Transparency and the Evolution of OpenRTB – Addressing Counterfeit Inventory

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Programmatic Advertising: Current Challenges

- Ad fraud remains a challenge
- Very limited supply chain transparency
- Some premium pubs inventory available thru very large number of inventory sources
- Domain misrepresentation a common challenge
  - Data shows well know websites have availability in excess of what is explainable
Common Ad Fraud Monetization Scenarios

Key extraction scenarios

- Counterfeit inventory
- Traffic selling/trading
- Made for ads sites
Counterfeit Inventory

Misrepresented inventory & traffic blending

- Prevalent, yet hard to solve due to transparency issues
- Get curious and look at your data and supply paths!
Programmatic Supply Chains

X.com

Exch. #1

Exch. #2

Exch. #3

Exch. #4

DSP #1

DSP #2

DSP #3

FakeX.com
OPENRTB ADS.TXT Standard

- **Authorized Digital Sellers**
- ads.txt file hosted at the publisher’s website, like robots.txt
- One line per authorized seller with up to four fields:
  - Domain name of the advertising system
  - Publisher’s account ID
  - Type of account/relationship (DIRECT or RESELLER)
  - Certification authority ID (currently TAG ID)

# Example ads.txt file
```
greenadexchange.com, 12345, DIRECT, AEC242
blueadexchange.com, 4536, DIRECT
silversssp.com, 9675, RESELLER
orangeexchange.com, 45678, RESELLER
silversssp.com, 75230, RESELLER
```
The Authorized Supply Chain
### Ads.txt enables inventory segmentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Participating pubs(^1)</th>
<th>Non-participating pubs(^2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authorized inventory</td>
<td>#authorized</td>
<td>#notImplemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-authorized (potentially counterfeit) inventory</td>
<td>#unauthorized</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) Participating pubs: Domains where there is an ads.txt available.  
2) Non-participating pubs: Domains where there is not an ads.txt available.
Important Notes

- Authorized **does not** imply completely free of invalid traffic
  - If publisher is receiving or buying invalid traffic ads.txt will not address this
  - “Normal” IVT\(^1\) detection still required to protect from “non-counterfeit IVT”

- Non-authorized does not necessarily equal invalid traffic
  - Can for example be inventory re-sold without publisher’s knowledge
  - Recommendation: if you see seemingly valid non-authorized inventory
    engage with the publisher to resolve it

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1) IVT = Invalid traffic
# Buy-side Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authorized inventory</th>
<th>Participating pubs&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Non-participating pubs&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increase buying</td>
<td>Continue to buy at your level of risk appetite.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Non-authorized (potentially counterfeit) inventory | Buy at your own risk | Recommendation is to vet the inventory carefully or ask for DealIDs from pubs. |

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1) Participating pubs: Domains where there is an ads.txt available.
2) Non-participating pubs: Domains where there is not an ads.txt available.
Work with the OpenRTB working group to solve the following areas for a future ads.txt version 2:

- Mobile apps
- Video and content syndication
- Subdomains
- Formats
- Blind/anonymous inventory
- Digitally signed ad requests

Got ideas for how to solve these? Please submit ideas to the working group!
Get Involved

Read the spec! Get curious!

- [iabtechlab.com/ads-txt/](http://iabtechlab.com/ads-txt/) to access spec, integration docs, and more info
- General Questions: openrtb@iabtechlab.com