

YouTube Is Banning Gambling, Alcohol, and Political Ads

By Eva Ivanova Published June 15, 2021 Est. 3 minutes



- YouTube bans gambling, alcohol, political and other types of content from its masthead ad unit, a highly-visible banner running on top of the platform's homepage
- The new change follows Google's restriction initiatives from 2020, protecting vulnerable audiences from certain types of content
- According to a spokesperson, Google regularly checks its ads requirements to ensure the needs of advertisers and users

YouTube has banned advertisements about a couple of topics from its visible masthead ad unit, including political, election, alcohol, and gambling ads.

YouTube Bans Ads for Elections, Alcohol, and Gambling

Since this Monday, YouTube is banning ads from its masthead ad unit on several topics, including political elections, alcohol, gambling (including sports wagering and casino games), and prescription drugs.

YouTube won't accept election advertisements placed in the banner running on top of the platform's homepage.

A spokesperson for Google, which owns YouTube, said that the company regularly reviews its ad requirements to make sure they meet the needs of users and advertisers.

This Update Builds on Other Changes Made by Google in 2020

Google's spokesperson said that the company is updating those requirements limiting the categories for ads eligible to run on YouTube masthead inventory.

The spokesperson said that this update builds on changes made by the company in 2020 to the masthead reservation process. The company believes it will provide a better user experience.

Google and other platforms received criticism for allowing political advertisements during the presidential election in 2020 and other political events.

In 2019, YouTube announced that it would ban brand ads for a full day on its masthead inventory, but, according to Google, it charged "a targeted, per impression rate to reach a broader range of advertisers and to more evenly distribute visibility to brands."

Google Sought Ways to Apply Similar Restrictions Last Year

In 2020, Google sought to find ways to restrict ads of gambling and alcohol by allowing users to filter such content. This initiative was part of Google's partnership with the International Alliance for Responsible Drinking, hoping to restrict such ads and stop harmful activity towards vulnerable audiences.

The ad set allows users to limit ads on gambling, alcohol, and other activities on top of the Mute This Ad option, which hides ads.

This solution is also a boost of the regional age restriction solution Google deployed to make content appropriate for age groups.

Media Regulators Fight Ads Exposure to Vulnerable Users

The UK has been a leader when it comes to restricting inappropriate content to underage users. It showed its success in Q3 of 2020, according to the country's Advertising Standard Authority. AgCOM, the Italian media regulator, also fined Google for breaching the country's gambling ads ban

Facebook teamed up with the UK Gambling Commission (UKGC) last September to enhance limitations on gambling content exposure to customers.

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Eva Ivanova, Author

Eva is a PR specialist and communications expert with ten years of experience in campaign organizing and creative writing. She is also a published author of fictional stories. Eva recently developed an interest in economics and the gaming industry after discovering the inspirational story of Molly Bloom.

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