Bing Ads bad account takedowns doubled in 2018

Bing Ads doubled the number of accounts it took down year over year, suspending nearly 200,000 accounts in 2018. It also removed 900 million ads and 300,000 sites from the Bing Ads platform, according to its annual report on ad quality.

Areas of attention. Tech support scams, crypto and weapons topped the list of sectors Bing paid particular attention to in its clean up efforts last year.

There’s something about tech support that makes it ripe for scam artists who’ve been pushing one scheme or another for years. That’s led to restrictions on all third-party tech support advertisers. This year, Bing Ads highlighted the scam of redirecting users from innocent looking ads to fake support pages that show pop ups with messages such as “virus detected in your computer” or “your computer has been locked.” and prompts to call for so-called support services.

Bing parent Microsoft is among the brands routinely used to lure victims. The company said it banned more than 12,000 tech support scam accounts across Microsoft properties, 20 percent more than in 2017.

The highly speculative nature and limited regulatory oversight of cryptocurrency made it appealing to fraudsters. Bing Ads banned cryptocurrency ads in May and said it blocked more than 5 million crypto ads last year.

In June, Bing Ads said it would further limit weapons-related advertising, banning ads for recreational guns and accessories used to create ammunition or make reloading faster. The company said it blocked more than 18 million ads and 5,000 websites for such content.

Why you should care. To maintain a brand safe ecosystem, Bing's efforts to combat bad actors are critical. Bad ads can affect good advertisers' campaign prospects and reputations. Bing Ads said, "We'll continue to leverage the interdisciplinary efforts of experts in machine learning and system design to scale our technology, alongside the domain expertise of policy and review experts to deter bad actors."

About The Author

Ginny Marvin is Third Door Media's Editor-in-Chief, managing day-to-day editorial operations across all of our publications. Ginny writes about paid online marketing topics including paid search, paid social, display and retargeting for Search Engine Land, Marketing Land and MarTech Today. With more than 15 years of marketing experience, she has held both in-house and agency management positions. She can be found on Twitter as @ginnymarvin.
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