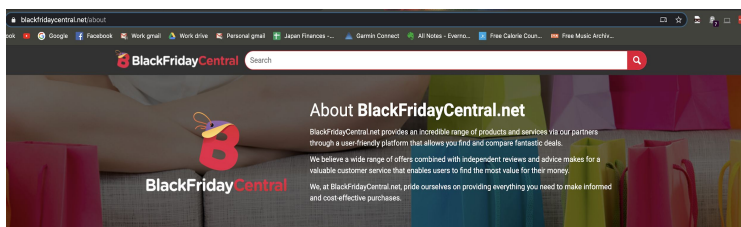# Fighting back against *Ad Fraud*

FRAUD SQUAD

Essence's global 'Fraud Squad' provides its clients with regular campaign impact analysis on ad fraud developments.

With a dedication to quality and continual improvement in processes and value provided to clients, Essence outperformed Ad Fraud benchmarks across all devices and formats for 2020 for the majority of our clients.

MANUAL EVALUATION PROCESS

We designed a process to surface domains and apps with excessive Invalid Traffic for regular manual review.

Domains and apps that are judged to be high risk for ad fraud are added to our exclusions lists.

Less money spent on fraudulent activity means greater efficiency and reduced brand risk.

SUSPECT SITES

The screenshot below shows multiple sites that appear to be part of the same 'ring.' They share similar layouts and identical copy, but each provide different fake contact details. These fraudulent sites often evade detection without rigorous Ad Fraud analysis and indeed we found ads placed by unsuspecting advertisers.

By doing the hard work of manually inspecting and identifying these sites we were able to add the sites to our exclusion lists, ensuring client investment isn't wasted on fraudulent domains. We prevented over **$730,000** in media spend from going to suspicious properties for a single client in 2020 alone.

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Fighting back against **Ad Fraud**

TARGETING INVALID TRAFFIC

Another example is shown below. We found three nearly identical sites - cheaplaptop.us, bestbuylaptop.us and laptopscart.com - all using the same template with minimal modifications, ostensibly unconnected and all with 90%+ invalid traffic rates.

EXCEEDING SIVT INDUSTRY BENCHMARKS

| Sophisticated Invalid Traffic (SIVT) Benchmarks		Essence Performance
APP	1.1%	0.43%
MOBILE WEB	1.5%	0.40%
DESKTOP	1.9%	0.76%
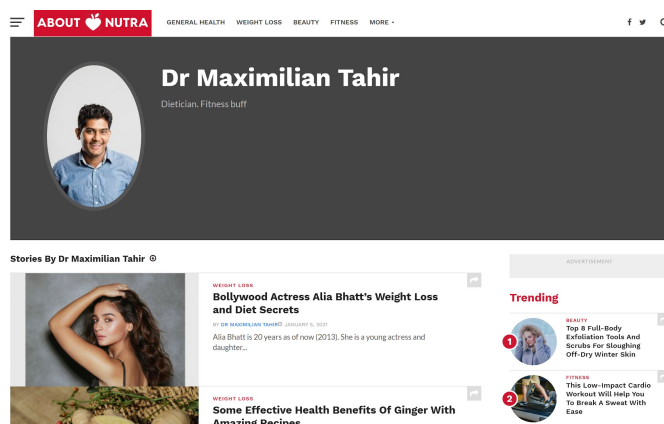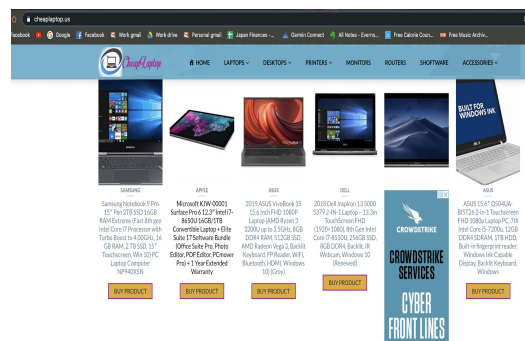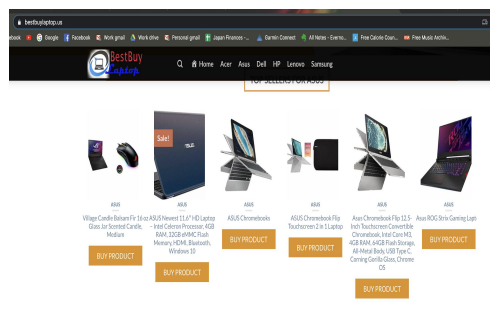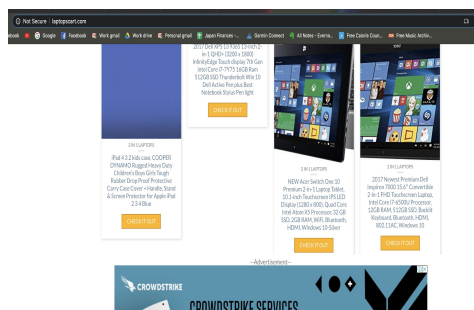
UNEARTHING CONTENT FARMS

Suspicious sites often try to appear more credible by attributing their content to authoritative authors. For example, this health blog attributes much of its content to a fictitious doctor. A reverse image search shows that the author's image is taken from a stock image site.

This site is a good example of a 'content farm.' These sites produce (or borrow from elsewhere) large amounts of low-quality content and hope to game search engine ratings and less sophisticated programmatic advertisers.
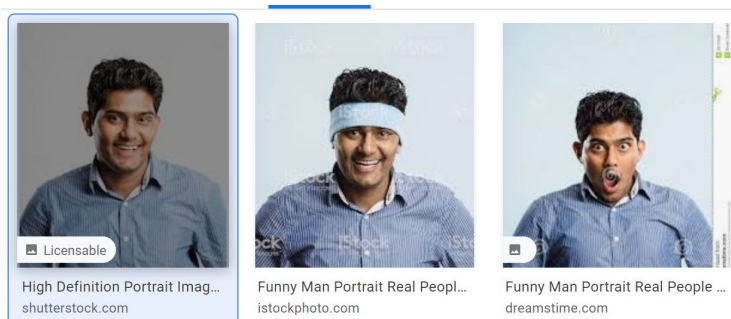
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