



# In Safe Hands

## Reach Solutions

Lilly Balcheva and Megan Evans

**Regulation of  
the digital  
world is a  
long-term and  
ever-evolving  
problem**





# So it's unsurprising brand safety has become one of the industry's most salient issues

## Online advertisers should evolve from 'brand safety' to 'brand suitability'

IAB's inaugural Trust Forum is told that online media needs more sophisticated ways of advertising against the context of content, rather than against blunt instruments like keywords that penalise quality media.



## Brands and tech giants come together to launch first digital safety alliance

Launched at 2019's Cannes Lions festival, the Global Alliance for Responsible Media marks the first time an alliance that represents all sides of the media industry is forming.

By **Ellen Hammett** | 18 Jun 2019

Share this article   



## What's the secret to winning a brand safety strategy in 2020?

By **Derek Wise** - 10 February 2020 13:23pm



Brand safety is not a new challenge, yet it remains top-of-mind for brands and continues to earn global attention



# Brands are right to be worried about where their advertising appears

% OF UK ADULTS AGREEING WITH EACH STATEMENT



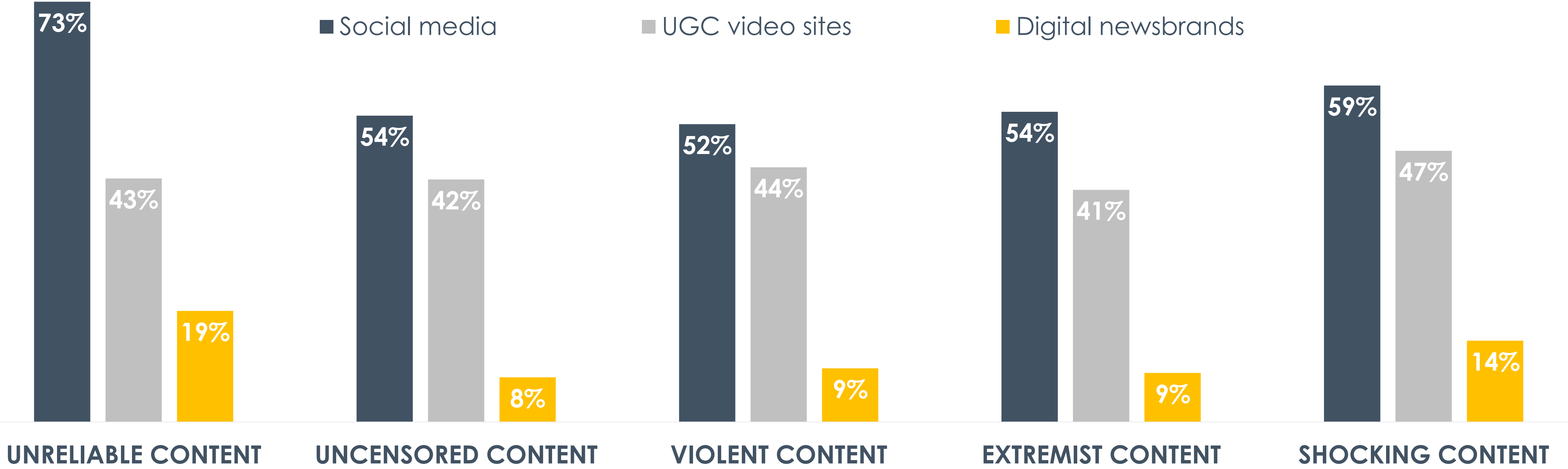
**Brands should be careful  
about where their ads  
appear online**



**Expect quality brands to  
advertise on quality websites**

# But consumer concern is limited to social media and user generated content video sites

% EXPECT TO SEE EACH TYPE OF CONTENT IN EACH SOURCE



# Because they know these platforms have little regulation

81%

of UK adults agree that content on social media and UGC video sites *'could be created or posted by anyone'*

"I worry about coming across this sort of content on social media or video sites mainly as **it's less regulated.**"

"I worry about the rubbish/violent/distressing **things that pop up on Facebook** and never know why it's allowed."

"I think **YouTube** is a worrying place to see **shocking** content. I know they have filters within it but it **still somehow gets through** to anyone and everyone regardless of age."

"Most likely social media, it can **somehow trickle through** on pages like Twitter – **needs more regulation and better protection.**"

# And lack any form of editorial curation

% AGREEING EACH STATEMENT APPLIES TO THE PLATFORM

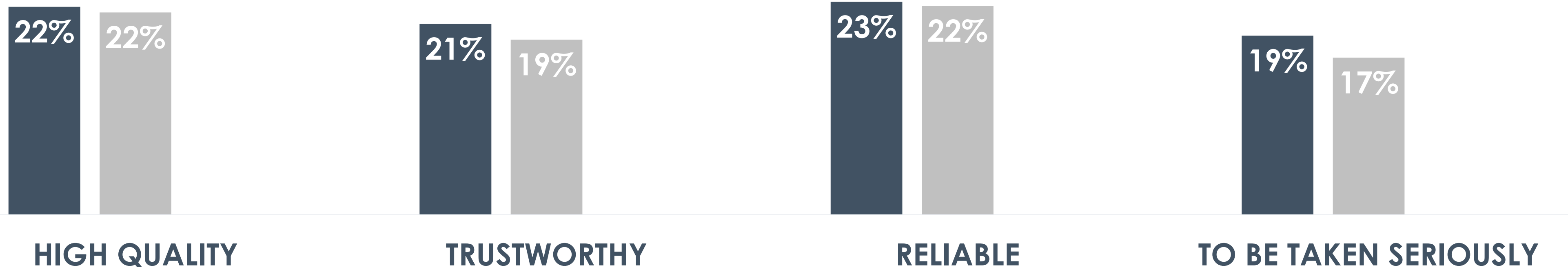
■ Social media & UGC video sites ■ Digital newsbrands



# Most people don't consider social media or UGC video sites to be the right environment for brands

% WHO WOULD ADVERTISE IN EACH ENVIRONMENT IF THEY WANTED THEIR BRAND TO BE PERCEIVED AS...

■ Social media      ■ UGC video sites



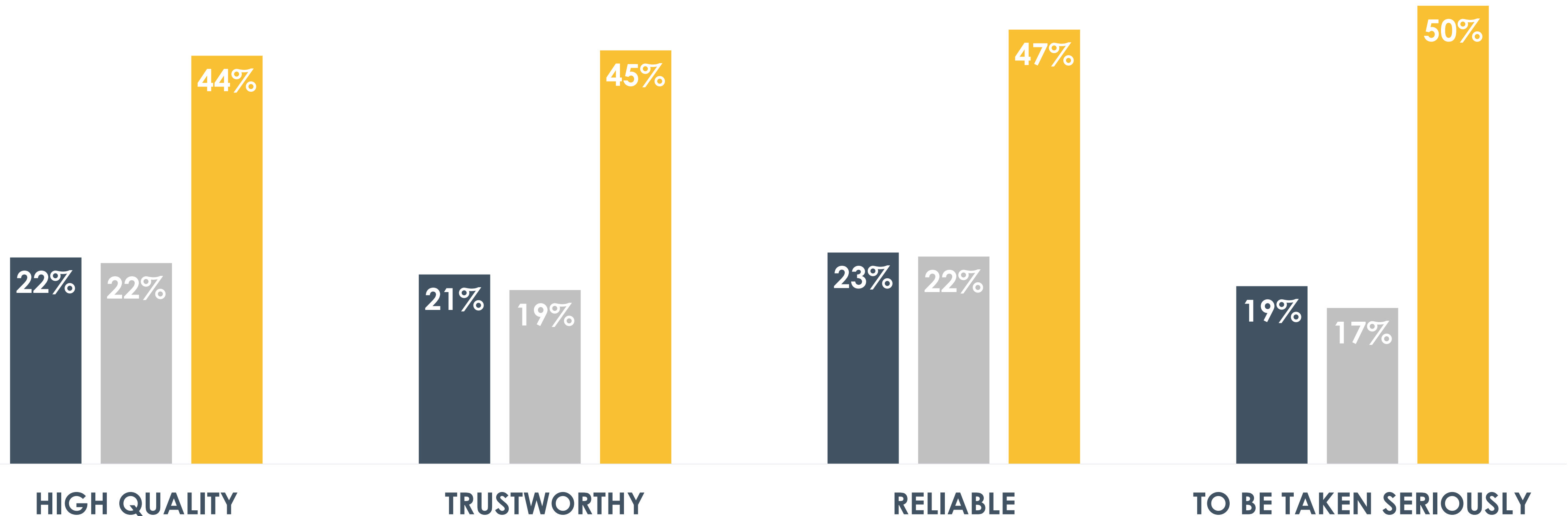
Source: Reach Solutions  
Base: UK Adults (n=2020)



# But they do understand the power of aligning with quality editorial environments

% WHO WOULD ADVERTISE IN EACH ENVIRONMENT IF THEY WANTED THEIR BRAND TO BE PERCEIVED AS...

■ Social media   ■ UGC video sites   ■ Digital newsbrands



So brand safety is - and always will be - a social media and UGC issue

## Brand Safety Concerns Come to Twitter as Ads Run on Profiles Selling Illegal Drugs

Is TikTok's Advertising Potential Worth The Brand Safety Risk?

## Google says YouTube might never be 100% brand-safe

By Imogen Watson - 05 March 2019 17:55pm

**BRANDS PROP UP ISIS** Household brands unintentionally 'fund terrorism' after adverts appear on terrorist and extremist YouTube propaganda videos

White supremacists and pornographers are also raking in cash from adverts posted on YouTube

IPA action on Instagram brand safety concerns



**Mirror** CORONAVIRUS NEWS MORE

## Lewis Hamilton attends Black Lives Matter protest at Hyde Park

Lewis Hamilton has been particularly vocal about the lack of racial equality within Formula One and attended a Black Lives Matter protest in London's Hyde Park

By Sam 20.36, 21 JUN

11 SHARES COMMENTS

VIOLENT CONTENT



He has long highlighted racism within society which has due to the worldwide protests.

Hamilton attended the latest one at London's largest park

"Went down to Hyde Park today for the peaceful protest person so many people of all races and backgrounds support

"It was really moving. I'm feeling extremely positive that cannot stop now."

**Manchester Evening News** NEWS IN YOUR AREA MORE

## Duchess of Sussex makes surprise visit to a school in one of her last solo engagements as a working royal

By Jess Glass, PA & Helen Johnson 22.37, 7 MAR 2020

ADULT CONTENT



**EXPRESS** LOGIN REGISTER 9°C

HOME NEWS SHOWBIZ & TV SPORT COMMENT FINANCE TRAVEL ENTERTAINMENT LIFE & STYLE

## Second 'Clap for Our Carers' moment planned to support all coronavirus key workers

A SECOND 'Clap for Our Carers' event has been scheduled this week Britain's key workers.

### Coronavirus: Campaigner calls for UK to 'clap for our carers'

**VIRUS PANDEMIC** CLAP FOR OUR CARERS' CAMPAIGN CALLS FOR PEOPLE AT HOME TO CLAP TO SHOW THEIR APPRECIATION FOR NHS WORKERS

Last week, Britons up and down the country joined together by their front doors and windows to thank frontline health workers by clapping and cheering. The show of support was to thank NHS staff who are risking their lives fighting the deadly pandemic. The Clap for Our Carers campaign called for people currently on lockdown within their home to clap to show appreciation for NHS workers at 8pm on March 26.

This includes teachers, supermarket workers, cleaners and delivery drivers alongside NHS staff who are working around the clock in the fight against COVID-19.

NEGATIVE CONTENT

But brand safety restrictions have been extended to all publishers



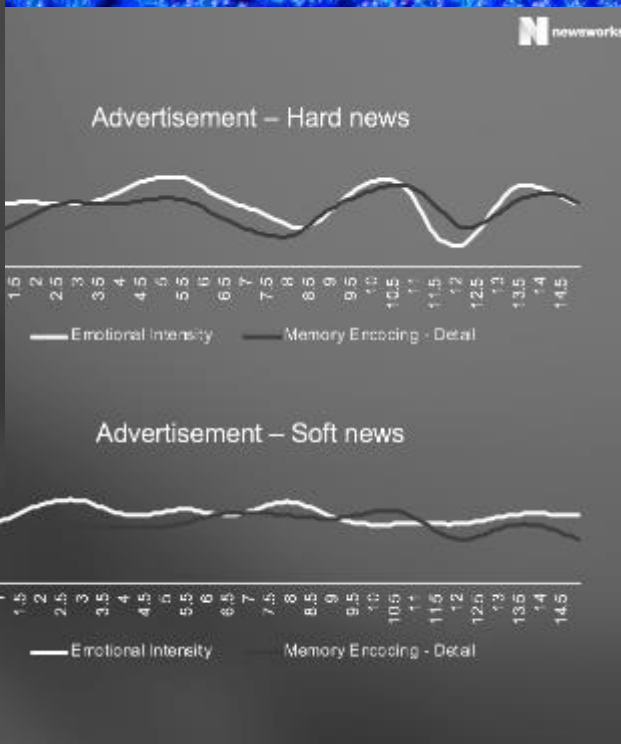
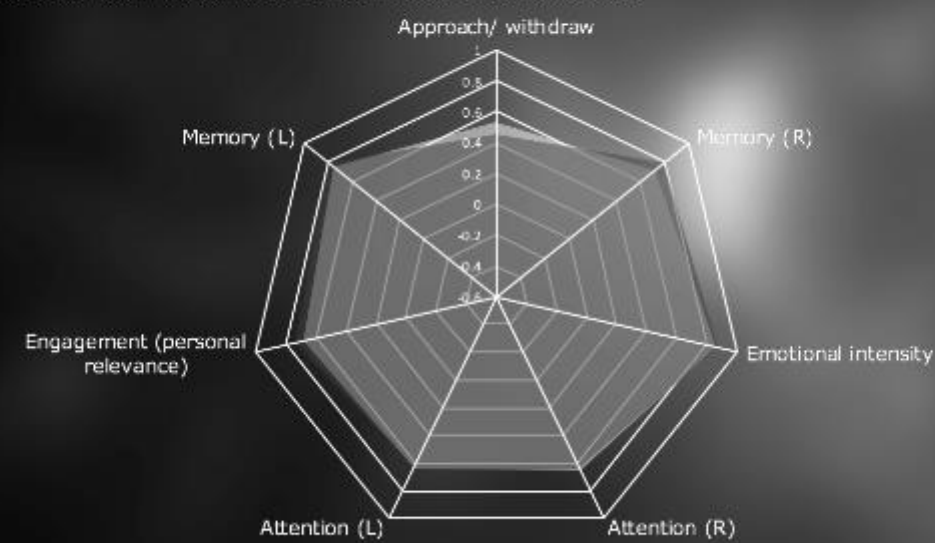
# THE HARD NEWS PROJECT

Why avoiding hard news could be damaging your brand

Even though there is no evidence that publisher content is 'unsafe' for brands

## BRAIN RESPONSE IS SIMILAR FOR BOTH TYPES OF STORY

Average levels of brain response to hard and soft editorial content





**So we decided to test  
two hypotheses...**

- 1) Advertising against serious  
'unsafe' news stories in a trusted  
environment does not negatively  
impact on brands**
- 2) Brand safety is context specific  
and not content specific**

# A two-stage approach

## 1. Forced exposure study

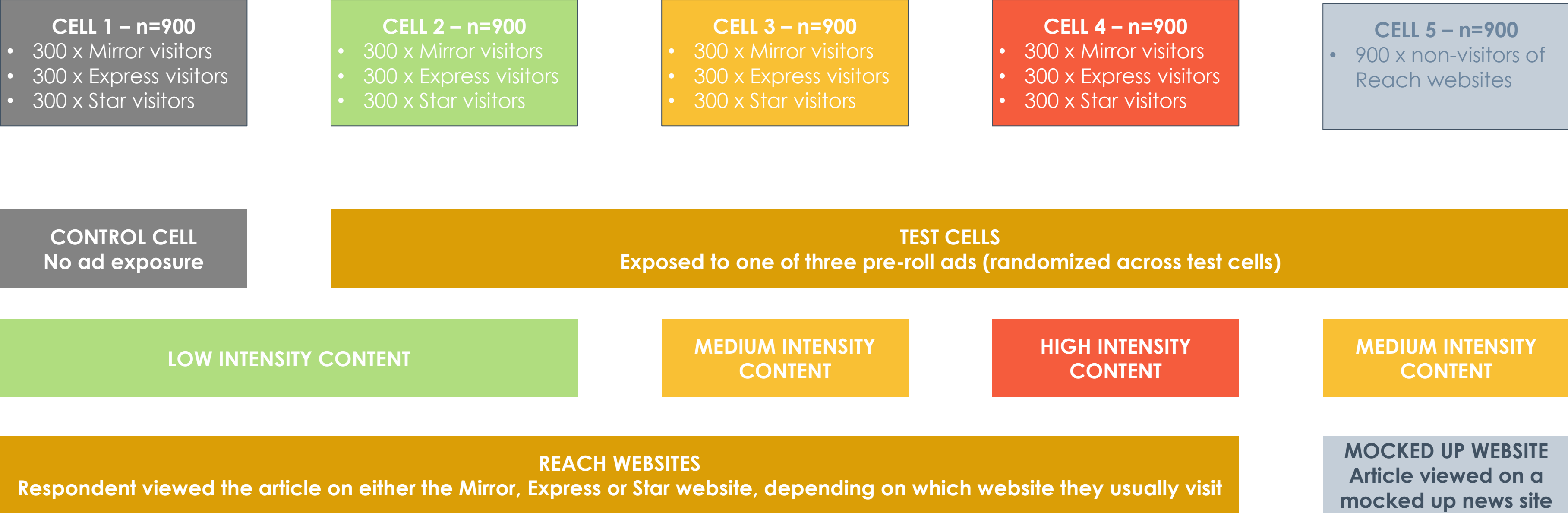
- Experimental study to test the impact of different types of ads on the brands advertising alongside them
- Total of **4500 respondents**
- Fieldwork conducted **January 2020**

## 2. Nationally representative survey

- To understand consumer concerns around brand safety and expectations of advertisers
- Total of **2020 respondents**
- Fieldwork conducted **May 2020**



# We tested the impact of digital newsbrand content in different contexts on advertiser brands



# Each respondent was shown one of three articles, representing differing levels of content 'intensity'

**LOW INTENSITY**  
Strictly Come Dancing

The screenshot shows a news article from the BBC website. The main headline is "Strictly's Dianne Buswell sobs as she makes confession to Dev after shock exit". Below the headline is a sub-headline: "The professional dancer was inconsolable after discovering that the pair were the third couple to leave the competition". There are social media sharing icons and a "TV" tag. Below the main article is a "RECOMMENDED" section with a video player showing Dianne Buswell in a red dress. The video title is "Strictly Come Dancing fans heartbroken as 'amazing' Dev Griffin is sent home".

CELL 1

CELL 2

**MEDIUM INTENSITY**  
Racism in football

The screenshot shows a news article from the BBC website. The main headline is "Nazi ultras plotted racist chant ambush of England stars 'to get game abandoned'". Below the headline is a sub-headline: "England players were subjected to torrents of horrific abuse during Monday night's Euro 2020 Group A qualifier". There are social media sharing icons and a "NEWS" tag. Below the main article is a video player showing a fan making a Nazi salute. The video title is "England v Bulgaria: Fan appears to make Nazi salute". Below the video is a sub-headline: "England v Bulgaria: Fan appears to make a Nazi salute during the Euro 2020 clash between Bulgaria and England."

CELL 3

CELL 5

**HIGH INTENSITY**  
ISIS 'Beatles' trial

The screenshot shows a news article from the BBC website. The main headline is "Mother of bloodthirsty ISIS 'Beatles' killer in legal battle to bring son back to UK". Below the headline is a sub-headline: "THE MOTHER of bring her son back". There are social media sharing icons and a "NEWS" tag. Below the main article is a video player showing two men. The video title is "Brit ISIS gang 'The Beatles' face death penalty after being extradited to the US". Below the video is a sub-headline: "US prosecutors seek to convict El Sharif, Elshelkh and Alexandre Kocoy as hostage-taking conspirators - which carries a possible death sentence".

CELL 4



# Each article contained a video, which was preceded by a pre-roll from one of three brands

M TV • TV News • Strictly Come Dancing

## Strictly's Dianne Buswell sobs as she makes confession to Dev after shock exit

The professional dancer was inconsolable after discovering that the pair were the third couple to leave the competition

SHARE COMMENTS By **Rose Hill** Senior TV reporter  
20:23, 13 OCT 2019 | UPDATED 01:46, 14 OCT 2019



RECOMMENDED

- I'm A Celebrity fight erupts among entire camp as Jacqueline and Nadine pull out
- Strictly romance bombshell as two 2019 stars have been 'secretly romping'
- Catherine Tyldesley lashes out at judges after surprise Strictly exit
- Strictly fans shock as Katy's caught giving Catherine Tyldesley 'dirty look'
- Strictly's Shirley Ballas 'fuming' as Anton interrupts her while Emma's in tears
- Strictly's Emma Barton's very famous exes as she keeps love life under wraps
- Teacher cries in class as boy's heartbreaking food question shows

Get the biggest Strictly Come Dancing stories by email

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Dianne Buswell was almost inconsolable tonight after discovering that she and Dev Griffin were the third couple to leave the competition.

The professional dancer was in floods of tears after the judges chose to send them home.

Away from the dance floor, DJ Dev consoled her by hugging her and insisted that they still had their highly-praised movie week performance to remember.


Changed out of their dance wear, the pair hugged as a crying Dianne told him: "I believed in you. 150,000,000 per cent."

News • Latest News • England Football Team

## Nazi ultras plotted racist chant ambush of England stars 'to get game abandoned'

England players were subjected to torrents of horrific abuse during Monday night's Euro 2020 Group A qualifier

SHARE COMMENTS By **Matt Mathers**  
01:18, 16 OCT 2019 | UPDATED 03:41, 16 OCT 2019



RECOMMENDED

- Premier League sex parties exposed: Player tells escorts 'treat him like toilet'
- I'm a Celeb star suffers naked pictures horror as intimate selfies leak online
- 'Britain's hardest man' lets four thugs batter him before asking 'is that it?'
- Bride suffers major wardrobe malfunction while cutting her wedding cake
- Man shares genius de-icing hack that clears your car in minutes
- Napoli fans clash with Liverpool police after being spotted with golf clubs
- Average UK penis size unveiled in major NHS research on toddlers

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The vile racist thugs who subjected England's black players to torrents of sickening abuse did so in a bid to get the match abandoned, according to reports.

Referee Ivan Bebek was forced to halt the Monday night's Euro 2020 qualifier twice due to Bulgarian fans' racist chants, throwing of objects and disruption of the national anthem.

Now it has emerged that the vile abuse suffered by England stars including Raheem Sterling and Tyrone Mings was part of an organised plot by a group known as the Usual Suspects, who have blighted Bulgarian football for over 25 years.


Sources say that one of the Bulgarian players told England captain and Tottenham striker Harry Kane that the hooligans deliberately tried to get the match abandoned.

M News • UK News • ISIS

## Brit ISIS gang 'The Beatles' face death penalty after being extradited to the US

US prosecutors seek to convict El Shafee Elsheikh and Alexandra Kotey as hostage-taking conspirators - which carries a possible death sentence

SHARE By **Danya Bazaraa** News Reporter & **Matthew Dresch**  
23:52, 9 OCT 2019 | UPDATED 00:47, 10 OCT 2019



RECOMMENDED

- I'm A Celebrity fight erupts among entire camp as Jacqueline and Nadine pull out
- UK set for heavy snow in -8C freeze - find out if it will fall in your area
- Teacher cries in class as boy's heartbreaking food question shows stark reality
- Family went from having 12 houses and a Porsche to nothing in two weeks
- Katie Hopkins forced to sell £1m home and now rents after cringe libel loss
- Furious gran told to pay Egyptian toyboy ex who wooed her with camels £40k
- If you have one of these surnames, you could inherit a Scottish castle and £370k
- Brits' 'most hated women'

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Two British members of 'The Beatles' ISIS cell now face the death penalty after the US decision to extradite them, according to reports.

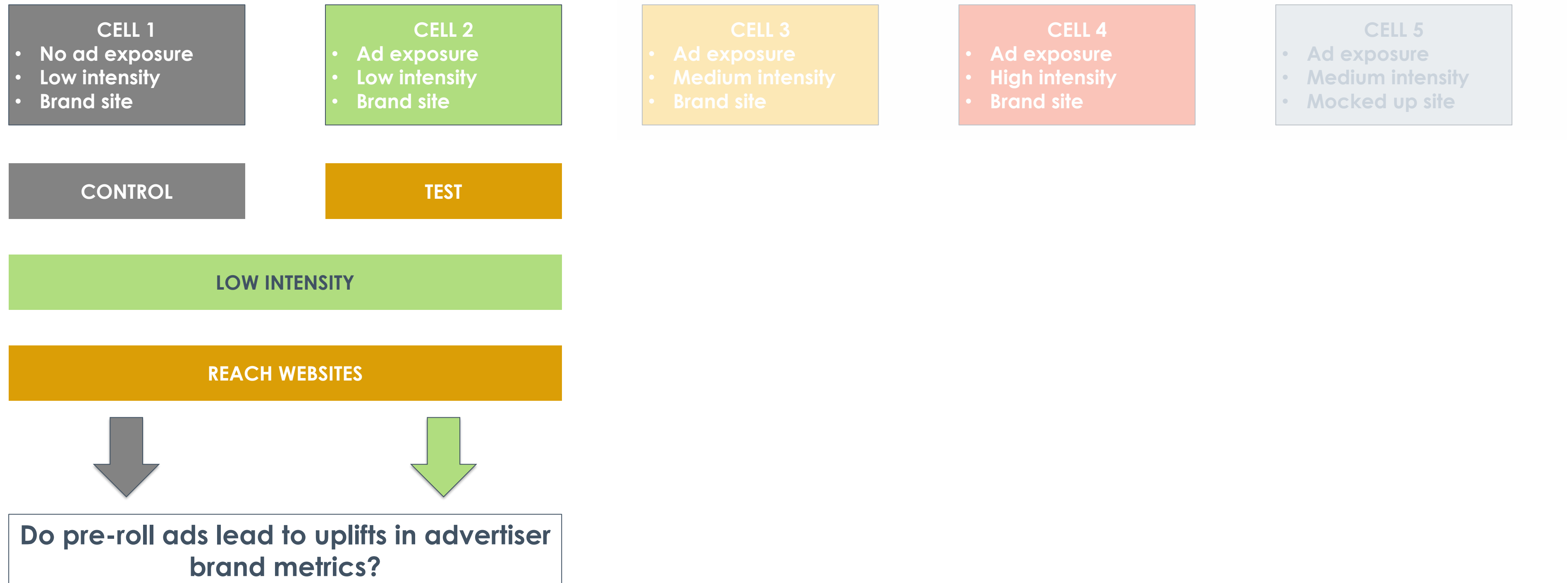
El Shafee Elsheikh and Alexandra Kotey, who were dubbed the 'George and Ringo' of the four-man gang, took part in brutal hostage executions in Syria.

Their English accents earned them the nickname 'The Beatles' among their hostages, who included Brits John Cantle, David Haines and Alan Henning.

The group was accused of being responsible for killing a number of high-profile Western captives, such as the beheading of US journalist James Foley.

Elsheikh and Kotey were captured in January last year, sparking an international row over whether they should be returned to the UK for trial or face justice in another jurisdiction.

# First of all we needed to prove the effectiveness of pre-roll ads in a forced exposure methodology





# This led to significant uplifts seen across a range of brand metrics

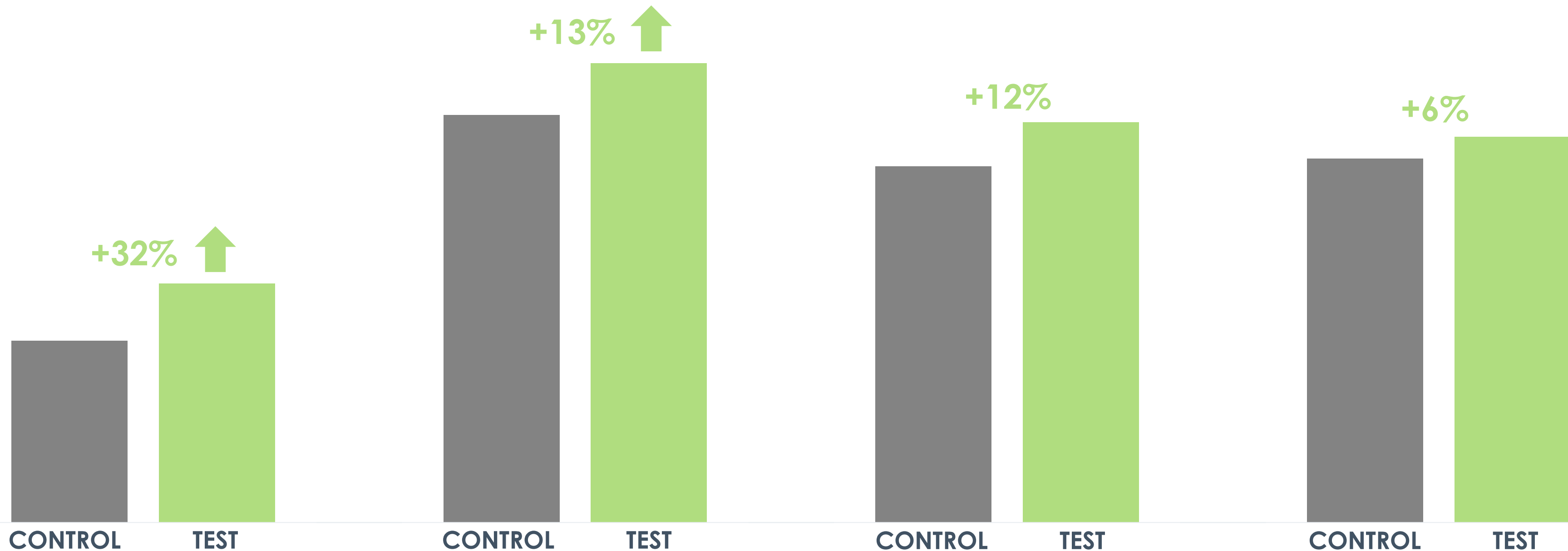
## TEST VS. CONTROL BRAND METRICS (AVERAGE ACROSS BRANDS)

SPONTANEOUS AD AWARENESS

SPONTANEOUS BRAND AWARENESS

CONSIDERATION

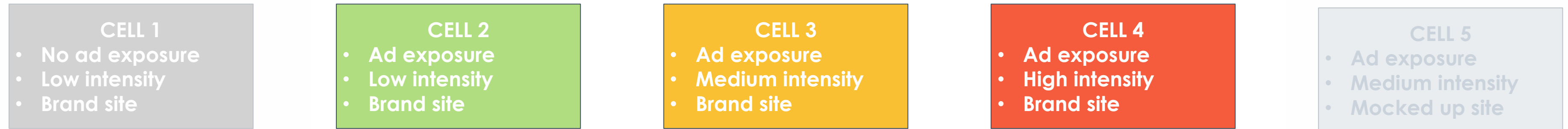
RECOMMENDATION



↑ Indicates significant difference between Control and Test group at 95% confidence level. + figures refer to percentage uplift between Control and Test group.

Source: Reach Solutions. Base: Average across brands – Awareness; Cell 1 Control (n=900) vs. Cell 2 Test (n=900)/Consideration and recommendation (Net likely); Those aware of each brand – Cell 1 Control (n=713) vs. Cell 2 Test (n=710)

# But is this positive brand impact affected by the digital news content it sits alongside?



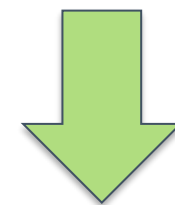
TEST

LOW INTENSITY

MEDIUM INTENSITY

HIGH INTENSITY

REACH WEBSITES

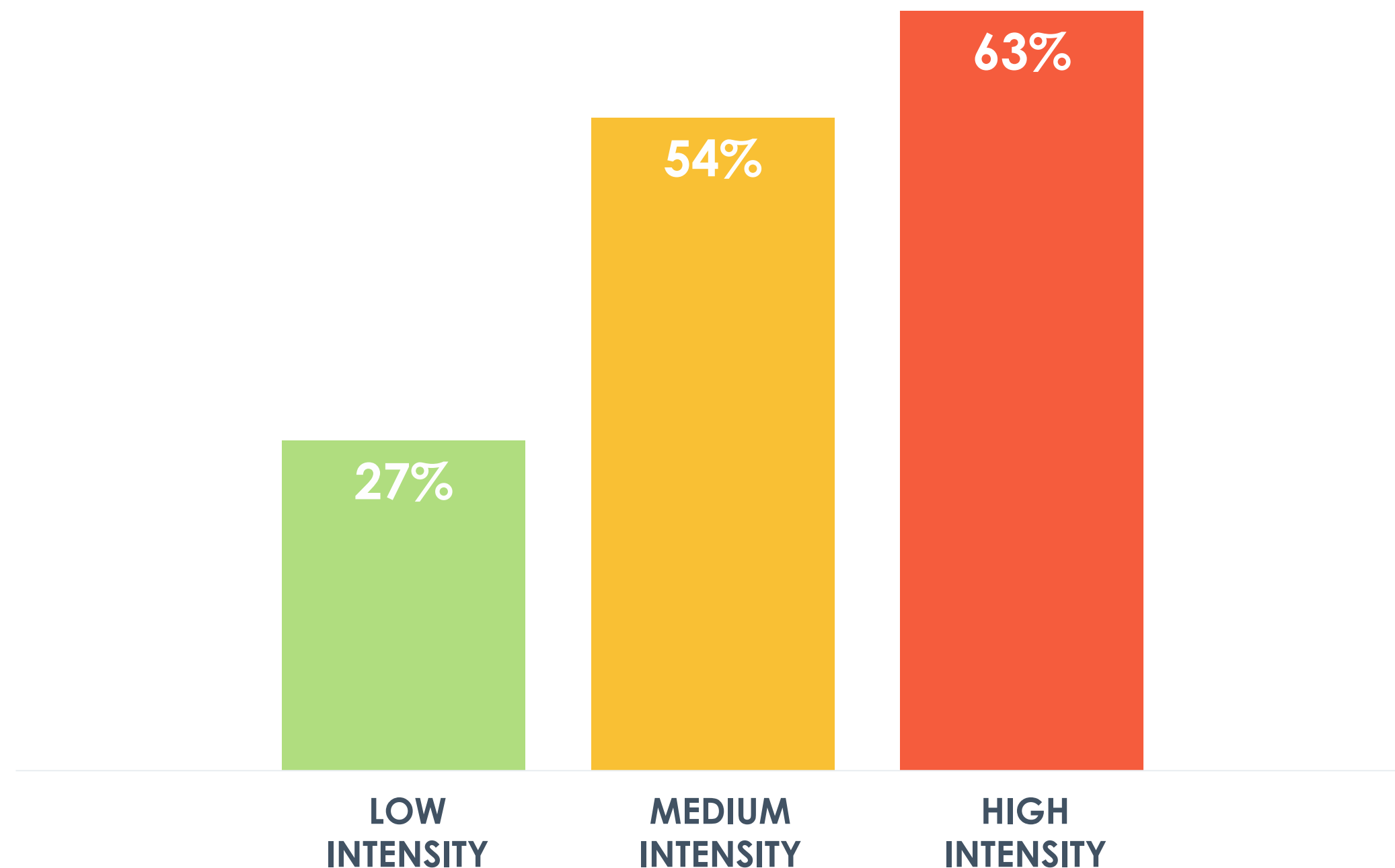


How are advertiser brand metrics impacted by increasing levels of digital newsbrand content intensity?



# Respondent negativity towards the articles was in line with our classification

% OF EMOTIONS TOWARDS ARTICLE CONTENT CLASSIFIED AS NEGATIVE



"It was a **fun, exciting** article that I **enjoyed** reading because I **love** Strictly Come Dancing. It **cheers me up** each week so seeing this video made me **happy**."

*Daily Star reader, low intensity*

"**Disgusted** that this is still happening in the modern world, **disappointed** in football fans, disappointed in UEFA."

*Express reader, medium intensity*

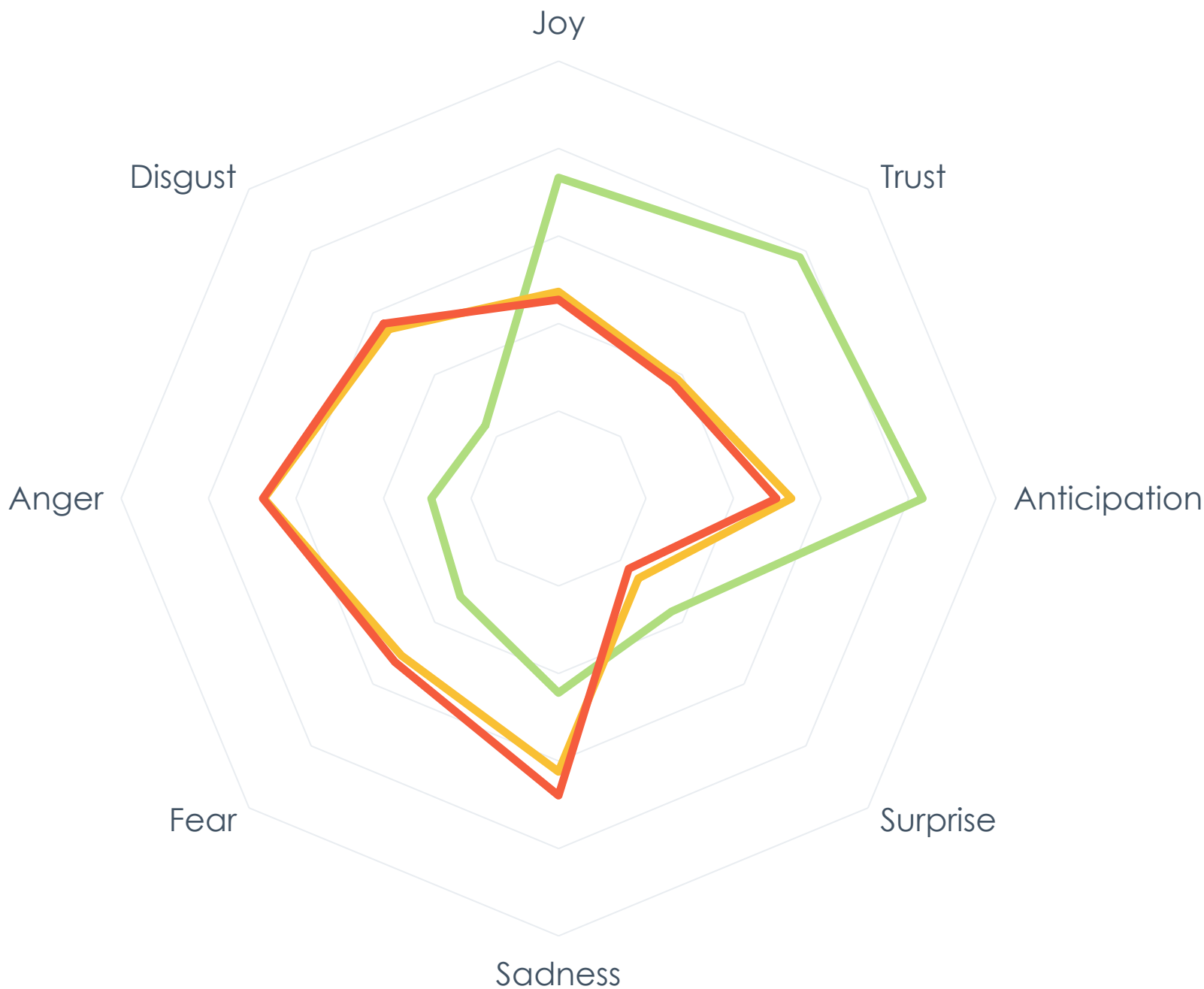
"**Scary** and makes you **worry** that more people are around. Quite **sad** that they killed people and that there are people in the world who are that **mean** and **cruel**."

*Mirror reader, high intensity*

# But these negative feelings were not transferred to the advertiser brands

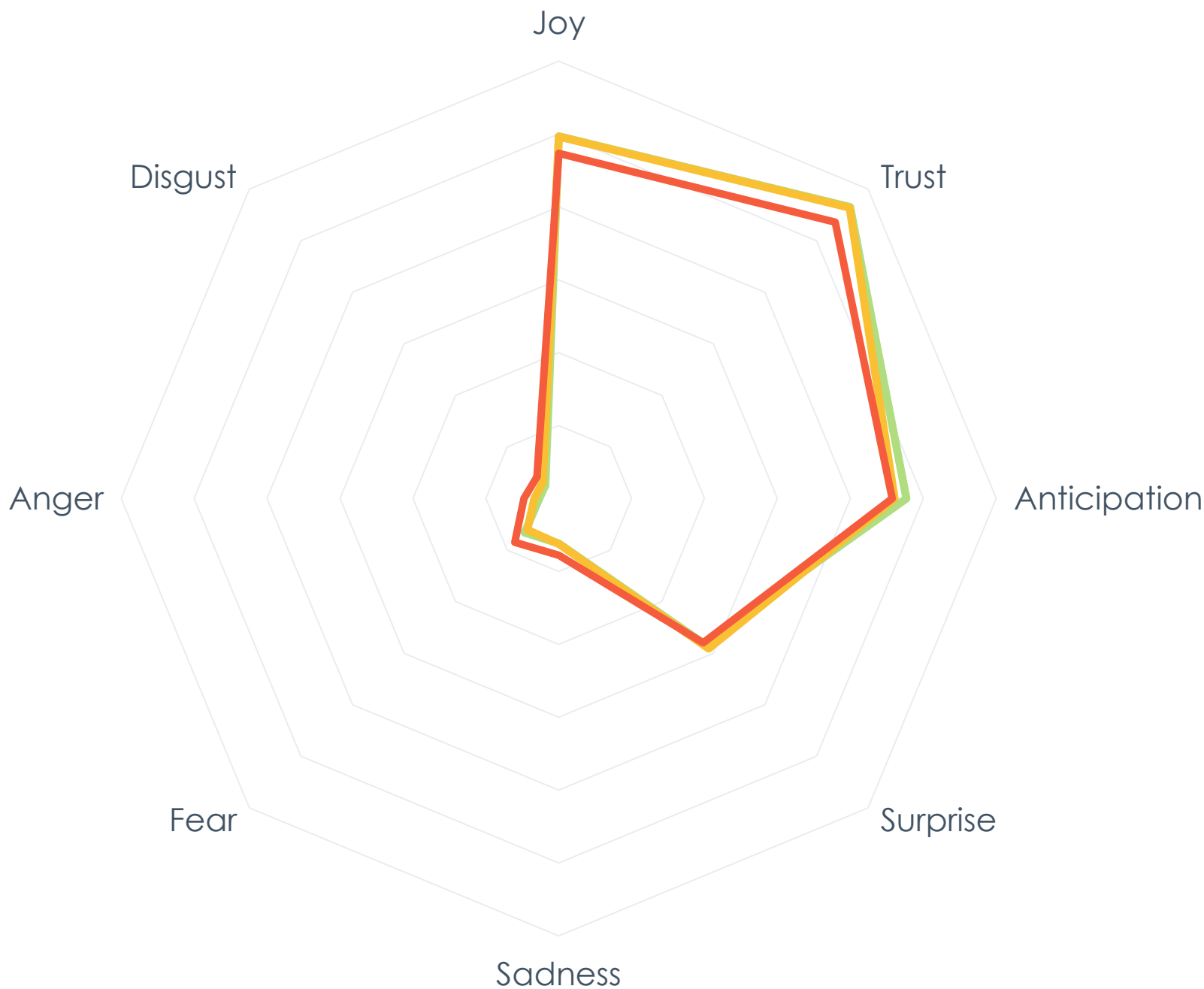
EMOTIONS TOWARDS THE **ARTICLE CONTENT**

— Low intensity    — Medium intensity    — High intensity



EMOTIONS TOWARDS THE **ADVERTISER BRANDS**

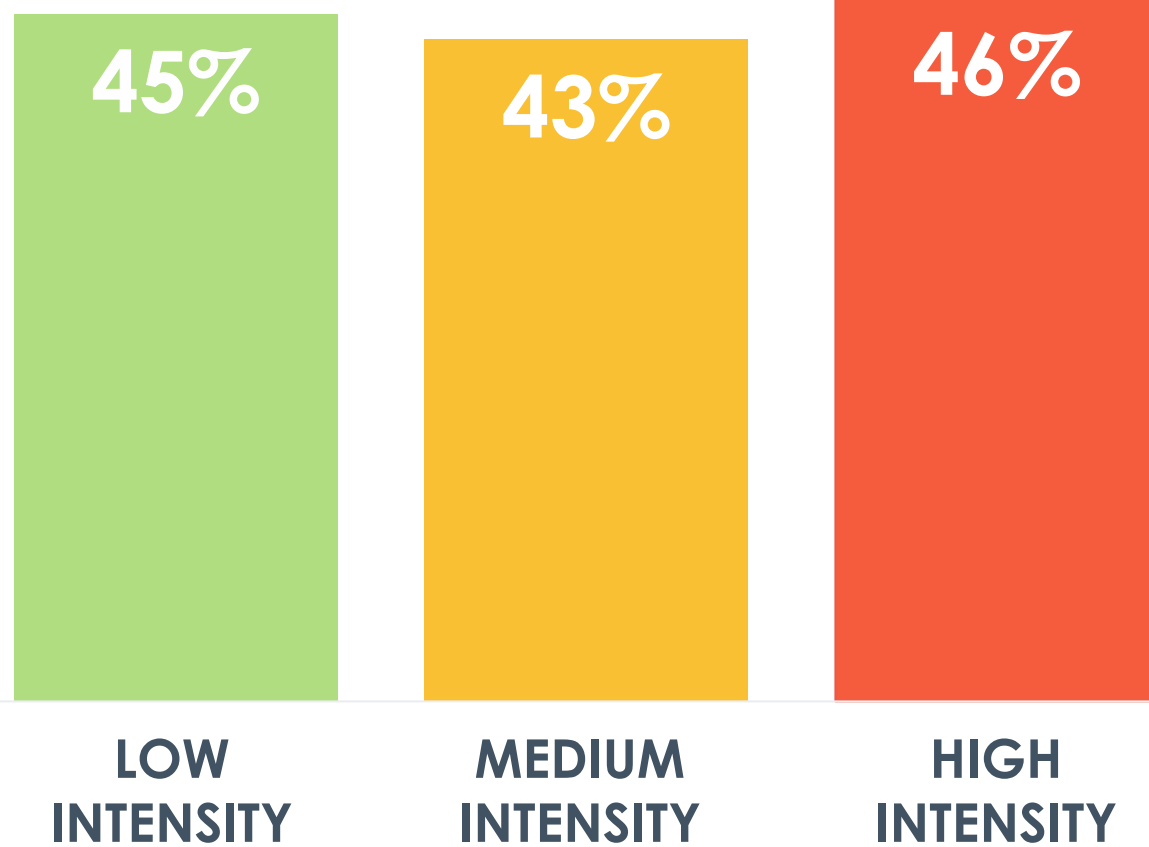
— Low intensity    — Medium intensity    — High intensity



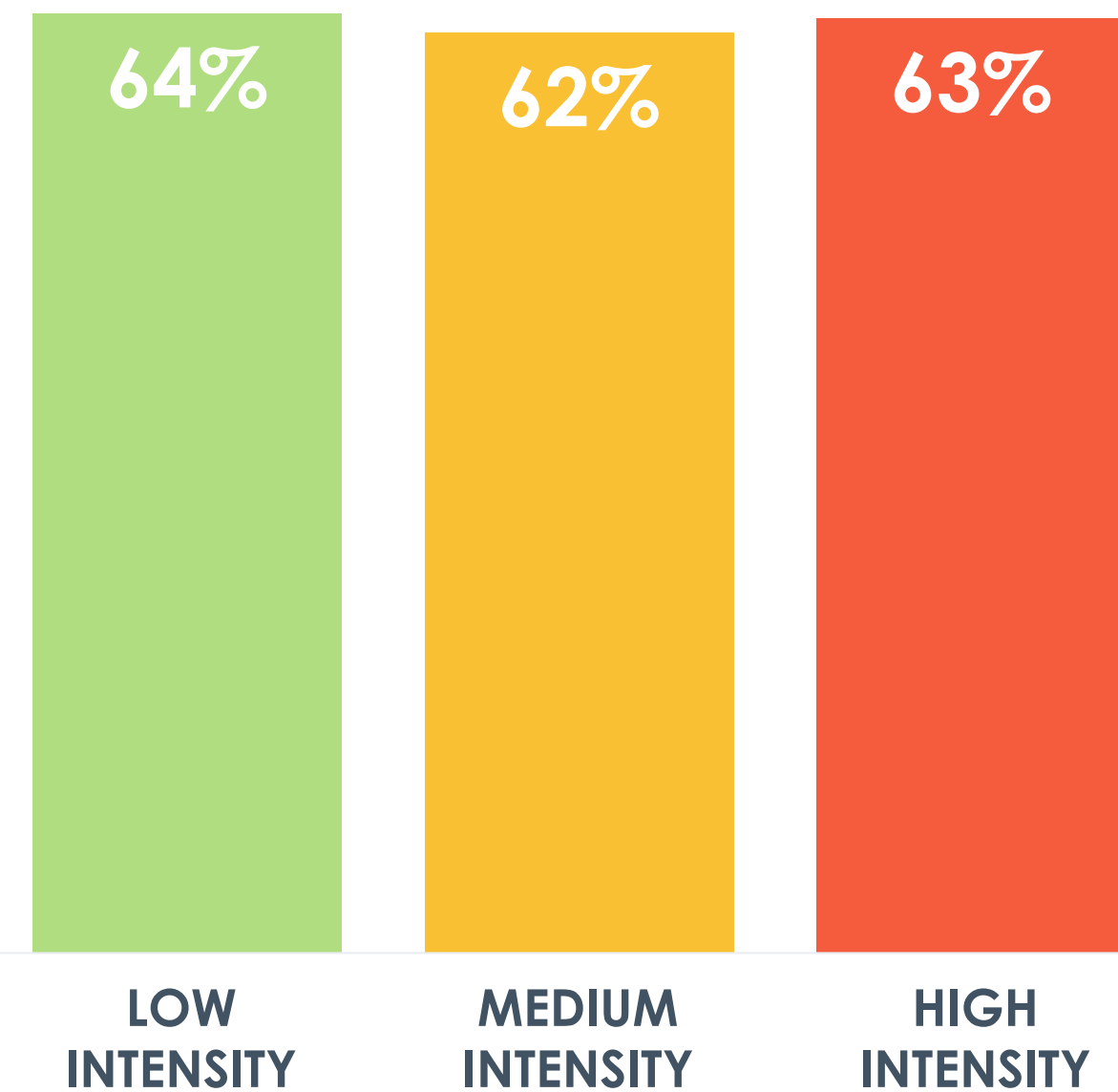


# The impact on brand metrics is the same regardless of the content intensity

POSITIVITY TOWARDS ADVERTISER BRAND (8-10 RATING) – AVERAGE ACROSS BRANDS

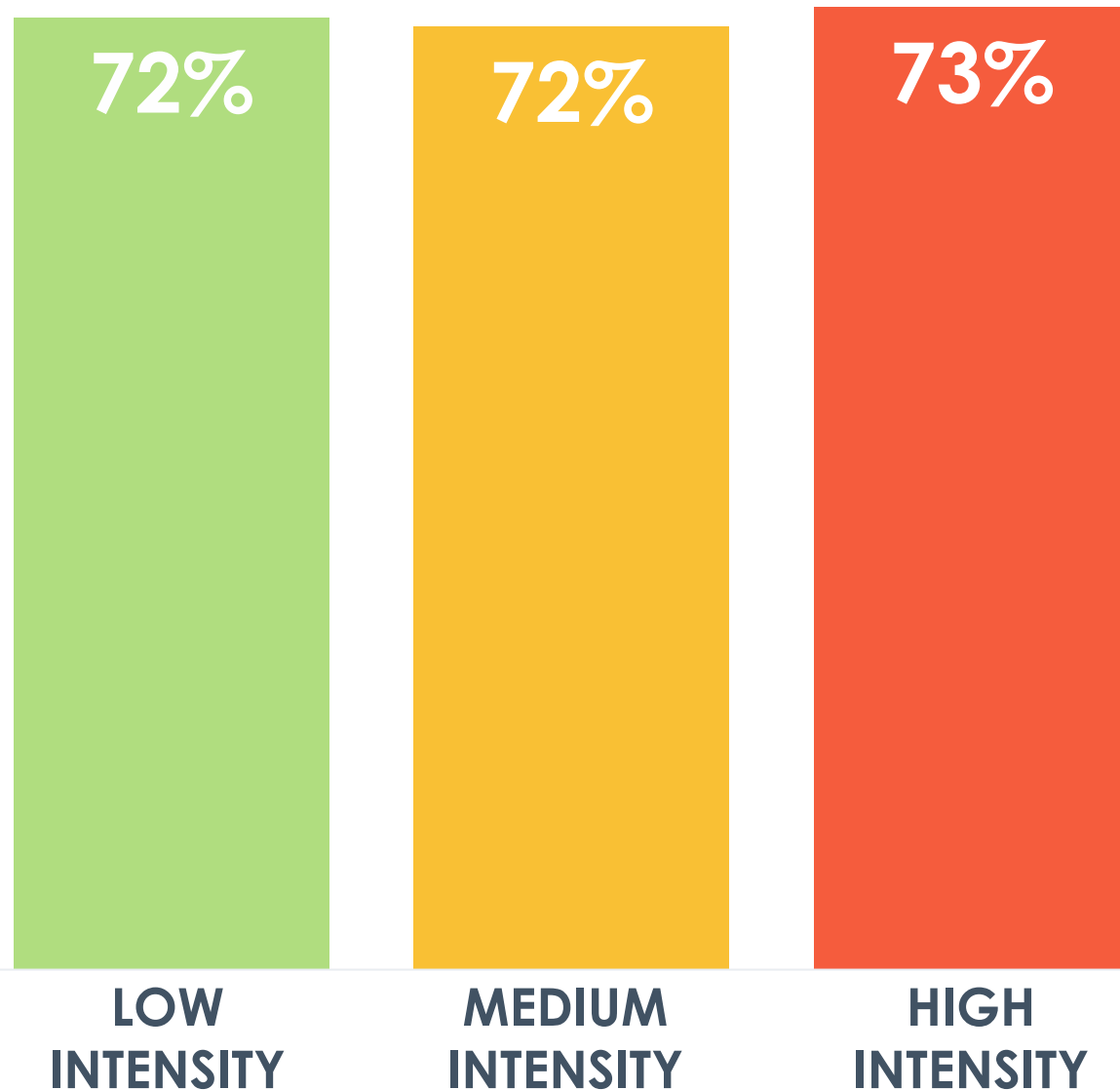


AGREEMENT WITH POSITIVE STATEMENTS ABOUT ADVERTISER BRAND – AVERAGE ACROSS BRANDS

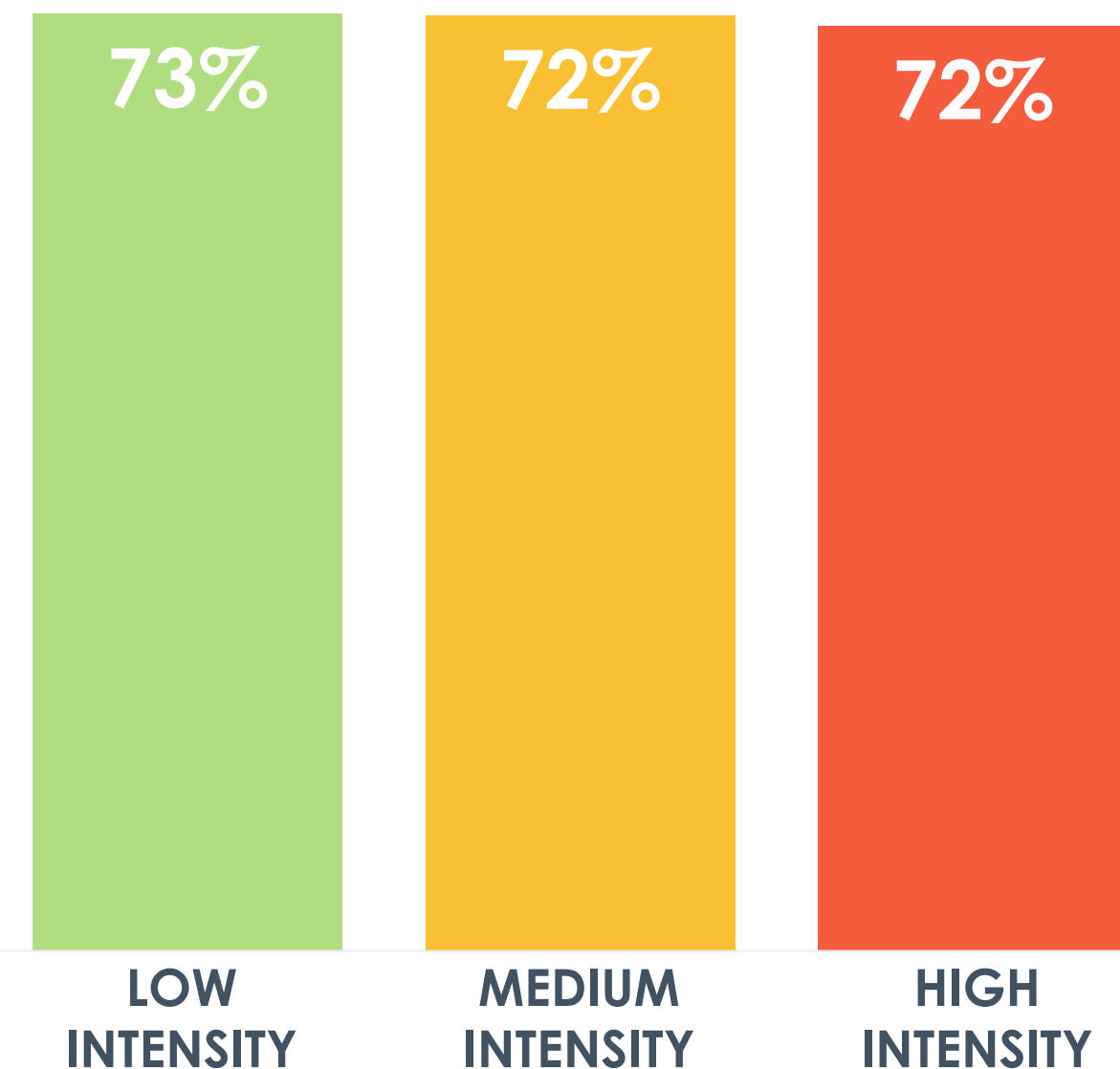


# Meaning that advertising is equally effective when shown with newsbrand content that would usually be blocked

ADVERTISER BRAND CONSIDERATION  
– AVERAGE ACROSS BRANDS



ADVERTISER BRAND RECOMMENDATION  
– AVERAGE ACROSS BRANDS





# But we also wanted to reinforce the importance of the environment


**N** NEWSWORKS | NEUROINSIGHT | **aop**

## Context Matters:

A brain science study revealing why ads in quality editorial environments are more effective

### Ads perform better in a premium editorial environment

Neuroscience demonstrates that the same ads stimulate very different brain responses, depending on where they are placed. Premium editorial contexts create stronger engagement, higher emotional intensity and greater long-term memory encoding, which is proven to correlate with decision-making and purchase behaviour.



**Engagement**  
(personal relevance)

**50%**  
higher on premium editorial sites than during general free browsing

**Left brain long-term memory encoding**  
(words and detail)

**21%**  
stronger on premium sites than during general free browsing

**42%**  
stronger on premium sites than on social media

**Right brain long-term memory encoding**  
(emotional/global features)


**13%**  
stronger on premium sites than during general free browsing

**9%**  
stronger on premium sites than on social media

**Emotional intensity**

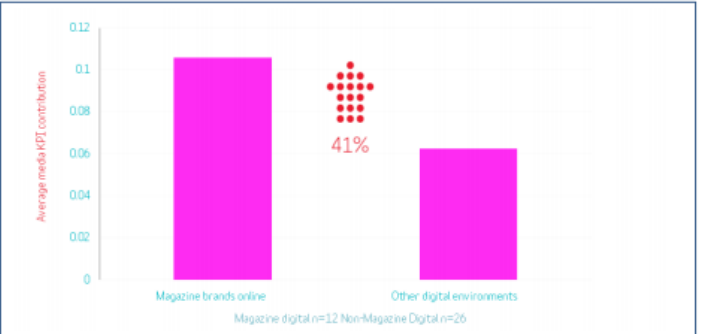
**25%**  
higher on premium sites than during general free browsing

**N** NEWSWORKS | NEUROINSIGHT | **aop**

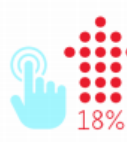


### Magazine brands online deliver a stronger impact on brand KPIs

We also compared magazines online with other digital environments and found that magazine brands online delivered a stronger impact on brand KPIs than other environments like YouTube, news sites, and social media.




The data here is from another study Magnetic conducted with Moat who are a digital analytics company and created Magazine media scores for Magnetic Publishers. They compared their benchmark scores to the norms for all Moat subscribers and found that the interaction rate was more than 18% higher for magazine brands online when compared with other digital environments, and that interaction time was 30% higher.



18%

Interaction rate



30%

Interaction time

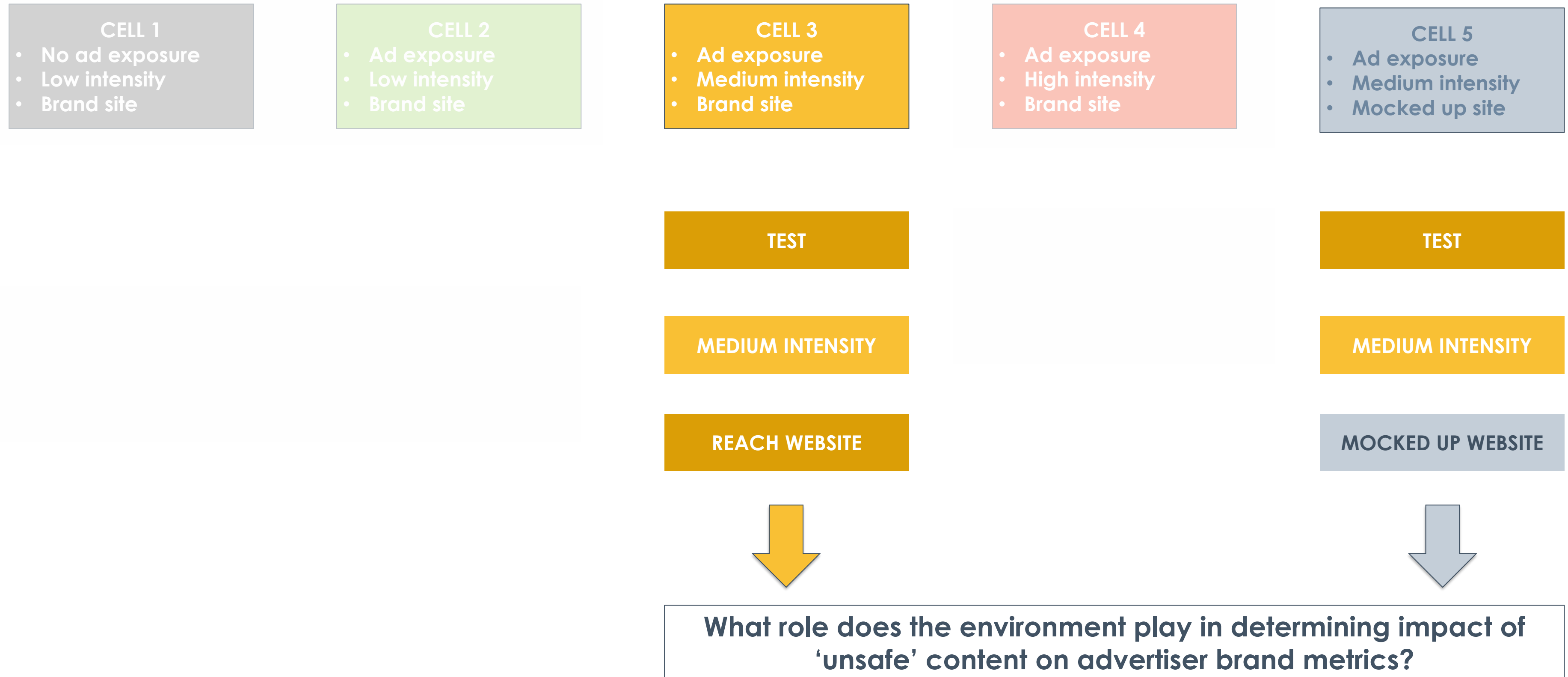
	MAGNETIC MEMBERS	INDUSTRY AVERAGES
Interaction Rate	3.54%	2.9%
Interaction Time	10.01 seconds	7.6 seconds
Attention Quality	33%	29.9%

**CARAT** Metrics That Matter, September 2016 | **MAGNETIC**

**METRICS THAT MATTER**

Anna Sampson, Magnetic  
Lizzie Rankin, Magnetic  
Alison Drummond, Carat

# By examining the role that context plays in brand safety



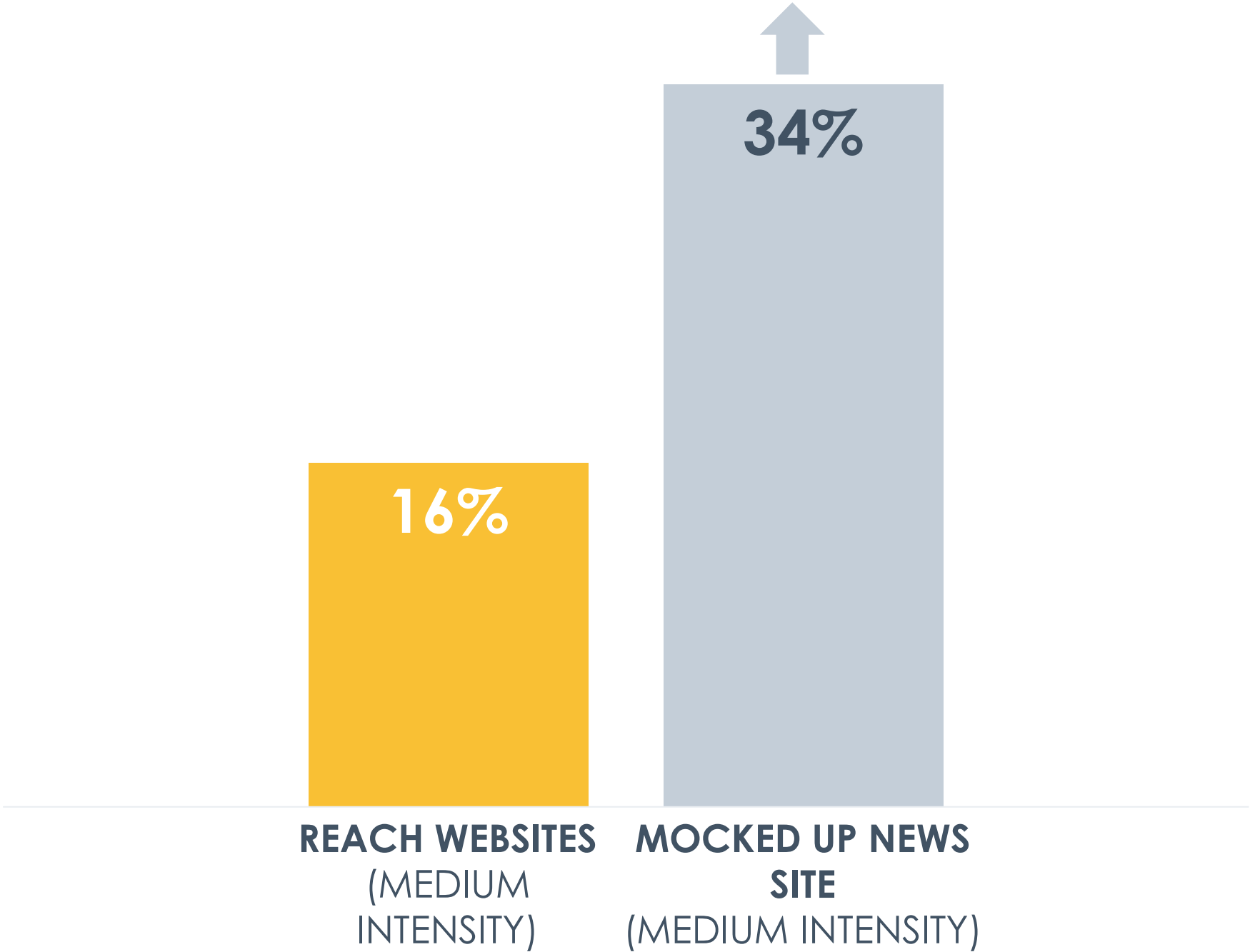


# We created a mocked up news website 'Circulate' to compare against our established newsbrands

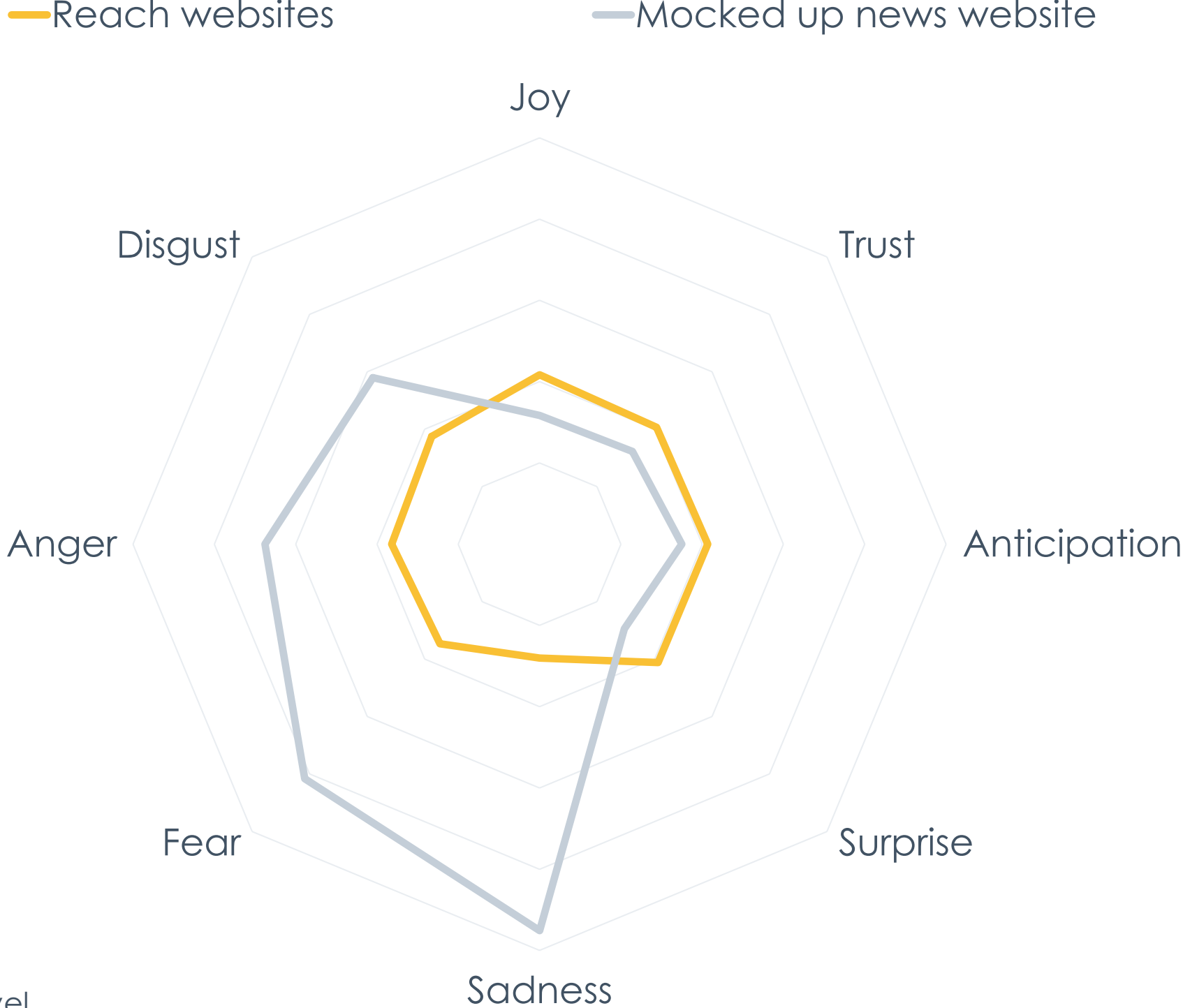


# An unfamiliar environment prompts negative emotions

% OF EMOTIONS TOWARDS WEBSITES CLASSIFIED AS NEGATIVE



EMOTIONS FELT TOWARDS WEBSITES (INDEX VS. AVERAGE)

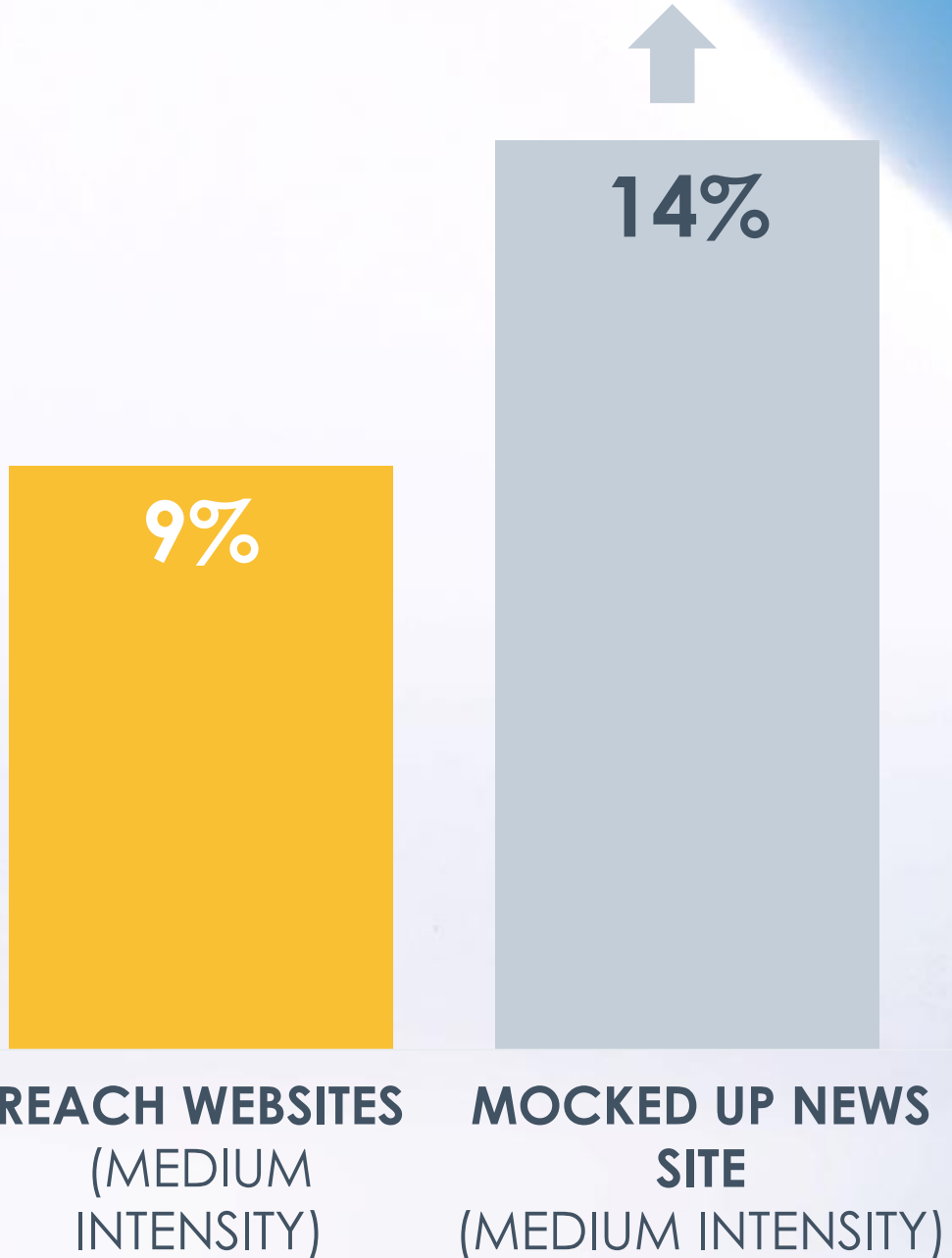


↑ Indicates significant difference between Reach websites and Mocked up website at 95% confidence level



# Which transfers to the advertiser brands

% OF EMOTIONS TOWARDS ADVERTISER BRANDS  
CLASSIFIED AS NEGATIVE

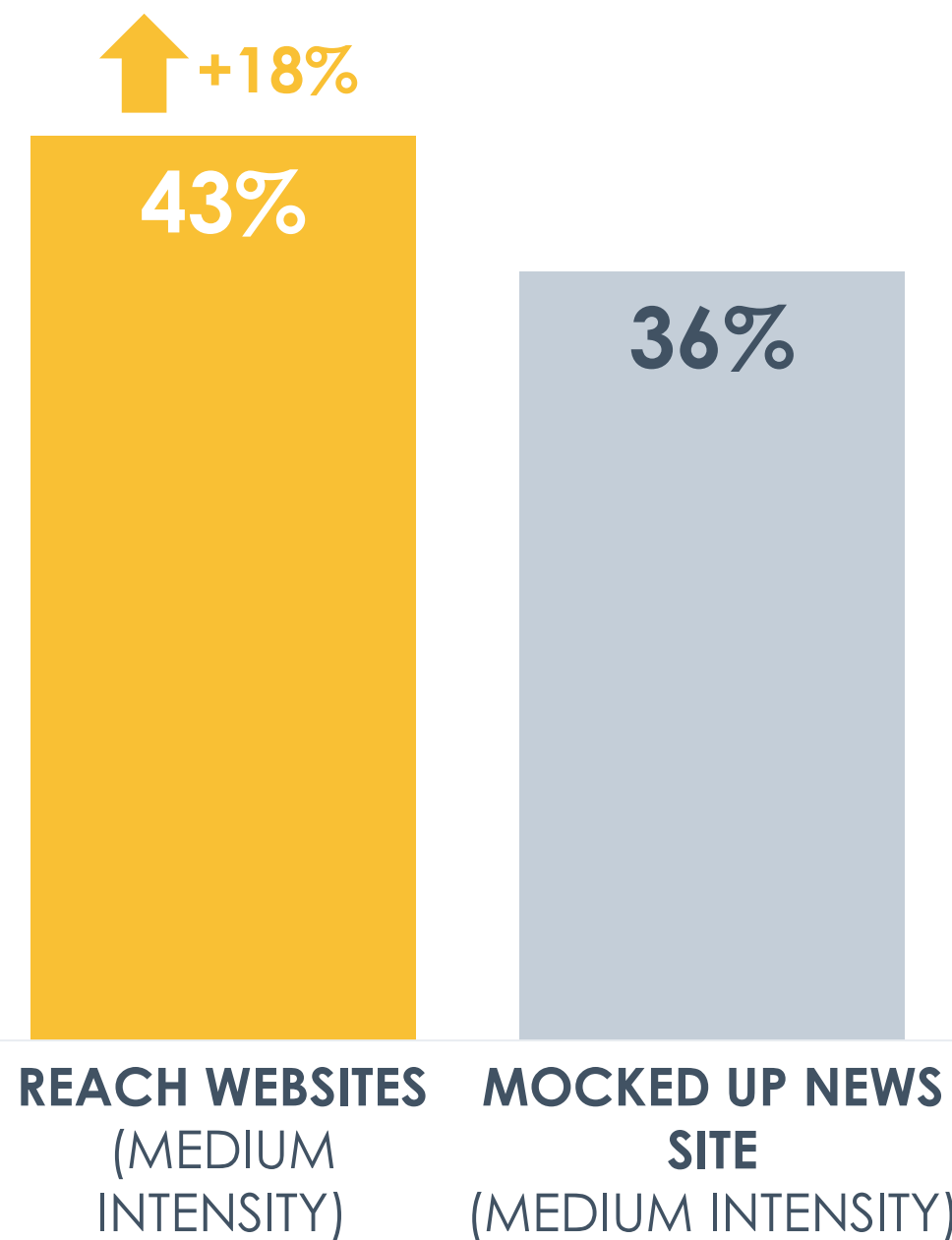


↑ Indicates significant difference between Reach websites and Mocked up website at 95% confidence level

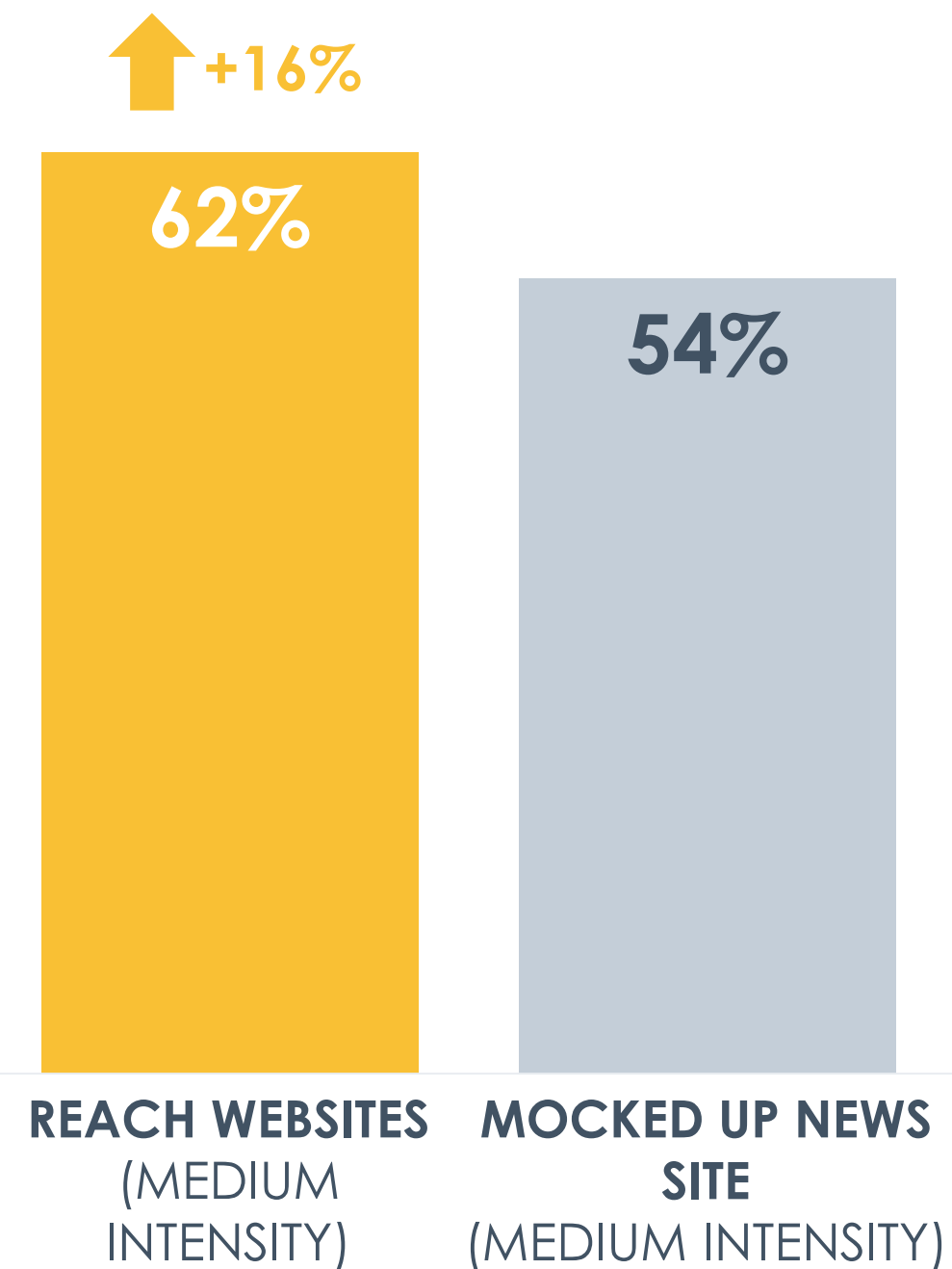
Source: Reach Solutions  
Base: Cell 3 – Reach websites (n=900), Cell 5 – Mocked up news website (n=900)

# Leading to more positive perceptions for brands advertised on trusted websites

POSITIVITY TOWARDS ADVERTISER BRANDS (8-10)  
– AVERAGE ACROSS BRANDS



AGREE WITH POSITIVE STATEMENTS ABOUT ADVERTISER BRANDS  
– AVERAGE ACROSS BRANDS



↑ Indicates significant difference between Reach websites and Mocked up website at 95% confidence level. + figures refer to percentage uplift between Reach websites and Mocked up website



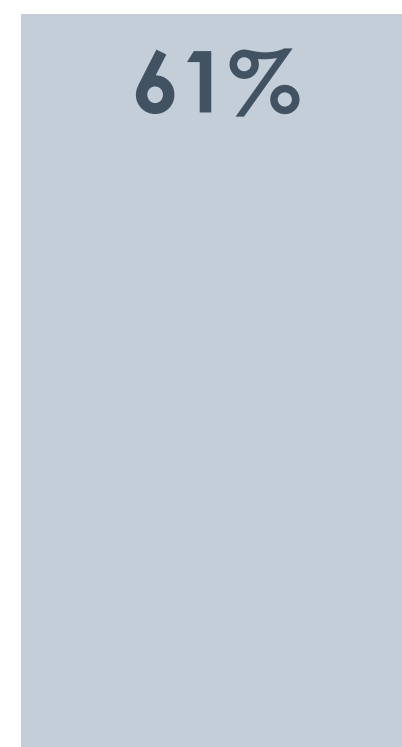
# Proving that brands are not negatively impacted by 'unsafe' content, as long as this is within a trusted environment

CONSIDERATION OF ADVERTISER BRANDS  
– AVERAGE ACROSS BRANDS

↑ +18%



REACH WEBSITES  
(MEDIUM  
INTENSITY)



MOCKED UP NEWS  
SITE  
(MEDIUM INTENSITY)

LIKELIHOOD TO RECOMMEND ADVERTISER BRANDS  
– AVERAGE ACROSS BRANDS

↑ +25%



REACH WEBSITES  
(MEDIUM  
INTENSITY)



MOCKED UP NEWS  
SITE  
(MEDIUM INTENSITY)



# Key take-outs

- 1** ● When shown in a trusted digital newsbrand environment, the level of content intensity does not adversely impact advertiser brands
- 2** ● Environment is key to this. When the safety of an established news site is taken away, responses to ads shown alongside intense content are significantly more negative



# The public know that not all digital platforms are equal





**And that  
quality  
environments  
matter**





**So brand safety shouldn't be a 'one size fits all' approach**





# Thanks for listening!

Full deck available to download from  
[reachsolutions.co.uk/insights](https://reachsolutions.co.uk/insights)

