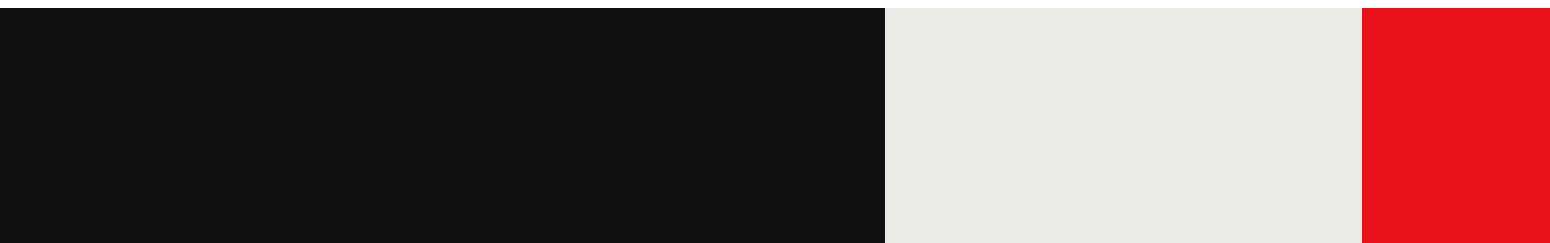



# Most consumers have noticed ads that use behavioral targeting

Article



Consumers are very aware of ads that they think were served to them using behavioral targeting. Our survey found that a majority of US consumers have noticed more than one kind of targeted advertising online. And the two most noticed kinds are ads based on consumers' previous searches and online activity.

To conduct our survey, EMARKETER started with a panel of over 1,600 US consumers ages 15 to 77 and screened out the 236 respondents who said they “don’t recall/haven’t seen/heard of these ads.” The consumers whose responses constitute the data discussed in this report all indicated they’d seen or heard a digital ad online in at least one of the online channels listed in the chart below.

**Ads targeted using previous search history are the most commonly noticed ads.** Nearly 80% of consumers say they’ve seen ads that targeted them based on their previous internet searches.

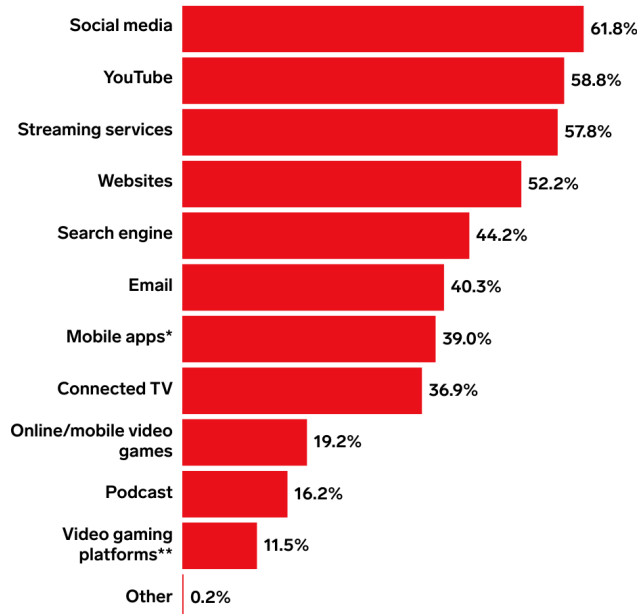
**Close to half of consumers say they’ve been targeted with ads based on their physical location.** While smaller shares of consumers have noticed ads targeted using information about their real-world activities, ads targeted by geolocation are relatively noticeable.

**Barely more than one-quarter of consumers have noticed ads targeted based on their offline activity.** Despite pervasive chatter about certain kinds of companies tracking consumer behavior, just around 26.0% of respondents said they’d seen ads that were aimed at them based on life stage or events.

## Consumers Often Overlook Ads as They Use the Internet

% of US consumers, May 2024

Q: Where do you normally see/hear digital ads online (on any device)? Select all that apply.



Note: n=1,378; \*excluding social media and mobile game apps; \*\*e.g., Sony PlayStation, Microsoft Xbox  
Source: EMARKETER Survey, "US Consumer Attitudes on Advertising and Privacy," July 2024

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Read the full report, [How Consumers Perceive Ads.](#)

Report by Max Willens Dec 13, 2024

# How Consumers Perceive Ads

