sale, assembly, or use of weapons, including firearms, that may lead to damage, injury or harm.
- If a site or page is found by Google to promote weapons, ads originating in Google Ads would be stopped from serving on that content.
- But we do not block sites from running these types of ads if they choose to do so from 3rd party providers, i.e. non-Google Ads through exchanges.
- We offer all publishers controls that allow them to block gun-related ads (or other ad categories) from appearing on their sites through exchanges.

Q: What has Google done with the income it had taken for these 5.5B bad ads? (Use off the record if possible; if not, on background without attribution is fine)

We generally invest this back into our enforcement systems to strengthen them and stop bad actors in the future.

- We've allocated substantial resources to stopping bad advertising practices and protecting users on the web.

- We take our work to keep the ads ecosystem healthy very seriously - it's why we invest so heavily in our systems that keep bad ads, bad sites and bad traffic out of our systems. Hundreds of our engineers, policy experts and others have dedicated their careers to this work.
- Even bigger picture though, we're invested in this industry for the long term. In order for this industry to grow, there must be a foundation of trust between advertisers, publishers and users, and why we are strong supporters of industry-wide efforts, like the IAB task forces, TAG, and the Media Ratings Council.

2022 Report Stats - GENERAL FAQs

Q: Can you contextualize the figures? How many ads ran in 2021?

We can't provide an exact number. The total number of ads fluctuates greatly by the minute based on a variety of factors that go beyond policy violations and are often dictated by advertisers adjusting individual campaigns.

Q: Why did Google restrict less ads than in 2021? What changed?

We saw a slight drop in restricted ads which we attribute to greater advertiser awareness and compliance with local/country regulations that have gone into effect over the past few years. This means, we took fewer actions from a legal perspective to remove or restrict the ads that violate local law.

Q: Why is there such a sharp increase in site-level actions from 2021 to 2022?

This year-over-year decrease in part reflects the introduction of new automated enforcement tools that have helped us better detect and take action on sites with pervasive policy violations.

Q: In 2021 you said the decrease was due to targeted improvements, and this year your saying the increase was also a result of certain improvements, why is that?

There are a few reasons why these figures fluctuate.

- First, there are certain factors that may impact these figures that are out of our control, such as the type of content that sites publish, or increases in certain types of abuse trends across the larger advertising ecosystem.
- Second, we're also constantly investing in new enforcement tools and making improvements to our automated systems, which may cause numbers to fluctuate as well. Last year we invested heavily in preventing bad actors from entering our network, and this year we've built on those enhancements by implementing better tools to detect policy violating content within our network. As the advertising ecosystem continues to change, and we develop new enforcement systems, these numbers are likely to continue to fluctuate.

Q: Why have far greater numbers of ads been restricted in categories like gambling, financial services and alcohol than last year?

This is the case for a variety of reasons, which includes new laws that have been put in place and new policies and enforcement improvements we implemented.

- For example, areas such as Financial Services increased due to our updated Financial Services Policy in the UK. We worked closely with the FCA to only allow certified advertisers to run on restricted terms and queries.
- And for gambling and games – as both on + offline gambling has become legal in various states in the U.S and countries globally – we only show from licensed advertisers where it is legal, otherwise, they are not allowed to run. So, we have generally seen a higher volume of ads and increase in restricted ads

Q: Which platforms are included in the totals?

The data provided covers removals from the network including Search, Display and YouTube Ads. We continue to identify new opportunities to share additional information and more data from all of our platforms in the future.

Q: Why was there such a significant increase in the total number of ads removed in 2022 compared to 2021?

TKTK

Q: Why were so many more ad accounts suspended in 2022?

In 2022 we continued to invest heavily in combating adversarial behavior and preventing scams. Taking action at the account level can be a more effective way to stop bad actors when they attempt to evade our enforcement systems.

Q: Each year, more ads are taken down, is that because you're seeing more badness?

Not necessarily, scale is relevant. More businesses use Google's Ad services to grow their online business. Notably, on average 9 in 10 small businesses use our advertising services.

We have also seen an increase in fraudulent advertising by adversarial actors during the pandemic. With this, their techniques have become more sophisticated and the scale in which they operate has increased - often running entire networks of accounts. Which is why we have heavily invested in our technology to detect coordinated activity. We look at factors such as the IP address, billing information and general patterns to take broader action - not just at the ad level, but to suspend multiple accounts linked to the same bad actor.

This approach is working: we more than tripled the number of accounts we suspended from 2020 to 2021. And suspended a total of 5.6 million accounts globally.

Q: Why does the report omit Trademark restrictions?

Many trademark restrictions are geo-specific based on how advertisers set up global campaigns. These restricted ads don't necessarily reflect bad or low quality ads. As a result, the figure isn't a meaningful way to explain how we address policy violating content on our platforms.

Q: There's a sizable difference between page and account level action on publisher enforcement but we've seen plenty of examples of repeat offenders. Why doesn't Google take more domain-level action to stop harmful misinformation?

We recognize that not all policy violations are intentional, and the vast majority of publishers in our network are well-intentioned partners who work hard to comply with our rules. So, we often begin our enforcement at the page level. This allows us to act more precisely by disabling ads on select pages and claims, while leaving ads up on the rest of a site's content, rather than using a blunt-force tool for one violation. We escalate our enforcement to the site level in the case of egregious or persistent violations. We find that many of our publishers are well intentioned, and work with us to address their violations to avoid further, site-level action.

Q: Why don't you break out these stats by region / country?

Our platforms and policies are global and these are global trends we are reporting on.