

Right Media Ad Classification Project Analytics Case

MSBA 6250, Spring 2019

Group 2

Andrea Montez, Jack Quick, Mike Brucek, Kevin Grady, Danny Moncada,
University of Minnesota

Right Media is a facilitator between publishers and ad networks who work with advertisers to help them place their banner ads in remnant space on publisher web sites. Right Media categorizes and places billions of ads a year, and the sheer volume has expanded far beyond their original scope. Right Media has outgrown their original system that relied heavily on personal relationships. They are unable to keep up with ad and publisher classifications, leaving both parties unhappy and generating a PR nightmare. They are lacking a classification system for publishers, and there are major flaws in the current methodology for classifying ads. The current classifications are unclear and ill-defined. Because there are no penalties for misclassified advertisements, networks are purposefully misclassifying ads to cut costs and increase revenue from showing more ads; the current system actually incentivizes them to be inaccurate!

The first thing Right Media should do is clarify and better define their ad classifications. They should solicit guidance on how to provide clearly defined categories that are easy to interpret from their largest publishers and ad networks to create buy-in and ensure their closest partners will support the new category definitions. This improvement eliminates accidental miscategorizations, although it doesn't directly address intentional violations.

As a medium-term solution, Right Media should leverage their current market influence to establish themselves as a market operator. The volume of ad networks is constantly growing and it will be nearly impossible for Right Media to keep up with demand as more advertisers enter the space, ultimately limiting their ability to address desired changes in the remnant ad marketplace. Adopting this core business strategy will require two key changes: 1) shift responsibility for ad classification to ad networks 2) elicit community feedback from the publisher and ad viewers to police ad classifications. Right Media should create a misclassified ad algorithm, an Online Complaint Portal, and a support team that would only focus on the smaller portion of problematic ads and publishers. Moving the task of ad classification to the ad networks frees up resources that can support these efforts.

These three actions will work in harmony to streamline ad misclassifications and create transparency. The misclassified algorithm will detect when an ad is consistently flagged by viewers as "inappropriate". Once it has been flagged often enough (based on a ratio of complaints to impressions), it would then instantly change the ad's classification to match viewer feedback and issue a notice to the ad network that informs them of the changes and what caused them. Financial penalties will be levied against ad networks who violate ad classification policy. The Online Complaint Portal creates a place for both publishers and ad networks to provide qualitative feedback about ads and consumer complaints and serve as a means of arbitration for disputed violations. The support team will manage all of these efforts in the background and work with clients directly as needed.

These are large changes that impact all parties and they have the potential to upset ad networks, and therefore advertisers. The introduction of financial penalties is new to the marketplace but incentivizing ad networks to be honest and accurate will gain the trust of our publishers while reducing negative public attention from inappropriately misplaced ads. We recommend a test with our largest ad networks first, followed by a slow rollout of the new process, working closely with ad networks for the first 90 days post-launch to help them thrive amidst the new restrictions and guidelines.


As a long-term focus, Right Media should create a publisher classification system partially utilizing the revenue generated by penalties as seed money. Classifying publishers benefits advertisers by helping to ensure their ads appear on quality and appropriate sites, rounding out a system that is mutually

beneficial to all parties. Using the miscategorized ad penalty revenue for this purpose should help minimize marketplace backlash during the rollout phase.

Appendix A

Sponsored

Create Ad



Hide ad
Why am I seeing this?

ORTHOLOGY

Make Physical Therapy your first choice!
www.orthology.com
Medications often treat the symptom, not the problem.

Sponsored

Create Ad

Ad Hidden
You won't see this ad and ads like it.
Why did you hide it?

- ☐ It's spam
- ☐ It's offensive or inappropriate
- ☐ It's sexually explicit
- ☐ It's annoying or not interesting
- ☐ I keep seeing this
- ☐ It's not relevant to me
- ☐ It's a fake news story
- ☐ Something else

Undo

Facebook allows users to dismiss ads. Once they do, they give them the ability to provide a reason.