



MANAGING COVID-19 BRAND SAFETY IN DISPLAY & VIDEO 360

Whether it is extremist content or fake news, ads seen adjacent to the wrong content can erode brand equity that took years to build.

OPEN SOURCE GUIDANCE FOR MARKETERS

Through a three-step process, you can set up your platforms to avoid high-risk websites and non-brand safe content that arise during crises like COVID-19. Crucially, we will tell you how to catch anything that might slip through the net—especially important if you're still outsourcing buying.

STEP 1: POSITIVELY TARGET BRAND SAFE DOMAINS

Now —more than ever— it is important to support quality news. Advertisers can do the right thing by supporting journalism and protect their brand equity by actively avoiding content that seeks to divide or misinform internet users.

“Website and App Targeting” (whitelisting) allows programmatic buyers to do just this. By using this feature at a line-item level within DV360, buyers can positively target content that is considered to be brand safe such as email, professional news, e-commerce sites, and price comparison engines.

MITIGATE SCALE CONCERNS

Advertisers who continue to use domain blacklists should reconsider whitelisting. New high-risk sites appear every day, making it impossible to update targeting regularly enough to include each domain that may pose a risk. Buyers are better off positively targeting sources they know to be high-quality and brand-safe.

STEP 2: AVOID UNSAFE CONTENT IN BRAND-SAFE DOMAINS

Domain whitelists help brands avoid the very worst content out there. However, even with brand-safe sites like news, there will be content that risk-averse advertisers will not want to appear against. This is especially true in times of crisis. DV360 has three tools programmatic buyers can use to avoid unsafe content:

SENSITIVE CATEGORY EXCLUSIONS

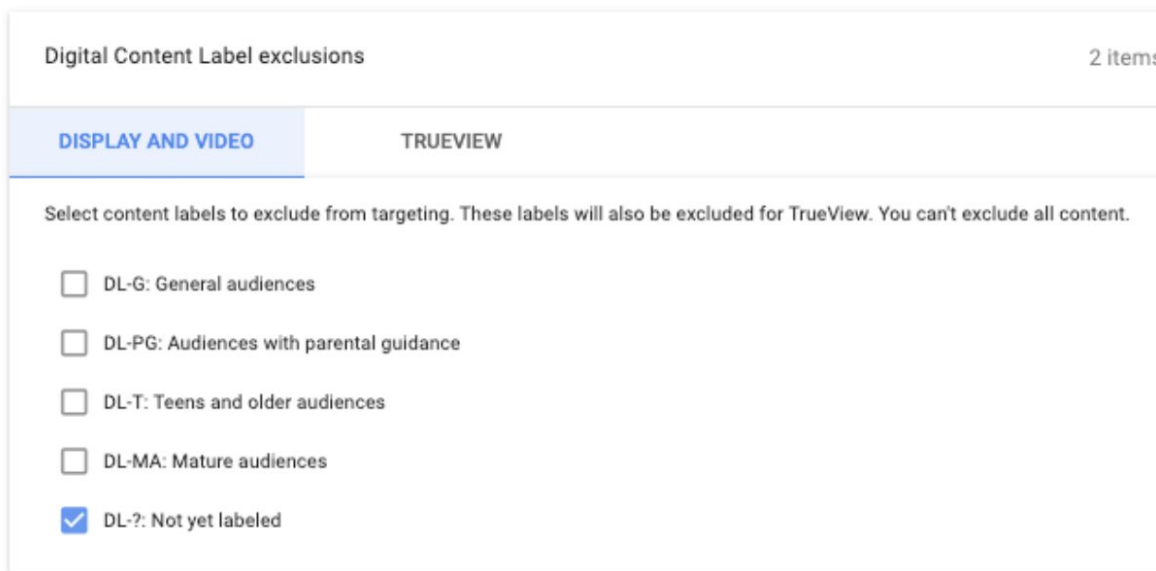
This feature allows an advertiser to exclude content with the potential to be particularly risky to a brand. Of note given the circumstances is the ability to exclude 'Tragedy' and 'Shocking' content.

DIGITAL CONTENT LABELS

This is a free tool is implemented in campaigns at a line-item level. It classifies content on a range from 'suitable for all general audiences' to 'suitable for mature audiences only.'

KEYWORD EXCLUSIONS

This blunt tool, if misused, can impact scale. However, excluding keywords such as 'coronavirus,' 'covid-19,' 'death,' and 'intensive care' can protect risk-averse clients from appearing alongside such content.



Digital Content Label exclusions 2 items

DISPLAY AND VIDEO TRUEVIEW

Select content labels to exclude from targeting. These labels will also be excluded for TrueView. You can't exclude all content.

- DL-G: General audiences
- DL-PG: Audiences with parental guidance
- DL-T: Teens and older audiences
- DL-MA: Mature audiences
- DL-?: Not yet labeled

ALWAYS EXCLUDE UNLABELED CONTENT

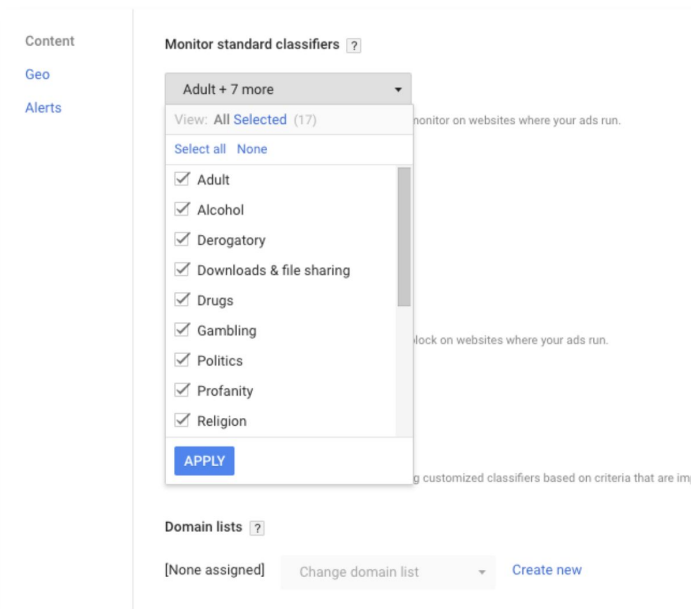
It is critical to exclude content that hasn't been labeled by Google. When a site is new, Google does not have enough data to classify its content, which might not be deemed suitable once the data is in. Or, sometimes a publisher "masks" a URL. In these cases, Google cannot create a Digital Content Label for the URL. The content might be fine, but advertisers run the risk of serving ads alongside sensitive content.

STEP 3: BLOCK CONTENT THAT SLIPS THROUGH THE NET

One of the key benefits of contract ownership is direct access to your buying platform. If you have taken this step, it is easy to check your brand safety settings are implemented correctly and protect yourself from a myriad of brand safety risks.

What should an advertiser who has not taken control of their DSP contracts or who outsources some of their buying do to ensure they are protected?

The long-term answer is [take more control](#). In the short term, you can request that the “Standard Content Classifiers” feature is implemented in your Campaign Manager Network.



STANDARD CONTENT CLASSIFIER SETTINGS

These settings allow advertisers to block risky content including ‘Tragedy’ and ‘Sensitive Social Issues’ across all buys (including those made outside DV360). There is no additional charge to implement this feature.

MightyHive recommends using Standard Content Classifiers instead of targeting a whitelist. If a whitelist is used and Standard Content Classifiers are implemented, the whitelist will prevail, leading to ads served on a whitelisted domain even if it contains content classified as ‘Tragedy,’ ‘Sensitive Social Issue,’ etc.

AVOID PAYING FOR BLANK ADS

It is critical to remember that when brand safety measures are implemented solely in the ad server, a blank ad will be served against content deemed risky by Google’s classification engine. Make sure ad server settings are aligned with those in the buying platform to prevent serving (and paying for) blank ads.