

# Does viewability drive conversions?

A scientific study of ad viewability and  
its impact on business outcomes



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With over 4 billion Internet users worldwide in 2019<sup>1</sup>, brands have the opportunity to reach and connect with more potential customers than ever before. But, the average person is exposed to over 4,000 ads per day<sup>2</sup>, making it difficult for brands to cut-through the digital noise, capture consumer attention, and convince consumers to take action. To quantify digital campaign effectiveness and its impact on driving meaningful conversions, Integral Ad Science (IAS) partnered with GroupM to conduct a series of scientific studies spanning three major brands.

IAS's Online Conversion Lift solution allows brands to measure incremental lift across predetermined conversion events, pinpoint optimal ad frequency, and identify ideal Time-in-view for campaign exposure. While viewability and Time-in-view play significant roles in campaign effectiveness, brands can leverage additional insights provided in the Online Conversion Lift reports. The study outlines best practices for each brand participant to plan effective, outcome-driven digital campaigns.

## We explored the following questions:



**What is the optimal exposure time to drive conversions?**



**What is the ideal frequency cap to maximize KPIs?**



**Can media placements be optimized to drive outcomes?**

Source:

1. Euromonitor International, July 2019

2. Yankelovich Partners as cited by Ad Week, June 2018

# METHODOLOGY

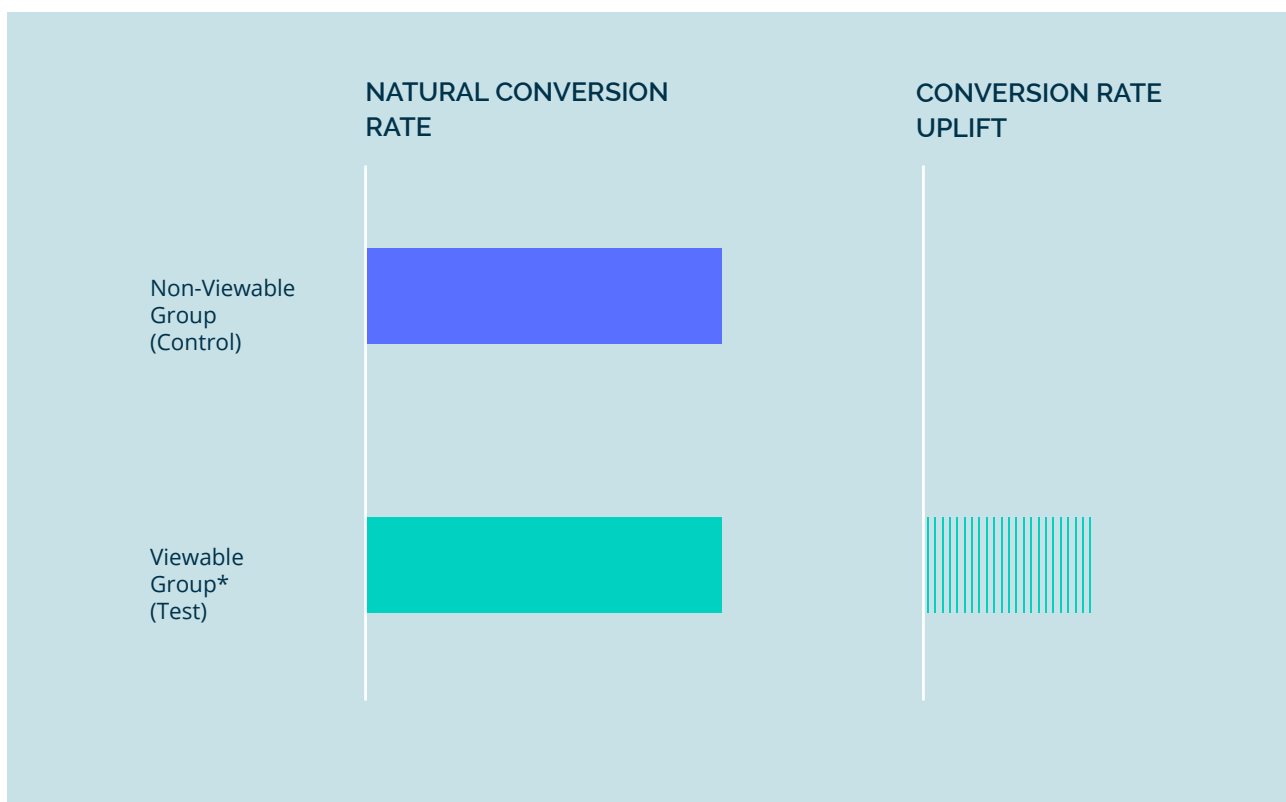
## Experimental design

In partnership with GroupM, IAS identified three brand candidates to participate in the Online Conversion Lift study. Brand participants met the minimum threshold requirement of 75 million impressions within a 30-day period, which ensures a sufficient sample size for statistically significant results. Each participant identified a unique conversion event that signified success for their digital campaign. Then, each brand implemented the IAS conversion pixel on the corresponding web pages where the conversion event would be measured, prior to the start of the campaign. Examples of conversion events include views of a specific landing page, content downloads, clicks on

a purchase button, a purchase confirmation page, etc. The minimum conversion samples size requirement is 100.

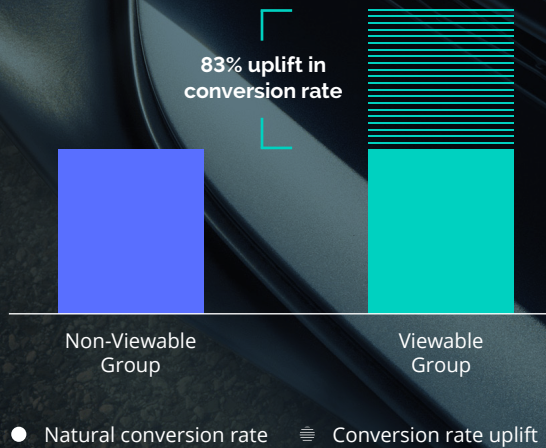
The chart below illustrates how the experiment is setup. IAS splits consumers who had an “opportunity to see” the ad into two groups: an exposed group (test) and an unexposed group (control). Based on industry standards for viewability\*, the exposed group includes consumers who were served at least one viewable ad, and the unexposed group includes consumers who were served a non-viewable ad. The difference between the conversion rates of the two groups is reported as the conversion rate uplift.

## How does Online Conversion Lift work?



\*Display ad impressions with at least 50% pixels in view for ≥1 second; excludes fraudulent impressions

# RESULTS



## 3,679 brochure downloads attributable to viewable campaign impressions

By partnering with IAS and GroupM to measure campaign results using Online Conversion Lift, Toyota was able to identify an 83% conversion rate uplift resulting in 3,679 incremental brochure downloads that can be attributed to viewable impressions from the campaign running in Denmark.

### ABOUT THE CLIENT

The Toyota Motor Company is one of the largest automobile manufacturers in the world today, marketing its vehicles in more than 170 countries and regions worldwide. Headquartered in Toyota City, Japan, the company's lineup includes Toyota, Lexus, and Toyota Gazoo Racing.

### CHALLENGE

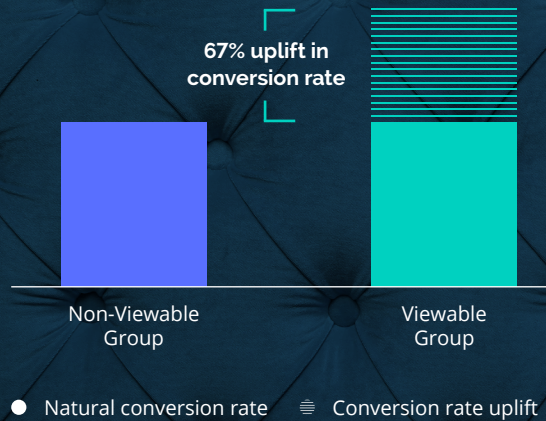
New car acquisitions require a long purchase cycle, resulting in low short-term media ROI for car dealers. This means a deeper perspective of media channel effectiveness and contribution to driving new and repeat purchases is essential for Toyota when optimizing ad campaigns. Having previously identified product brochure downloads as a key stage of the buying journey, signaling "in-market" behavior among consumers, Toyota needed to measure and increase conversion rates relating to this key performance indicator.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

In addition to measuring the campaign's success against the client's KPIs, Online Conversion Lift measurement was also able to surface actionable insights and learnings that can be used to inform the strategy and planning for future campaigns:

- 1. Media quality drives performance:** A significant uplift in conversion rate was observed within the group that was exposed to viewable impressions.
- 2. Frequency matters:** The campaign achieved the highest incremental lift in brochure downloads at a frequency cap of nine viewable impressions.
- 3. Optimize for Time-in-view:** Although more costly, ad placements seen for three seconds or less on high quality sites such as traditional and local publisher websites drove more brochure conversions than low quality sites. To further maximize conversions, Toyota increased bids across both high quality and low quality sites for placements with Time-in-view greater than three seconds.

# RESULTS



## 1,470 bookings attributable to viewable campaign impressions

By partnering with IAS and GroupM to measure campaign results using Online Conversion Lift, Radisson Hotel Group was able to identify 1,470 incremental hotel room bookings that can be attributed to viewable impressions from the three-month long campaign in Sweden.

### ABOUT THE CLIENT

Radisson Hotel Group is a leading hospitality company operating more than 1,100 hotels across 115 countries. Its brand portfolio includes Radisson Collection, Radisson Blu, Radisson, Radisson RED, Park Plaza, Park Inn by Radisson, and Country Inn & Suites by Radisson.

### CHALLENGE

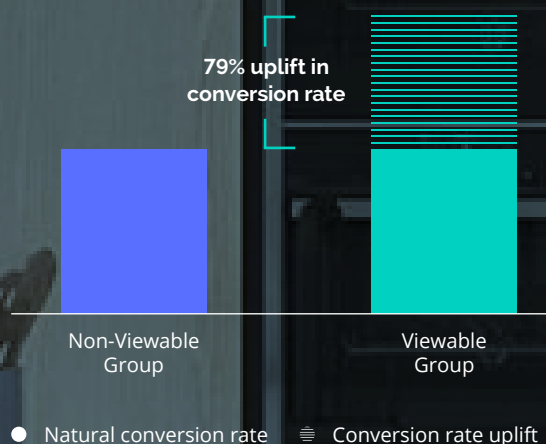
Radisson Hotel Group faces a highly competitive media landscape with online travel agencies, traditional hotel competitors, and new disrupting entrants. The fundamental business goal of all Radisson properties is to maximize hotel room occupancy. Radisson needed to ensure programmatic campaigns would deliver incremental bookings and consistently be optimized towards this business goal.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

In addition to measuring the campaigns success against the client's KPIs, Online Conversion Lift analysis was also able to surface actionable insights and learnings that can be used to inform the strategy and planning for future campaigns:

- 1. Media quality drives performance:** A significant uplift in conversion rates was observed within the group that were exposed to viewable impressions.
- 2. Prioritize frequency over reach:** The Radisson campaign was most effective in driving bookings from a cost perspective at a frequency of seven to nine impressions.
- 3. Achieve efficiencies by optimizing media placements:** Certain domains (email, messaging, and similar sites) showed lower performance in generating hotel bookings.

# RESULTS



## 3,270 store visits

### attributable to viewable campaign impressions

By partnering with IAS and GroupM to measure the campaign's results using Online Conversion Lift, Kvik was able to identify a 79% conversion rate uplift that generated 3,270 incremental in-store visits that can be attributed to the viewable impressions generated by the campaign running in Denmark over a three month period.

## ABOUT THE CLIENT

Kvik is a producer and retailer of Danish-design kitchens, bathrooms, and wardrobes. Headquartered in Vildbjerg, Denmark since 1983, Kvik operates more than 150 stores across the Nordics region, West- and Southern Europe, Hong Kong, and Thailand.

## CHALLENGE

Kvik has an expansive presence spanning eight markets across Europe. One of their key goals is to drive in-store visitation by reaching new consumers who are in-market for a new kitchen. Since having the right media partners for their marketing initiatives is key to reaching this niche audience, they wanted to measure their online media campaign with the goal to identify key sites/domains that would be successful in driving in-store visitation.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

In addition to measuring the campaigns success against the client's KPIs, Online Conversion Lift measurement was also able to surface actionable insights and learnings that can be used to inform the strategy and planning for future campaigns:

- 1. Media quality drives performance:** A significant uplift in conversion rates was observed within the group that was exposed to viewable impressions.
- 2. Frequency matters:** Cap frequency at nine viewable impressions, with an ideal five to seven frequency to maximize media ROI.
- 3. Achieve efficiencies by optimizing media placements:** Certain domains such as local news sites showed higher performance in impacting in-store visitation while aligning with campaign CPA benchmarks. Email sites tend to be less impactful in driving visitation and far exceed CPA benchmarks.

# KEY TAKEAWAYS



## Media quality drives performance:

Viewability shows strong ties to outcomes. A significant lift in conversion rates was observed within the group that was exposed to viewable impressions.



## Manage your media buy using Time-in-view performance:

Consider using Time-in-view to improve the performance of your media. Certain domains show higher performance in impacting outcomes among viewable impressions with shorter Time-in-view (zero to three seconds), while other sites require longer Time-in-view (over three seconds) to generate a conversion.



## Frequency of viewable impressions matters:

Campaigns tend to show higher performance with higher viewable impression frequencies. Among the campaigns we measured, the highest incremental lifts in performance were observed at a frequency cap of nine viewable impressions.



## Achieve overall efficiency by optimizing media placements:

There were varying trends in placement optimizations across the three case studies. Each campaign showed a unique pattern for success, which means your optimizations should be campaign-specific.

## ABOUT IAS

Integral Ad Science (IAS) is the global market leader in digital ad verification, offering technologies that drive high-quality advertising media. IAS equips advertisers and publishers with both the insight and technology to protect their advertising investments from fraud and unsafe environments as well as to capture consumer attention, and drive business outcomes. Founded in 2009, IAS is headquartered in New York with global operations in 17 offices across 13 countries. IAS is part of the Vista Equity Partners portfolio of software companies. For more on how IAS is powering great impressions for top publishers and advertisers around the world, visit [integralads.com](https://integralads.com).