

# From Russia, an Ad Conundrum

Study finds distrust of social ads in wake of political fracas

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**A**s new data emerges on the political activity of Russian entities in the 2016 election year, research from HubSpot finds that US adults aren't sure about how much to trust ads on social networks.

In fact, the level of distrust discovered by HubSpot was nearly identical no matter the platform, whether it was Facebook, Twitter or Google. For example, 59% of US internet users polled found current ads on Facebook to be at least somewhat untrustworthy. Some 58% of respondents felt the same way about ads on Twitter, and 55% about ads on Google.

But while distrust of ads today may be high, only a few said they plan to use social networks less often as a result.

Due to the controversy over political ads, a quarter of respondents said they plan to decrease use of Facebook. Another 21% expected to use Twitter less, and even fewer—14%—planned on limiting use of Google.

Only a few of those surveyed said they would take even more drastic measures, such as not using the platforms altogether. Just 16% of respondents said they would stop using Facebook, and 14% planned to stop logging on to Twitter. And only 6% planned to stop using Google.

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**US Internet Users Who Plan to Stop Using Facebook, Twitter or Google in Light of News that They Displayed Political Ads that Originated from Russia, Nov 2017**

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% of respondents



*Note: ages 18+; respondents selected all that applied; "none of the above" was an exclusive option*  
*Source: HubSpot, "Political Ads Survey" as cited in company blog, Nov 21, 2017*

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But again, a small number of respondents said they would take those actions. In total, 77% had no plans to stop use anytime soon.

Companies like Facebook and Google are **looking to improve** ad measurement standards. Earlier this year, UK ad industry trade group the **Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA)** asked both Facebook and Google to work with it and fellow trade group **ISBA – the Voice of British Advertisers** to bring the brand safety, measurement and viewability of the digital advertising on their platforms up to "acceptable industry standards."