



Sizmek | RESEARCH

Rich Media and Video Benchmarks

H1 2016

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As one of the leading ad management platforms in the world, Sizmek has access to an extraordinary knowledge base. In order to compile **Rich Media and Video Benchmarks H1 2016**, Sizmek Research analyzed 21 unique formats, more than 2,500 unique unit size combinations, over 1.3 million individual ads, and hundreds of billions of impressions served via the Sizmek platform during the first half of 2016. Here, Sizmek Research compiled key benchmarks across a wide array of formats, verticals, and regions of the most important metrics advertisers need to know about for campaign performance.

With these benchmarks, you'll be able to find out answers to key questions, such as:

- Did my banner campaign outperform my region's benchmarks?
- Am I seeing a lift in engagement rates for my rich media campaigns versus my standard banner campaigns?
- For my vertical, how often should I expect my audiences to start watching my video?
- How often should I expect my videos to be viewed to completion?

Rich Media and Video Benchmarks H1 2016 provides up-to-date benchmarks for engagement across regions and verticals to help advertisers establish starting points toward knowing how their campaigns are performing.

Rich Media Engagement

Rich media's ability to engage users is renowned and provides numerous ways for consumers to interact. Though many rich media banners provide calls-to-action (sometimes even more than one, including clickthroughs or enticements via animation or high-resolution imagery), rich media's main goal is often for users to engage users right then and there without leaving the page. This is why it's important to look at overall unique interaction rates for rich media, not just clickthrough. With rich media, a brand has many more options to engage a user into action than just clickthroughs.

Region	Standard Banner CTR	Rich Media CTR	Rich Media Unique Interactions	Lift in Engagement
Global	0.16%	0.27%	1.19%	7.44X
North America	0.14%	0.21%	1.13%	8.07X
Latin America	0.25%	0.17%	0.84%	3.36X
Europe	0.14%	0.35%	1.48%	10.57X
Middle East + Africa	0.19%	0.34%	0.74%	3.89X
ANZ	0.08%	0.08%	0.52%	6.50X
East Asia	0.12%	0.36%	0.76%	6.33X
South Asia	0.28%	0.35%	1.47%	5.25X

Findings

Globally, rich media lifted engagement 7.44 times more than standard banners. Rich media impacts regions like North America the most, where rich media unique interaction rates are 1.13% versus standard banners' 0.14% CTR, which means that rich media delivers 8.07 times lift over standard banners.

The difference is starker in Europe, where rich media unique interaction rates stand at 1.48% versus standard banners' 0.14% clickthrough rate. This means that rich media delivers a whopping 10.57 times lift in engagement over standard banners in Europe. On an absolute basis, the rich media unique interaction rate in South Asia, at 1.47%, represents the second-highest regional rate, though its lift is tempered because of the high standard banner clickthrough rates (0.28%) in that region. Rich media appears to impact Latin America the least—its 0.84% unique interaction rate delivers 3.36

times lift over standard banner CTRs (0.25%). The Middle East + Africa's 0.74% unique interaction rate for rich media delivers a 3.89 times lift over standard banner CTRs (0.19%). While on the lower end as compared to global benchmarks, rich media's impact is still significant in these regions, representing a large uptick over standard banner CTRs.

Rich Media in Programmatic

While basic rich media units that are "confined to the iFrame" such as polite banners are somewhat common in programmatic environments, it is still fairly rare to see advanced rich media, such as more sophisticated forms of expandables and pushdowns, executed in programmatic environments. This is unfortunate because expandables and pushdowns actually perform extraordinarily better than polites.

According to Sizmek's global benchmarks, expandables' deduplicated interaction rates stand at 2.16%, bringing about a 145% lift over benchmark unique interaction rates of polites (whose deduplicated interaction rates stand at 0.88%). Pushdowns fare even better: their deduplicated interaction rates stand at 2.45% according to our global benchmarks, bringing in a lift of about 178% over polite benchmarks for unique interaction rates.

Format	Impressions With Any Interactions (Deduplicated or Unique Interaction Rates)	Lift Over Polite CTRs
Polite Banners	0.88%	0%
Expandable Banners	2.16%	145%
Pushdown Banners	2.45%	178%

Findings

In the past, technical challenges kept advanced formats like pushdowns and expandables from being used within programmatic channels. Many have tried running advanced rich media formats in private marketplaces. Often, because private marketplaces may cover dozens of sites, these advanced formats have failed to render properly and may have resulted in high default rates.

Sizmek's rich media infrastructure has been retrofitted to ensure that more advanced expandable and pushdown formats can run equally well across premium direct buys, run-of-network buys on ad and publisher networks and on private marketplace deals in programmatic ([see Sizmek Programmatic Creative](#)).

Benchmarks by Vertical

When looking at global benchmarks, rich media generally garner high interaction rates (above the global average of 2.4%) in a number of business verticals, including Retail, Restaurants, Tech & Internet, News & Media, CPG, Corporate, Health & Beauty, and Entertainment. Looking at engagement rates by vertical provides insights into how advertisers capture audience attention.

Vertical	Rich Media Interaction Rate	Rich Media CTR	Standard Banner CTR	Rich Media Lift in CTR Over Standard Banner	Rich Media Lift in Engagement Over Standard Banner
Apparel	1.69%	0.50%	0.24%	1.08X	6.04X
Auto	1.88%	0.20%	0.15%	0.33X	11.53X
B2B	1.18%	0.22%	0.20%	0.10X	4.90X
Careers	2.07%	0.17%	0.10%	0.70X	19.70X
CPG	3.45%	0.19%	0.17%	0.12X	19.29X
Corporate	2.95%	0.53%	0.08%	5.63X	35.88X
Electronics	1.62%	0.43%	0.31%	0.39X	4.23X
Entertainment	2.47%	0.28%	0.13%	1.15X	18.00X
Financial	1.93%	0.38%	0.11%	2.45X	16.55X
Gaming	1.02%	0.13%	0.14%	(0.07)X	6.29X
Government & Utilities	0.86%	0.17%	0.12%	0.42X	6.17X
Health & Beauty	2.71%	0.28%	0.19%	0.47X	13.26X
Medical	0.70%	0.12%	0.15%	(0.20)X	3.67X
News & Media	4.33%	0.42%	0.16%	1.63X	26.06X
Restaurants	6.85%	0.22%	0.17%	0.29X	39.29X
Retail	9.11%	0.37%	0.20%	0.85X	44.55X
Services	1.34%	0.16%	0.14%	0.14X	8.57X
Sports	1.67%	0.22%	0.07%	2.14X	22.86X
Tech & Internet	5.97%	0.35%	0.13%	1.69X	44.92X
Telecom	1.64%	0.52%	0.21%	1.48X	6.81X
Travel	0.81%	0.17%	0.14%	0.21X	4.79X

Findings

When comparing standard banner and rich media clickthrough rates, there were modest increases across almost all verticals. The largest lift in CTRs when moving from standard banners to rich media occurred in:

- Corporate (5.63 times lift)
- Financial (2.45 times lift)
- Sports (2.14 times lift)
- Tech & Internet (1.69 times lift)
- News & Media (1.63 times lift)
- Telecom (1.48 times lift)
- Entertainment (1.15 times lift)
- Apparel (1.08 times lift)

However, the point of many rich media units is not necessarily to encourage clickthrough, but to engage the user with the ad unit without making them leave the publisher's page. This is particularly important if advertisers want to "make an impression" (no pun intended) on the user, without forcing the user to clickthrough. By signaling to the user that they will not be taken off the page, the unit lowers the user's emotional barriers to interaction with the brand and, paradoxically, often results in a greater share of users engaging.

Using this paradigm, we can look at other indicators that brands are getting through to their audiences by encouraging them to interact. As seen in the last column, Rich Media Lift in Engagement Over Standard Banner, all verticals benefit tremendously when they leverage rich media rather than standard banners.

But which ones benefit the most? According to Sizmek's global benchmarks, the verticals that experience the greatest rich media "engagement lift" over standard banner CTRs include:

- Tech & Internet (44.92 times lift)
- Retail (44.55 times lift)
- Restaurants (39.29 times lift)
- Corporate (35.88 times lift)
- News & Media (26.06 times lift)
- Sports (22.86 times lift)
- Careers (19.70 times lift)
- CPG (19.29 times lift)
- Entertainment (18.00 times lift)
- Financial (16.55 times lift)
- Health & Beauty (13.26 times lift)
- Auto (11.53 times lift)

Note that this analysis was primarily conducted on global vertical benchmarks. We encourage you to dig deeper into Sizmek benchmark data to determine which verticals respond best to rich media in your particular market.

In-stream Benchmarks

For in-stream noninteractive video, regional data reveals how pre-roll/mid-roll/post-roll video performs across different markets.

In-stream Noninteractive Video by Region

Region	CTR	Video Start	Fully Played Rate
Global	1.50%	92.5%	72.9%
North America	0.42%	97.7%	80.0%
Latin America	2.49%	87.7%	66.1%
Europe	1.53%	90.3%	74.7%
Middle East + Africa	5.82%	95.3%	56.1%
ANZ	0.65%	95.8%	81.2%
East Asia	2.36%	92.2%	54.9%
South Asia	3.48%	84.9%	50.2%

Findings

Though video start rates remain consistently high across the different regions, fully played rates vary widely. Fully played rates are relatively high at 80% in North America and ANZ, while dropping significantly down to approximately 50% in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. The significantly lower fully played rates in these territories drag down global rates to 72.9%.

Interestingly enough, it is also in those regions where you see significantly higher clickthrough rates for noninteractive video—possibly indicating that audiences in these regions prefer to interrupt what they are doing and go to the advertisers' website instead of watching the video to completion.

Interactive Video by Region

Region	Interaction Rate	Impressions With Any Interaction	Noninteractive Video CTR	Lift in Engagement
Global	4.69%	3.97%	1.50%	3.13X
North America	3.87%	3.45%	0.42%	9.21X
Latin America	11.46%	6.35%	2.06%	5.56X
Europe	6.29%	5.11%	1.53%	4.11X
Middle East & Africa	15.72%	9.44%	5.82%	2.70X
ANZ	4.61%	4.34%	0.65%	7.09X
East Asia	5.09%	3.30%	3.48%	1.46X
South Asia	0.28%	0.35%	1.47%	5.25X

Findings

The regions with the highest level of engagement around interactive video are Latin America (at 11.46%) and the Middle East and Africa (15.72%). However, an important point around interactive video is its ability to drive engagement over and above noninteractive video, which is true across the board.

When comparing regions, North America and Australia/New Zealand have the lowest interaction rates (IR) for interactive video—3.87% and 4.61% respectively. But they also have relatively low noninteractive video CTR rates—.42% and .65%. This suggests that though these regions' interactive video rates are not as high as some other regions', advertisers actually get much more lift in engagement by changing to interactive video—9.21 times and 7.09 times more, in fact.

Europe and Latin America score significantly above the global average at 4.11 times and 5.56 times higher (versus a global multiplier of 3.13 times) in terms of how much more engagement an interactive video execution brings over regular noninteractive video.

Rich Media With Video Versus In-stream Benchmarks

Because video within a rich media unit is commonly initiated by hand, start rates for video within rich media units are naturally lower than in-stream start rates (where videos automatically play as pre-rolls, mid-rolls, and post-rolls as part of a larger content stream). The question is, how large is the difference—particularly because in-stream CPMs are often much higher than certain types of rich media CPMs.

Region	HTML5 Rich Media With Video Start Rates	In-stream Start Rates	HTML5 Rich Media With Video Fully Played Rates	In-stream Fully Played Rate
Global	30.8%	92.5%	63.0%	72.9%
North America	25.1%	97.7%	66.1%	80.0%
Latin America	21.5%	87.7%	64.1%	66.1%
Europe	34.0%	90.3%	62.5%	74.7%
Middle East + Africa	45.5%	95.3%	58.1%	56.1%
ANZ	13.5%	95.8%	73.3%	81.2%
East Asia	14.5%	92.2%	53.6%	54.9%
South Asia	26.9%	84.9%	60.6%	50.2%

Findings

Start rates for rich media with video in the Middle East and Africa and Europe regions are above the global average—and also represent the smallest gap from in-stream start rates. This is likely due to a combination of higher-than-average interaction rates with these types of rich media units, and a greater incidence of autostart video.

Fully played rates differ by less than 5% in many regions, including Latin America, Middle East and Africa, and East Asia. Differentials of fully played rates in all regions is less than 15%, suggesting that, once the video in a rich media unit starts, audiences are very likely to watch it to completion—at least, almost to the same extent that they would watch an in-stream unit to completion after it has begun.

Benchmarking Your Rich Media and Video Performance

Rich Media and Video Benchmarks: H1 2016 provides you with up-to-date benchmarks by region and format to help assess the performance of your rich media and video campaigns. This report includes only a subset of Sizmek's metrics and benchmarks. A complete compendium of data is available to Sizmek customers. If you would like access to our complete set of benchmarks, regional or specific verticals, or individual markets, please contact your account representative or visit go.sizmek.com/contact.

About Sizmek

Sizmek is the Open Ad Management company that brings freedom of choice and contextual relevance to omnichannel digital advertising. As the largest independent ad server, more than 42,000 next generation advertisers, agencies, publishers and trading desks rely on Sizmek's offerings and flexible third-party platform integrations to provide the industry's most customizable, best-in-class approach to creating seamless workflow across a wide variety of partners in the digital advertising ecosystem. With a single point of access to the best technology, data, and strategic guidance, Sizmek builds flexible solutions for marketers and publishers that combine programmatic efficiency with creative. Sizmek operates in more than 70 countries, with local offices providing award-winning service throughout North America, EMEA, LATAM, and APAC.