

In France, Digital Ads Are Often Viewed as Intrusive and Irrelevant

Nearly 30% of Internet Users in France Use Ad Blockers

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eMarketer Editors

The sophistication and efficiency of buying and selling digital advertising means online and mobile ads are proliferating. But that has left many internet users in France feeling bombarded by ads in digital environments, and they prefer a less distracting experience. France continues to post one of the highest levels of ad blocking in Western Europe.

eMarketer estimates that the number of internet users in France using ad blockers at least once per month reached 14.1 million in 2017, and will pass 16 million in 2019. This year, 28.7% of internet users of all ages will block ads, equivalent to 22.9% of France's entire population.

Ad Blocking Users and Penetration in France, 2015-2019

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Ad blocking users (millions)	11.3	12.3	14.1	15.4	16.3
—% change	60.6%	8.7%	14.2%	9.0%	5.9%
—% of internet users	22.4%	23.8%	26.7%	28.7%	30.1%
—% of population	17.1%	18.5%	21.0%	22.9%	24.1%

Note: internet users of any age who access the internet at least once per month via any device (including a mobile device) with an ad blocker enabled

Source: eMarketer, Aug 2018

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eMarketer's latest report, "Ad Blocking in France 2018: Numbers Still Rising as Concern Extends to Mobile Devices," examines consumer attitudes toward advertising, and how that contributes to the increasing use of ad blockers.

Many internet users in France feel that digital advertising is intrusive and irrelevant to their interests. Some 68% of web users in France polled by Kantar Millward Brown in November 2017 said ads were more intrusive than three years prior, and 75% said ads appeared in more places in that time frame. More than one-third of those surveyed found ads more confusing as well.

Ad block usage has grown steadily in recent years, as millions of individuals use ad blocking tools to reassert some control over their online experience. While usage is still far greater on PCs than on mobile devices, mobile ad blocking is rising rapidly, in part because internet users are spending more time on their smartphones.

Rune Werliin, vice president of marketing and professional services at AudienceProject, confirmed that, based on his company's research, mobile ad blocking is growing, while ad blocking on desktops is stabilizing. "Mobile traffic is rising and continuing to rise. This is where the battle will be," he said. "The ease of using ad blockers is something else leading to an increase [on mobile]. And as even more time is now spent on mobile, that also leads to more ad blocking, as people will go the extra mile to avoid the ads."

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