

November 2014

The Importance of Being Seen

**Viewability Insights for Digital
Marketers and Publishers**



think with **Google**[™]

WHAT WE WANTED TO KNOW

We conducted research using our Active View technology to learn about the current state of viewable impressions on the web.

There is increased interest in viewability among brand advertisers and publishers now that the Media Rating Council has lifted the viewable transaction advisory. Brand advertisers want to ensure that their ads can be seen and are seeking enhanced ROI. Publishers want to enhance site viewability and to use viewable impressions as a currency to do so.

Here we highlight the trends we discovered in analyzing the research data to help advertisers and publishers formulate their viewability strategy.

WHAT WE DID

Google conducted a study of our display advertising platforms, including Google and DoubleClick, to better understand ad viewability. According to the Media Rating Council and IAB standards, a viewable impression occurs when 50% of an ad's pixels are on screen for one second. The data used in this study are based on display ads in browsers (desktop and mobile) and does not include mobile in-app or video apps.

WHAT WE FOUND



State of publisher viewability

A small number of publishers are serving most of the non-viewable impressions. 56.1% of all impressions we measured are not seen, but the average publisher viewability is 50.2%.



Page position matters...

The most viewable position is right above the fold, not at the top of the page.



...So does ad size

The most viewable ad sizes are vertical units.



Above the fold ≠ always viewable

Page position isn't always the best indicator of viewability. Not all above-the-fold impressions are viewable, while many below-the-fold impressions are.

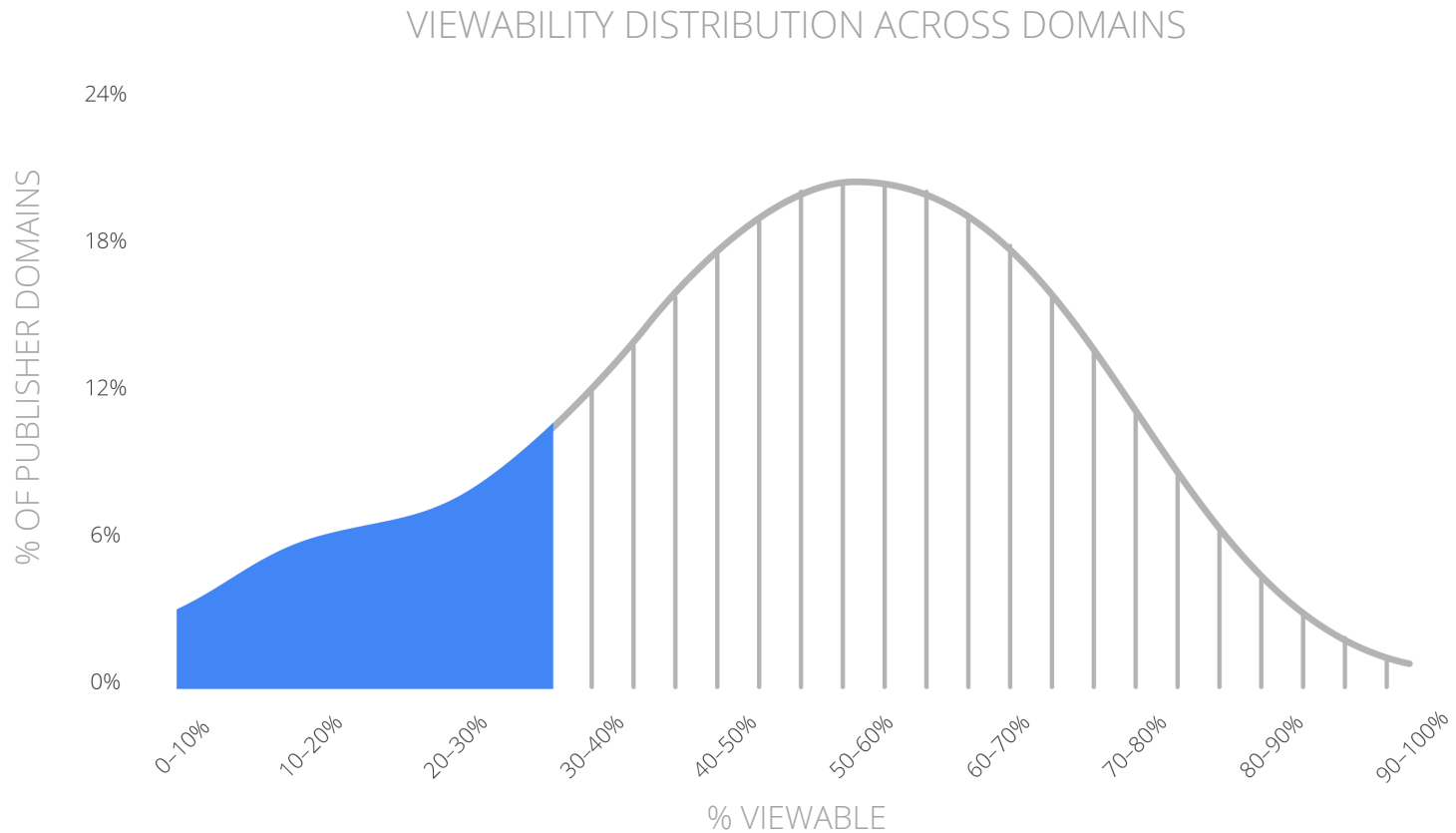


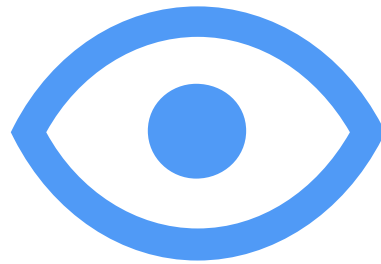
Viewability varies across industries

While it ranges across content verticals, and industries, content that holds a user's attention has the highest viewability.

State of Publisher Viewability

A small number of publishers are **serving most of the non-viewable impressions.**

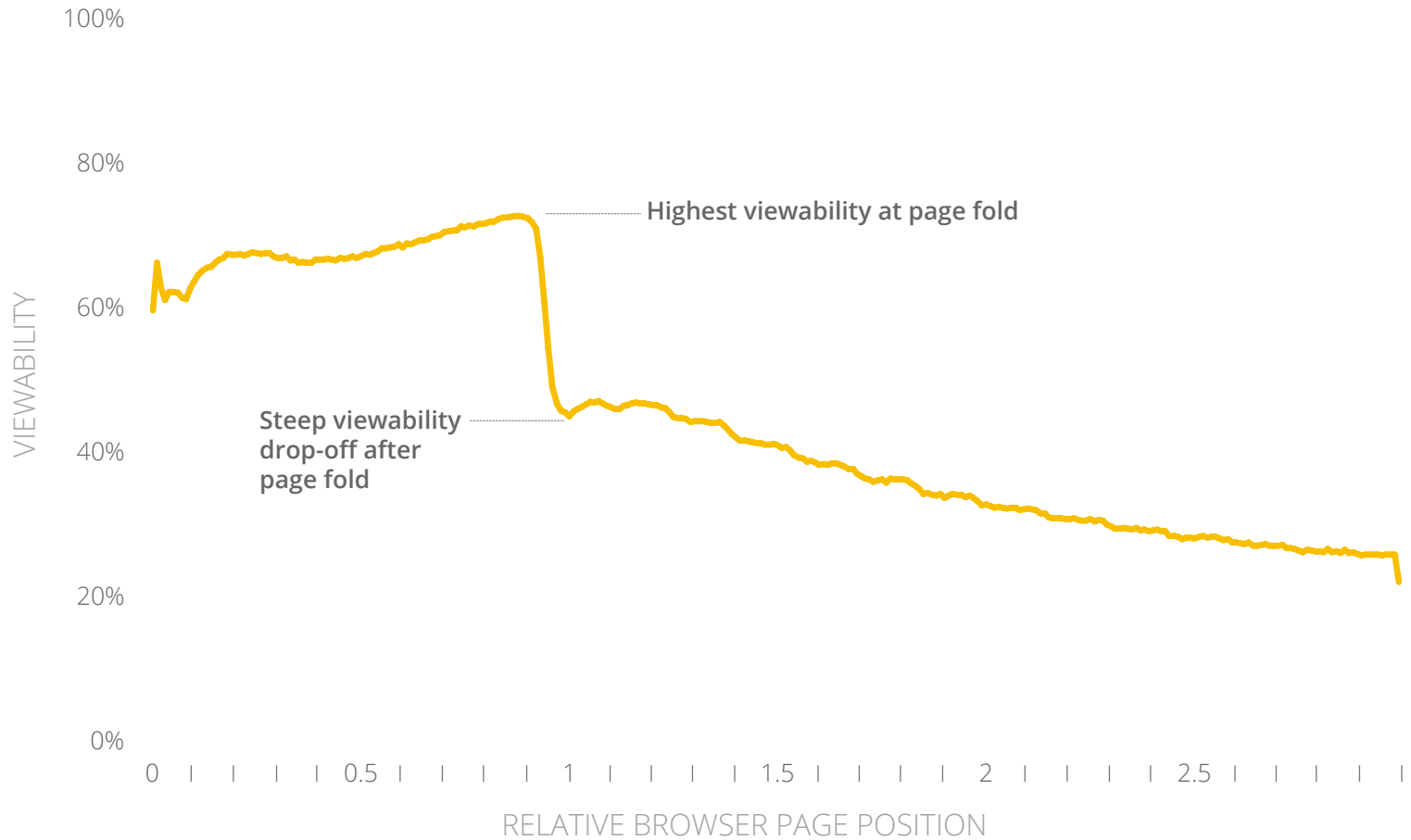




56.1%

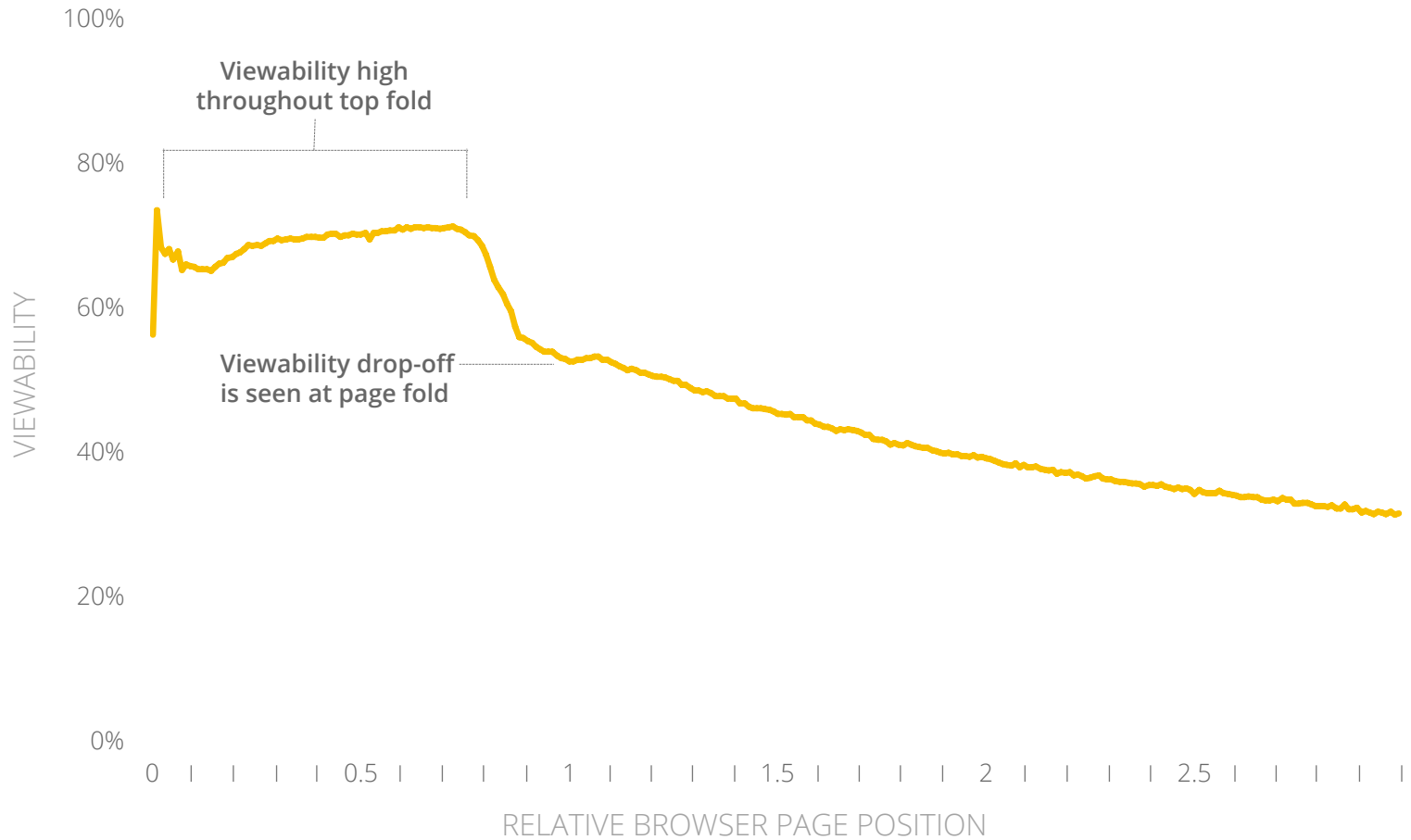
of impressions are
not seen, but the
**average publisher
viewability is 50.2%.**

Average viewability by vertical position (728 x 90)



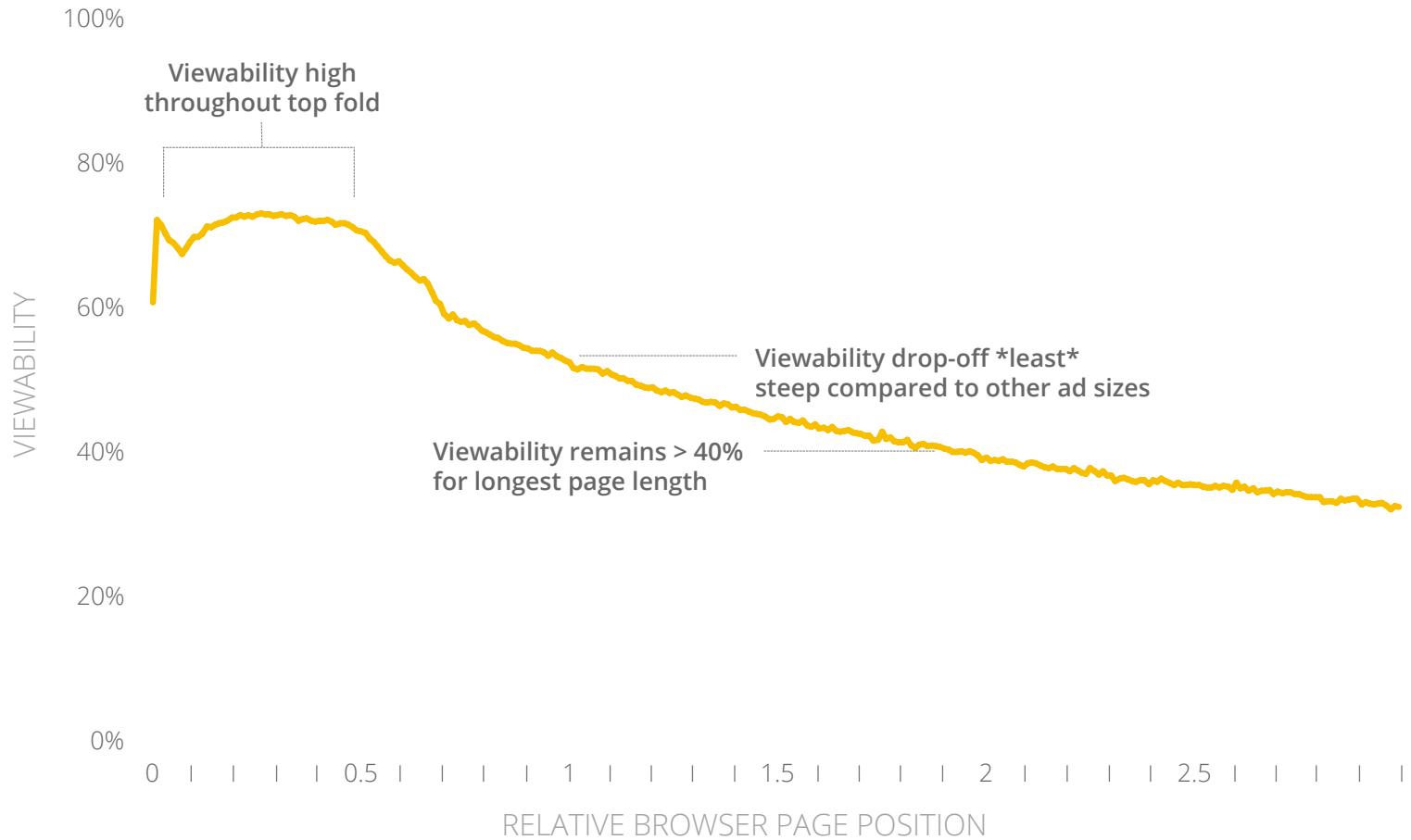
Note: Horizontal axis denotes position of top edge of ad impression.

Average viewability by vertical position (300 x 250)



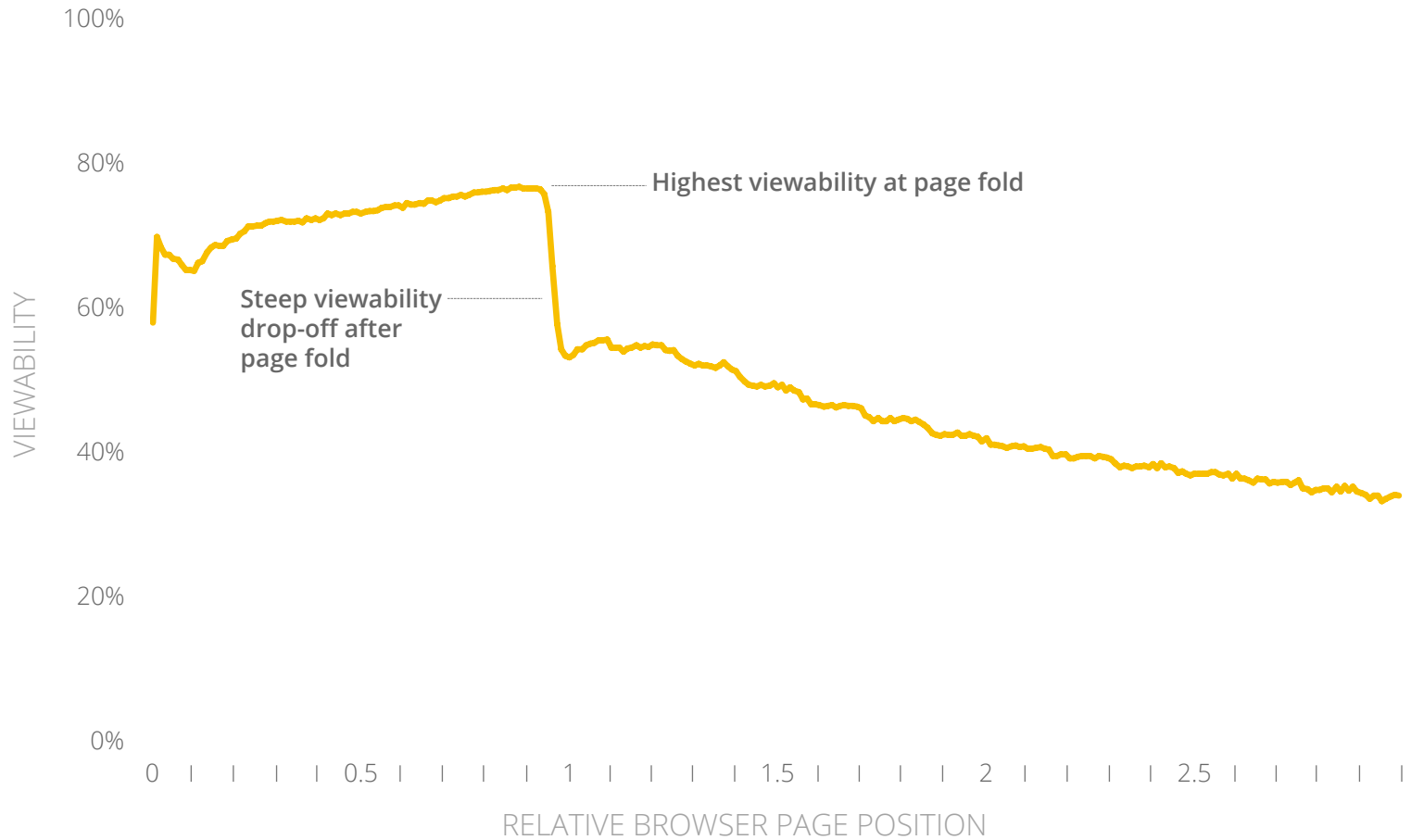
Note: Horizontal axis denotes position of top edge of ad impression.

Average viewability by vertical position (160 x 600)



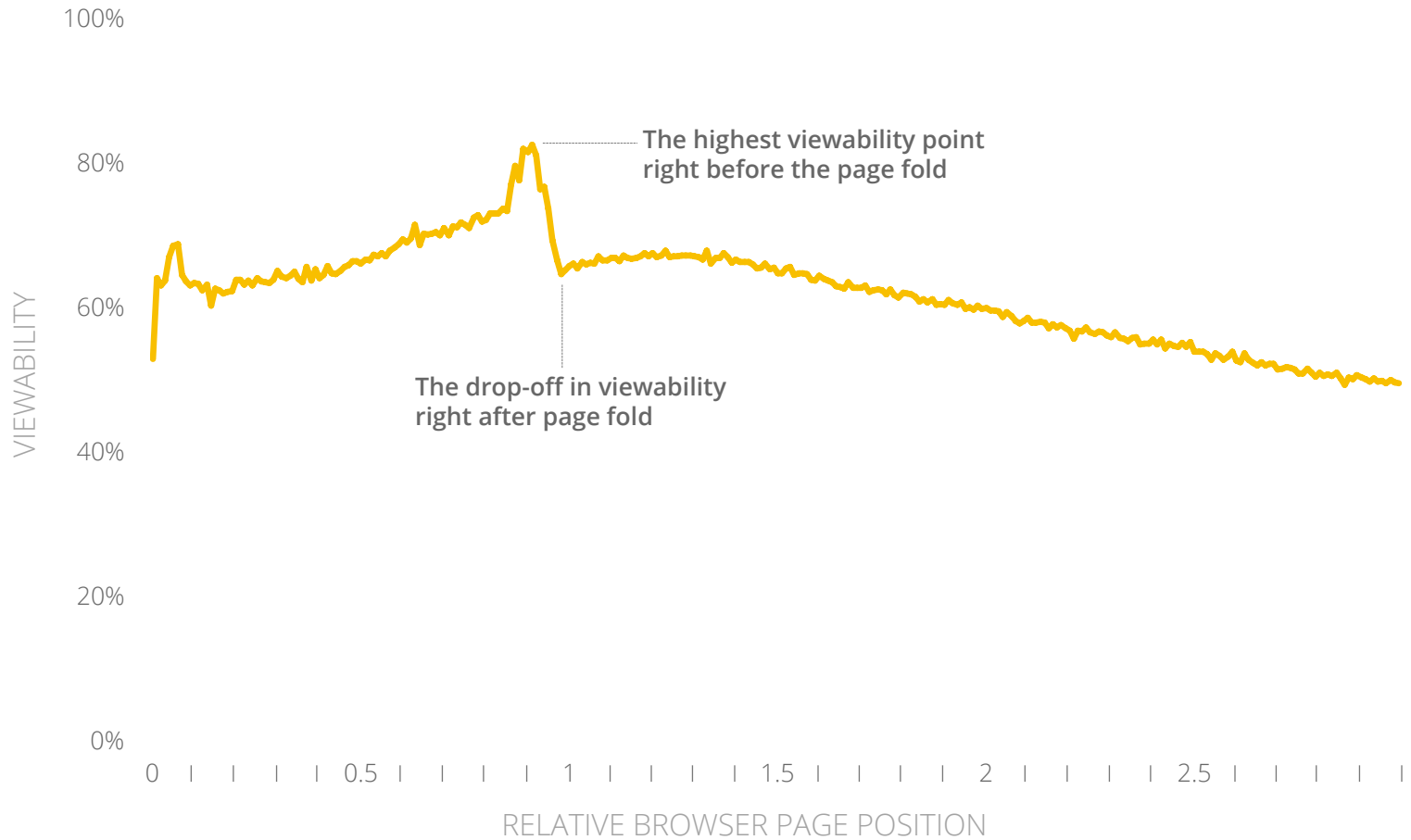
Note: Horizontal axis denotes position of top edge of ad impression.

Average viewability by vertical position (468 x 60)



Note: Horizontal axis denotes position of top edge of ad impression.

Average viewability by vertical position (320 x 50)

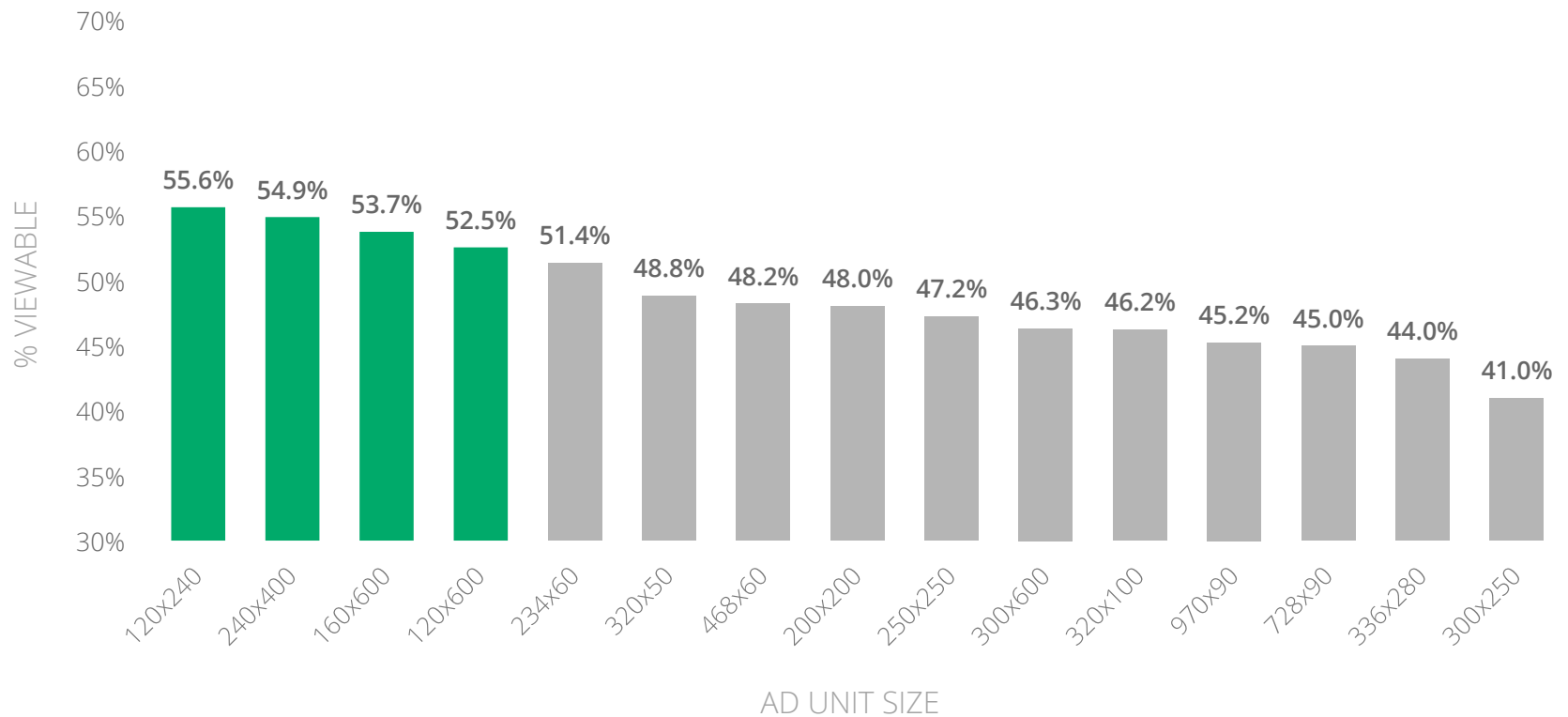


Note: Horizontal axis denotes position of top edge of ad impression.

... So Does Ad Size

The most viewable ad sizes are vertical units.

VIEWABILITY RATES BY AD SIZE



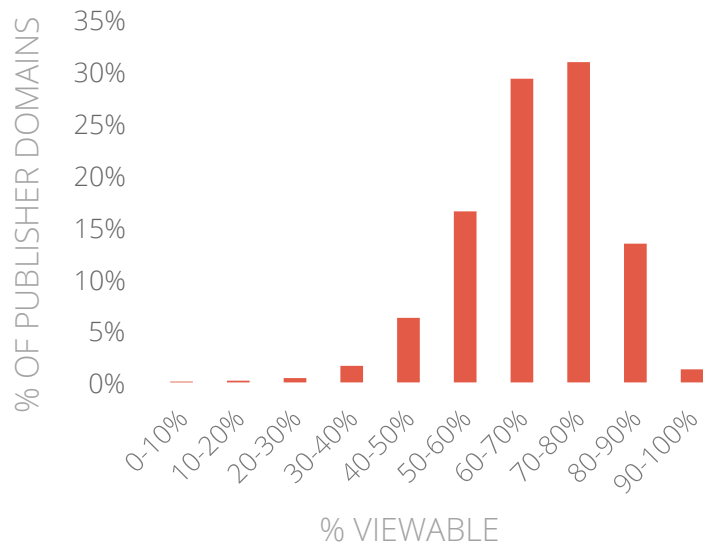
Above the Fold \neq
Always Viewable

Above the fold is not always viewable while below the fold often is.

Median viewability for
above-the-fold ad units

68%

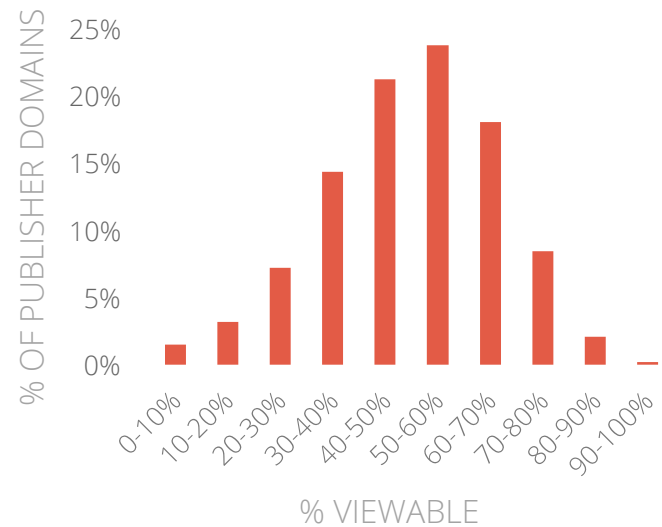
ATF VIEWABILITY DISTRIBUTION



Median viewability for
below-the-fold ad units

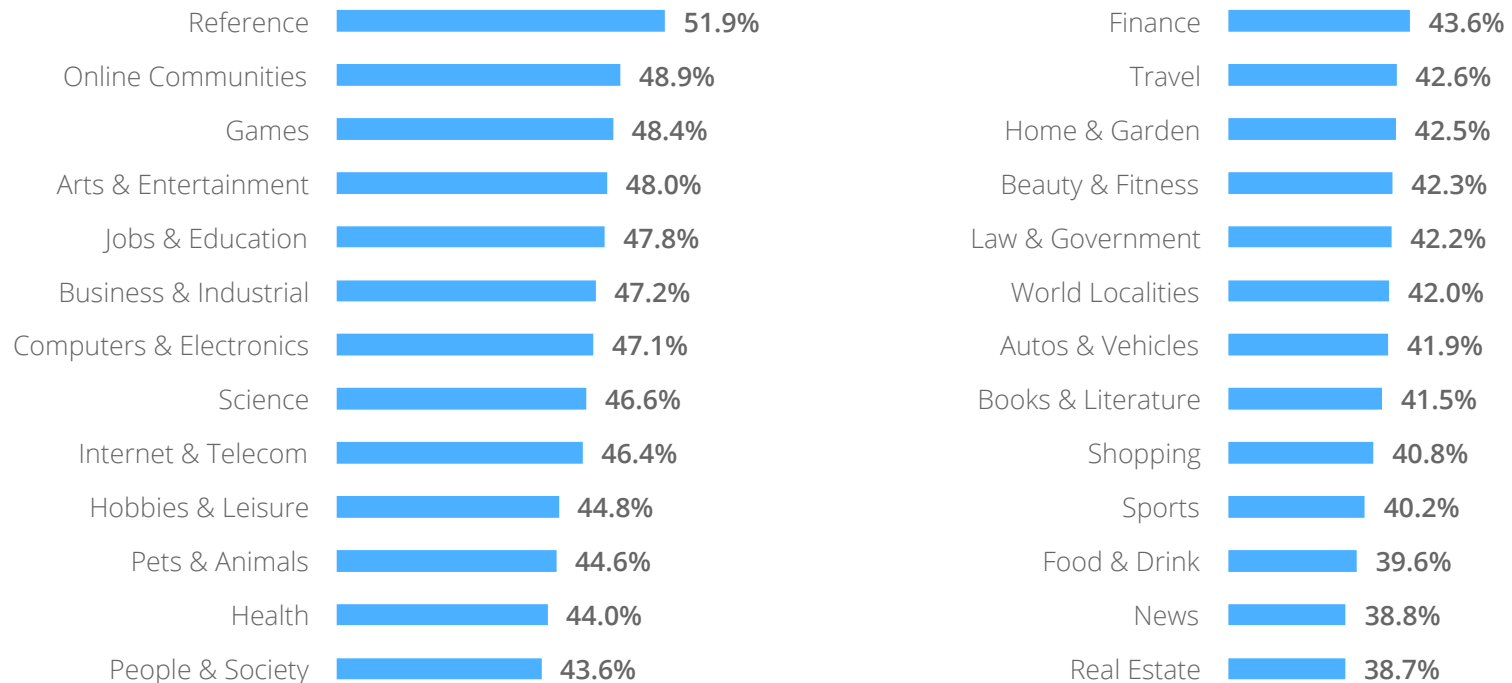
40%

BTF VIEWABILITY DISTRIBUTION



Viewability Varies
Across Industries

Viewability varies significantly across content verticals, with the **highest viewability belonging to sites associated with more captive engagement.**



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR ADVERTISERS

Viewability data enables advertisers to identify both high- and low-value inventory and then shift budgets and targets accordingly to maximize reach and ROI.

By understanding trends about what inventory has the highest viewability, advertisers can better formulate their media strategies.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR ADVERTISERS



Viewability varies significantly by page position and ad size.

In general, advertisers should consider the relationship between page position and ad size while planning creative and targeting.



Page position doesn't tell the whole story.

Ultimately, advertisers should target based on viewability measurements to achieve the best results.



Vertical ad units are the most likely to be seen by users.



On average, publishers have 50% viewability rates, but some publishers have much lower viewability.

Advertisers seeking viewable impressions should steer towards high viewability sites.



Consider targeting sites with more engaging content to achieve higher viewability rates.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR PUBLISHERS

Viewability data can help publishers increase the long-term value of their display inventory.

By understanding the factors that affect viewability, publishers can enhance their sites to maximize viewable impressions.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR PUBLISHERS



To achieve average viewability, **publishers should aim for above 50% viewability.**



Publishers should consider which ad sizes are **most effective at different page positions when making ad placement/layout decisions.**



Viewability can enable publishers to **better identify and monetize valuable below-the-fold inventory.**

WHAT WE DID

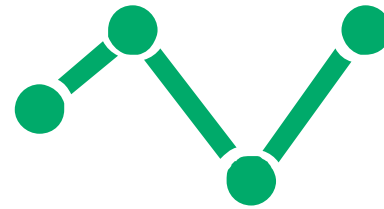
Google conducted a study of our display advertising platforms, including Google and DoubleClick, to better understand ad viewability. According to the Media Rating Council and IAB standard, a viewable impression occurs when 50% of an ad's pixels are on screen for one second. The data used in this study is based on display ads in browsers (desktop and mobile) and does not include mobile in-app and video ads. The data was collected in two months: October 2014 for the average viewability of impressions and domains, and July 2014 for the rest of our findings.

WHAT WE DID



Minimum measurable counts:

Domains with less than 1,000 measurable ads over the period of a week were removed. **This filtering ensures sufficient data points for each domain to be confident in the statistics and removes unmeasurable domains.** Unmeasurable domains were removed to **better represent true viewability numbers** instead of presenting numbers artificially lowered by non-measurable sites.



Minimum measurable counts (vertical position graphs):

The vertical position graphs **use a minimum measurable count of ten ads over one day** due to the data sets' small granularity.

WHAT WE DID



Minimum received rate:

Active View ads send data pings regardless of whether they are viewed.

Domains where we received pings from fewer than 50% of enabled ads are removed. Again, this is done to **eliminate issues caused by non-measurable sites.**



With this filtering in place, we created a data set with over one week of data from impressions on DoubleClick for Publishers, DoubleClick Ad Exchange and the Google Display Network.