

SECURITY SOLUTION SCORECARD

By Rob Beeler



You need to protect your users to grow as a publisher.

The security solution scorecard.

The most important recommendation that I can make is that you have a security partner. If you are running programmatic without a security partner, you are serving malvertising and inappropriate ads to your users. The fact that you don't see it, doesn't mean it isn't happening. Most likely you are losing users who consider you an unsafe brand without ever letting you know of their poor perception of your site.

Price alone should not be the deciding factor. There are several solutions out in the market that cater to different types of sites and offer different kinds of security. For media companies, you need

a partner that knows the digital advertising ecosystem. Publishers will have their own standards for ad quality. It, therefore, pays to spend some time thinking about what partner will be the best fit.

Effectiveness is hard to measure: Test anyway. Unless you are a security expert yourself, it might be hard to tell who the right partner will be. First and foremost, you should make sure the solution is easy to implement. Ask for a trial and make sure the UI shows you what you need to see. Dig in and check for false positives (counting something as malicious when it's not).

coverage

<input type="checkbox"/> Do they offer a holistic security and ad quality solution?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">MalvertisingAd QualityAd Content
<input type="checkbox"/> Do they cover all the ways your ads are served?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Desktop, Mobile, In-app, CTVDisplay, native, videoDirect and Programmatic
<input type="checkbox"/> Do they work in real-time?	Real-time blocking, monitoring, and reporting is a requirement.
<input type="checkbox"/> Can they protect you from attacks across the globe?	What are their capabilities for your primary region? Is their coverage effective around the world?
<input type="checkbox"/> How familiar are they with your kind of traffic and the demand served to your specific audience?	Protection goes beyond geography. Particular types of content and audiences attract different malicious players. Know if your partner has the expertise that aligns with your needs.
<input type="checkbox"/> Do they operate without your involvement but allow you to step in when you require control?	You should be able to rely on your partner to handle things without your involvement. However, you may want to be actively monitoring and making decisions about ad quality and ad content on your own.
<input type="checkbox"/> Do they work with industry trade groups? Do they have good relationships within the industry?	Their security strategy should be to help make the internet a safer place overall. They should be active in industry conversations about standards and threat prevention.

detection

<input type="checkbox"/> How strong is the vendor's zero-day detection?	Zero-day detection refers to a security company's ability to detect a new threat within the same day.
<input type="checkbox"/> Do they monitor the entire threat map? Do they scan the landing page?	Monitoring should include the ad code, the creative, and the post-click landing page.
<input type="checkbox"/> Do they have an elite team of security experts? Is there any level of human verification?	Security expert oversight ensures accuracy + reduces the rate of false positives. The strength of the security team runs alongside the strength of vendors' detection technology.
<input type="checkbox"/> What methodologies do they employ? Do they use the latest security approaches?	Your partner should use a hybrid of solutions combining security research with machine learning algorithms that analyze the behavior of attacks.
<input type="checkbox"/> Which ad quality blocking controls are in place?	Ability to manage ad content by vertical, keyword, domain, or blocklist. Review creative manually or with customized, seasonal, and niche policies.
<input type="checkbox"/> How do they prevent overblocking?	You want a solution that is accurate and doesn't block good creatives with bad ones.

workflow

<input type="checkbox"/> What will such a solution take of my time? What will it save me?	Automatic blocking eliminates time spent related to user complaints. Demand partner resolution streamlines communication by automatically notifying offending demand partners.
<input type="checkbox"/> Is there any level of customization or policy granularity? Is it easy to update blocking and detection rules across policies?	You should have the ability to be very specific about your ad quality policies. See what tools they offer to set up and update those policies.
<input type="checkbox"/> Do they passback impressions that they have blocked? Can they handle situations where the replacing ad is also blocked?	Passing back impressions helps recover potential revenue loss.
<input type="checkbox"/> Do they provide automated incident reports? Do they offer reports for executives and more detailed reports for tactical ad operations teams?	Set alerts for real-time insight and review incidents by policy, partner, tag, and creative. They should offer reporting specific to the role of the person receiving them.
<input type="checkbox"/> Do they provide partner benchmarking?	Monitor for policy incidents and benchmark partners with advertiser's reputation BI dashboard.

Final Thoughts

Reputation and references are important. Ask around. However, make sure the customers you talk to are similar to your needs in both strategy and requirements.

Threats and ad quality standards change over time. Communication is key. Security requires a partnership. You need a company that will communicate regularly about what is going on in the security space and how it might impact you.

Some security companies are focused on security. Some are focused on your success as a business. The true difference between a vendor and a partner is someone who takes the time to understand your business. A partnership can help protect you and help you in ways you can't anticipate until you start working together.

