

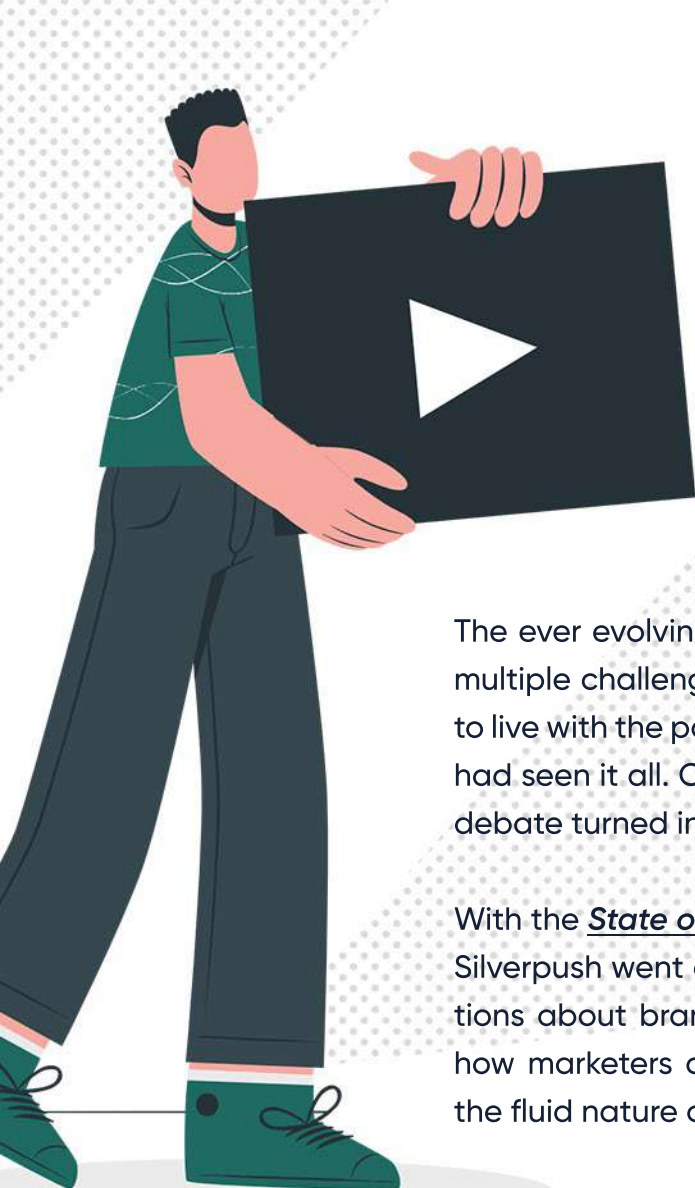


How is **brand suitability** reshaping video advertising?

A report on the evolution of brand suitability for video and how marketers can avoid pitfalls

January 2022





Introduction

The ever evolving digital advertising landscape has always presented multiple challenges for marketers, brands and agencies. From learning to live with the pandemic, to bracing for a cookie-less world, advertisers had seen it all. Or so it seemed, before the brand safety and suitability debate turned into an issue that had everyone's attention.

With the *State of Brand Safety and Suitability in Video* survey for 2020, Silverpush went on a quest to find answers for the most pressing questions about brand safety. The survey gave us invaluable insights into how marketers and brands are perceiving and mitigating risks, given the fluid nature of the digital marketing ecosystem.

In the two years since we ran the survey a lot has changed. Moving beyond the brand safety debate, the focus is now on brand suitability. With this report, we will take an in-depth look at the evolution of brand suitability in video and how digital marketers and brands can ensure the most suitable environment for their ad placements.

Brand Safety & Brand Suitability

– What is the difference?

In the past, brand safety and suitability were often used interchangeably, with marketers giving little or no thought to the differences between the two. It was not until 2017 that everyone noticed how brand safety and suitability were two aspects that required separate advertising strategies for brands to execute campaigns successfully.



Brand Safety plays an integral part in protecting a brand's online reputation by restricting association with potentially inappropriate or negative content.



Since then, many platforms have taken steps to offer a generic level of brand safety that includes insulation from racism, violence, terrorism, gun culture, drug use, and the like. These are the types of content that society in general, and advertisers in particular consider bad and the list has not changed much over the years, hence ad platforms can offer relatively safe environments for ad placements through algorithms that are designed to detect such content.

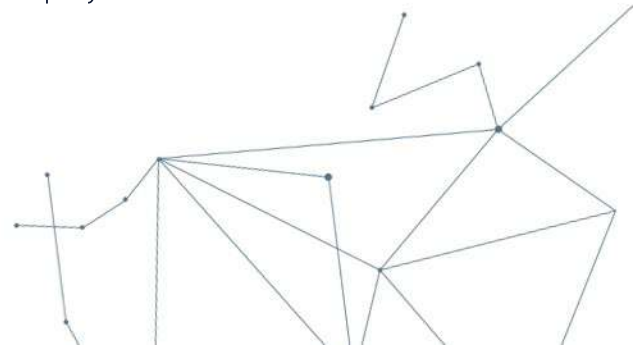


Brand Suitability takes into account the potential implication of content adjacency and how it can affect the way a brand is perceived.

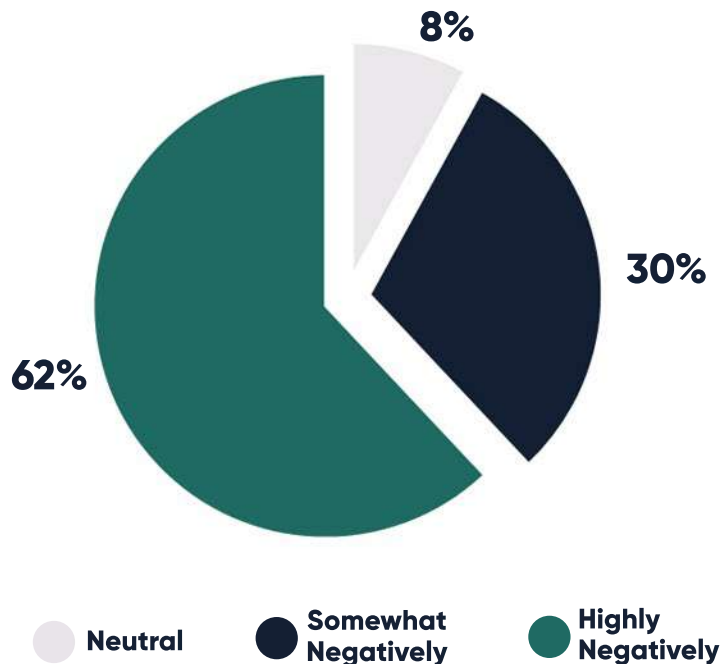


Brand suitability might be a subset of brand safety, but it is much more nuanced and brand dependent. Factor in the scale of popularity of ad platforms like YouTube and the suitability requirements become all the more important. To put it simply, brand suitability in video advertising moves beyond avoiding ad placements next to inappropriate content, it delves deeper into what works best for a brand to extract the most ad mileage.

In Perspective – A brand selling bespoke luxury items would not want its ads placed next to violent video game web casts, whereas an energy drink brand would happily advertise its products next to such content. That's brand suitability at play.



TO WHAT DEGREE DO AD PLACEMENTS ACROSS HARMFUL CONTENT DAMAGE BRAND PERCEPTION?



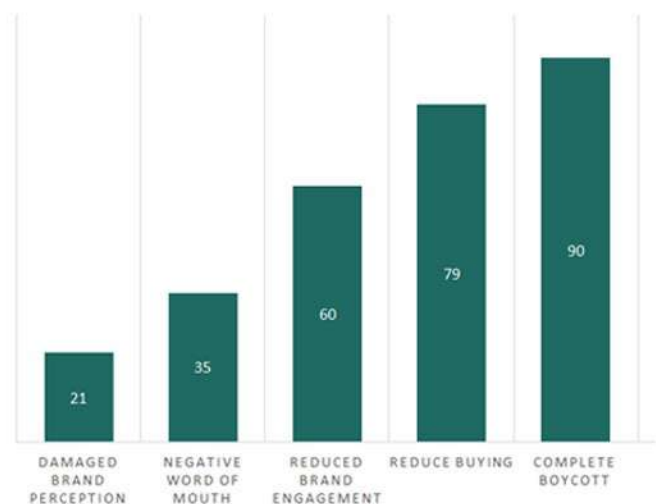
Safe is not always suitable ...and vice versa

As one of the biggest video marketing platforms, YouTube has also woken up to this challenge and ensured advertisers get a safe environment to place their ads. The video hosting platform goes to great lengths to flag content that can be potentially unsafe for brands, but this still doesn't take into account suitability.

While brand safety is about avoiding content that no advertiser would want adjacent to their ad, suitability is a very brand-specific approach. A consumer goods brand may find certain content not suitable for their brand, while a sneaker brand may find that same content perfectly suitable.

One possible step in the right direction is the Global Alliance for Responsible Media (GARM) framework for brand suitability that allows for content to be categorized as low, medium or high risk, and every advertiser can decide which level of risk they are comfortable with.

What are the effects of unsafe brand exposure in the minds of consumer?



*Silverpush State of Brand Safety & Suitability in Video Survey, June 2020

According to GARM's suitability framework, a video can be 100% brand safe, but still not be suitable for a specific advertiser. Here's how

Risk Level Tolerance

GARM's suitability framework shows a video can be low, medium, or high risk in terms of suitability. A medium risk video about a rap song that talks about gang culture might not be suitable for a high end watch brand, but can work great for an athleisure label.

Influencer Credibility

Associating with video influencers is a sure fire way for a brand to get noticed. All content creators ensure their material is in line with the video hosting platform's safety guidelines. However, despite being 100% safe if the content creator starts promoting certain views that are conflicting with a brand's principles, brand suitability will take a severe beating.

Tone or Topic Misalignment

Sometimes a video can be on point with what the advertiser wants to be aligned with, but the way the topic is approached is not aligned with the brand's values or image. For e.g. a low risk video talking about a juicy steak dinner will be safe for ad placements but will clash with suitability requirements for a brand manufacturing vegan products.

Brand Mentions

A video that mentions the advertiser itself or its competitors may be unsuitable for some advertisers because it may negatively reflect on the brand. This is a very straightforward way a brand safe video may not be suitable for a specific advertiser.

Content for Kids

Though video content developed for children will pass all safety standards for advertising, its suitability quotient will not be much for all brands. A beer brand will come across as insensitive and irresponsible if its ad shows up against kids learning videos.



The case for Brand Suitability in video – What makes it so important

Ad recall

An ad that appears alongside relevant content has great potential for positive recall. And this is what brand suitability aims to achieve. A 2017 Google study showed that contextual alignment can drive up to a 50% higher ad recall.

Contextual alignment drives

50%
higher ad recall

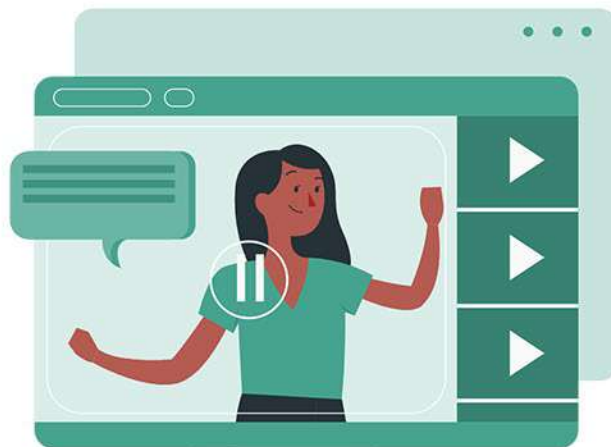
33%
*of people flagged
polarizing social issues
as a severe content risk.*

Brand protection

Brand suitability is tied with brand safety that protects your company's image from irreparable harm. It takes years of work to build a brand's reputation and it's not something you can just buy, so you need to protect it. If your ad appears next to negative content, people will assume that your brand agrees with it and supports it even if you don't. The numbers back this up – 33% of people flagged polarizing social issues as a severe content risk.

Engaging consumers

All modern day brands thrive on consumer engagement, the whole point of advertising revolves around this premise. Placing ads adjacent to brand suitable videos ensures consumers engage positively with your marketing advances. So, if your brand appears next to this type of content, they will extend that association to your brand as well and show interest in your offering.



Brand suitability offers a more granular approach towards video marketing by focusing on both the topic and context of ad placements and analysing content through this lens can make a large impact. Following a suitability mindset, brands can take a more thoughtful approach to the content they advertise alongside and the result is a more measured way for advertisers to increase their reach and support premium content. This also helps publishers use context gained through brand suitability data to better optimize and monetize their inventory based on advertiser requirements.

AI and Brand Suitability

Brand safety tools used by marketers today rely on blacklisting and whitelisting. Keywords are clubbed into appropriate or inappropriate buckets as per a brand's requirements. This, in turn, helps the tool comprehend which content type is safe for ad placement. This approach though offers brand safety but will draw a blank in terms of brand suitability, since keyword-based tools are unable to understand the subtlety in context and often lead to blocking of safe content. This negatively impacts an advertising campaign's performance, as reach is considerably reduced.

On-video Context Detection



Can detect on-screen text that actually features in a video, not solely relying on keywords and metatags.

Apart from generic harmful contexts such as terrorism, obscenity, etc., AI can also detect brand-defined inappropriate contexts, thus providing brand suitability along with brand safety. AI-based brand safety solutions effectively detect unsafe and unsuitable contexts in online videos, thus offering a brand safe and suitable video advertising environment to marketers.

In-video Context Detection



Detects faces, logos, objects, actions, scenes, emotions in a video/ image to filter out harmful and undesirable content.

AI-powered contextual targeting is successfully bridging this gap to emerge as the true solution to the brand suitability issues.

Brand safety technology that makes use of AI-powered contextual targeting is not only the latest but also the most advanced solution to the brand suitability problem. AI-powered contextual brand safety technology accurately understands nuances in context, and therefore, does not lead to over blocking of content, unlike conventional safety solutions.

Audio Sentiment Analysis



Can detect unsafe and undesirable contexts in the background audio of a video, adding another layer of contextual exclusion.



Brand Suitability Checklist

1 Clear and Common Objectives

A good start in this direction is by building suitability guidelines that all stakeholders in the organization understand and are comfortable with.

2 Evolving Creative Strategy

Establish your brand voice with the use of imagery, tone and language that is in line with the brand's values. Understand the Tools: Delve deeper into the inner workings of all the tools at your disposal. Take time to understand what they can and cannot do.

3 Understand the Tools

Opinions and views change rapidly. Create a review team that monitors and takes course corrective measures to counter the impact on your brand.

4 Monitor Latest Developments

Monitor Latest Developments: Keep an eye on the latest news that is related to your brand and how changes in your creative strategy can be incorporated to accommodate the developments.

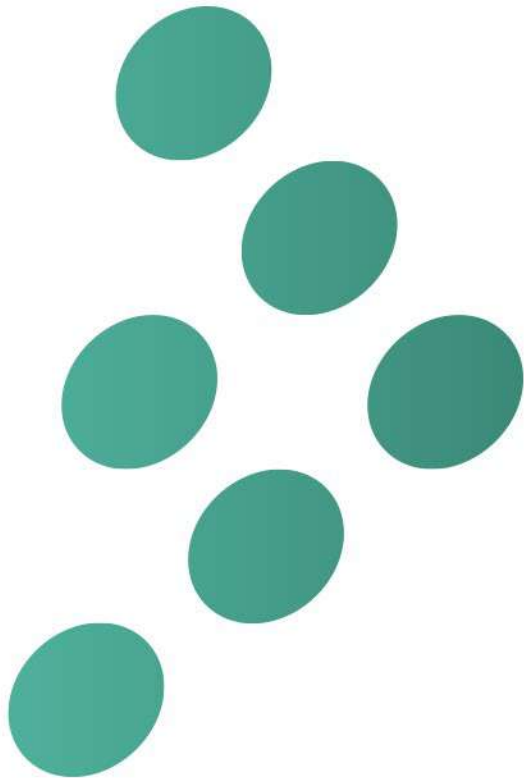
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Evaluate Regularly: Your suitability guidelines should not be set in stone. Consumer preferences/views are shaped and re-shaped by current events and your suitability framework should be flexible enough to mitigate any harm to the brand.

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ABOUT SILVERPUSH



Silverpush offers artificial intelligence powered advertising technology solutions. Helping some of the largest brands globally, to understand and reach their customers, like never before. With its deep learning and computer vision powered platform Mirrors, Silverpush helps brands discover their most relevant audience through context relevant video ad placement targeting, in a brand safe and suitable environment.

Our mission is to offer data driven solutions to complex client problems, using cutting edge technology. We are focused on further developing proprietary metrics around advanced computer vision capabilities that can be applied to new use cases in the media industry and can in the future serve a variety of other industries and use cases.

Since 2012, Silverpush has been leading the industry in bridging the customer journey from TV-Search-Social-Mobile. With global presence in 12 offices across Asia, Middle East, Africa and Europe, Silverpush continues to serve 150+ brands worldwide, including Unilever, Coca-Cola, Nissan, Mondelez, Nestlé, Johnson & Johnson, KFC, Astro to name a few

Give your video advertising the brand suitability advantage with Silverpush

[Learn More](#)

