



**614**  
GROUP

**TAG FRAUD SNAPSHOT:  
UNITED KINGDOM**  
MAY 2020



In conjunction with **The 614 Group**, TAG issues annual Fraud Benchmark Reports in the [United States](#) and across [key European markets](#) to measure the effectiveness reducing IVT in campaigns when buying through TAG Certified Channels. TAG Certified Channels are channels in which multiple entities involved in the transaction – such as the media agency, buy-side platform, sell-side platform and/or publisher – have achieved the TAG Certified Against Fraud Seal. The most recent benchmark research in the US and Europe demonstrates that buying through TAG Certified Channels reduces IVT by 88% and 94% versus industry averages, respectively. In April 2020, TAG also [published](#) a snapshot across major markets in Asia-Pacific which found that the IVT rate in TAG Certified Channels in the region was 91% lower than the global industry average.

As part of its ongoing research on fraud around the world, The 614 Group analyzed more than 17 billion campaign impressions that flowed through TAG Certified Channels in the United Kingdom (UK) throughout 2019. TAG Certified Channels are channels in which multiple entities involved in the transaction – such as the media agency, buy-side platform, sell-side platform and/or publisher – have achieved the TAG Certified Against Fraud Seal. The 614 Group also interviewed agency executives in the UK for their insights and experiences.

For agencies and advertising, the data showed clear benefits to purchasing inventory via TAG Certified Channels in the UK.

**Inventory that ran through TAG Certified Channels in UK campaigns had an IVT rate of just 0.63%, an improvement of 76% over the UK industry average of 2.63%.<sup>1</sup>**

Future research will show continued progress against the TAG Fraud Benchmark, as UK companies continue to align their anti-fraud efforts with the TAG Certified Against Fraud Programme. After two years of calculating and reporting an achievable benchmark, agencies and advertisers are leveraging the TAG Fraud Benchmark to change advertiser behavior and use it as an effective tool in discussions with clients with regard to IVT best practices.

<sup>1</sup>This UK analysis blended IVT rates delivered directly to TAG, including Moat's IVT Report for H1 2019 and DoubleVerify IVT Reporting from September through December 2019.

The [Trustworthy Accountability Group \(TAG\)](#) is a global industry non-profit organisation, encompassing more than 650 member companies across 26 countries, aimed at combating criminal activity in the digital advertising industry. [TAG's Certified Against Fraud Programme](#) sets rigorous standards for companies to identify and remove Invalid Traffic (IVT) from the digital advertising supply chain.

There are two types of invalid traffic: General Invalid Traffic (GIVT) and Sophisticated Invalid Traffic (SIVT). The [Media Rating Council \(MRC\)](#), -- a nonprofit organisation that manages accreditation for media research and rating purposes -- defines each in the following ways:

- **General Invalid Traffic (GIVT)** includes traffic identified through routine and list-based means of filtration—such as bots, spiders, other crawlers; non-browser user agent headers; and pre-fetch or browser pre-rendered traffic.
- **Sophisticated Invalid Traffic (SIVT)** includes traffic identified through advanced analytics, multipoint corroboration, human intervention—such as hijacked devices, ad tags, or creative; adware; malware; misappropriated content.

## About This Report

The 614 Group analysed data from TAG's ongoing global research to measure the impact of TAG Certification in reducing fraud in actual campaigns and to assess the industry's perception of both TAG and the fight against fraud in the UK. This snapshot focused on discovering rates of both General Invalid Traffic (GIVT) and Sophisticated Invalid Traffic (SIVT).

### Report Parameters

<b>Inventory Type</b>	Desktop, Mobile Web, Mobile In-App Display, Video
<b>Types of Fraud Examined</b>	GIVT SIVT
<b>Volume of Impressions Examined</b>	17.8 billion
<b>Study Duration</b>	2019
<b>Data Contributors</b>	Omnicom Media Group Publicis Media GroupM
<b>Experts Interviewed</b>	Saiful Ahmed Director, Ad Technology Omnicom Media Group  Tom Burns Director, Digital Standards and Partnerships, RoW Publicis Media

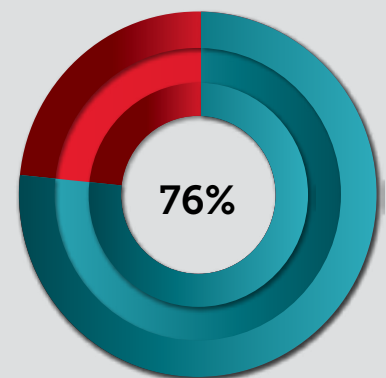
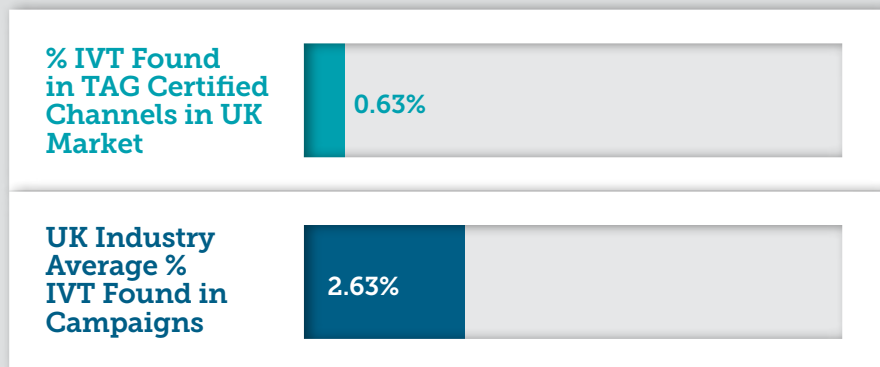
### Data Collection and Processing

The 614 Group partnered with agency holding companies and their MRC-accredited technology partners to collect data from campaigns that ran in the UK. Working with the holding companies' MRC-accredited measurement vendors, The 614 Group collected and aggregated all impressions for campaigns that were executed during the calendar year of 2019. These campaigns included display media and video ads in desktop, mobile web and in-app environments. The study did not use sampling of any kind: 100% of all TAG Certified Against Fraud impressions given to The 614 Group were included in the measurement. Upon receipt, all data was aggregated within a secure database in order to create the proper reporting.

## Key Qualitative Findings: Highlights

- Interviews were conducted as the COVID-19 pandemic spread worldwide, and agency executives described the additional and urgent challenges the crisis has created in terms of traffic quality and brand safety. As COVID-19 forces agencies to focus more on pandemic-related issues, executives noted that it is more important than ever to have an easy and effective means of avoiding ad fraud in campaigns.
- Agency executives believe in the importance of – and the ability to – tie anti-fraud initiatives to marketing outcomes. While people generally believe that, “better media equates directly to better results, and that inventory that is free from IVT is inherently better,” as one executive said, additional education and increased data sharing are needed regarding the success of TAG Certified Channels in improving marketing outcomes.
- Agency executives say their clients generally understand the value of TAG Fraud Benchmark, and how their agency partners are performing against it. Since the release of the two prior European reports, clients have said that they understand the importance of the combining technology and process in combating IVT. For example, planners and buyers are talking about the performance of their campaigns against the TAG Fraud Benchmark and asking questions about why their performance is above or below it.

### Quantitative Findings Overview Media Type: All Media



TAG Improvement Over UK Average

### Expanded Quantitative Results

	TAG Certified Impression Total (UK Only)	Fraud Rate in TAG-Certified Channels UK <sup>3</sup>	TAG European Benchmark Full Year 2019
All Traffic	17,767,197,756	0.63%	0.53%
Desktop Combined	5,122,549,689	1.14%	1.14%
Desktop Display	4,464,430,654	1.20%	1.23%
Desktop Video	658,119,035	0.71%	0.75%
Mobile Web (Video & Display)	3,087,110,729	0.73%	0.70%
Mobile In-App (Video & Display)	9,557,537,338	0.32%	0.26%

<sup>3</sup>Combined SIVT/GIVT fraud rates.



## Conclusion

Following on the heels of The 614 Group's 2019 TAG European Fraud Benchmark Study, which analyzed IVT rates in TAG Certified Channels across several key European markets, this snapshot provides a more in-depth examination of the specific data and issues related to the UK market.

While the 0.63% average IVT rate seen in campaigns run through TAG Certified Channels in the UK market is impressively low, it is slightly higher than the 0.53% average IVT rate seen in TAG Certified Channels measured across five European markets in the 2019 TAG European Fraud Benchmark Study released earlier this year. This may be due in part to the ongoing process of harmonising industry anti-fraud standards in the UK, which has been taking place over the last two years.

In January 2018, TAG announced [an agreement](#) with the UK [Joint Industry Committee for Web Standards \(JICWEBS\)](#) - involving trade bodies IAB UK, ISBA, the IPA and the AOP - to align programme standards across markets. In October 2018, JICWEBS [adopted](#) TAG's Certified Against Fraud Programme in the UK markets (effective from 1 January 2019). TAG and JICWEBS are also working to align their transparency and brand safety programmes (TAG's [Inventory Quality Guidelines](#) and [JICWEBS' DTSG Brand Safety Principles](#)), as well as achieve organisational alignment.

Future research will show continued progress against the TAG Fraud Benchmark, as UK companies continue to align their anti-fraud efforts with the TAG Certified Against Fraud Programme. After two years of calculating and reporting an achievable benchmark, agencies and advertisers are leveraging the TAG Fraud Benchmark to change advertiser behavior and use it as an effective tool in discussions with clients with regard to IVT best practices.



### About the Trustworthy Accountability Group

The Trustworthy Accountability Group (TAG) is the leading global certification programme fighting criminal activity and increasing trust in the digital advertising industry. Created by the US industry's top trade organisations, TAG's mission is to eliminate fraudulent traffic, combat malware, prevent internet piracy, and promote greater transparency in digital advertising. TAG advances those initiatives by bringing companies together across the digital advertising supply chain to set the highest standards. TAG is the first and only registered Information Sharing and Analysis Organization (ISAO) for the digital advertising industry. For more information on TAG, please visit [tagtoday.net](http://tagtoday.net).



### About The 614 Group

The 614 Group is a results-driven digital advertising infrastructure consultancy, providing strategic and tactical services to our clients. With unparalleled experience, a global network, and talent, the firm generates the ideal blend of visionary and operational support services which can be completely customized to each client's capabilities and goals. Through our original content, live events, and research, we empower the industry-at-large, with cutting-edge education and resources. Based in the U.S., the firm works with more than 40 consultants across three top global markets.

