



It's not an ad blocker, but it's a step in the right direction.

Google's new "ad filter" released today and built into the newest version of their Chrome web browser, was designed to reduce the number of people adopting ad blockers, which is having a major impact on their multi-billion dollar ad revenue stream. Google has backed, with muscle, the standard by the Coalition for Better Ads, and in one day has effectively dropped the gauntlet on sites with problematic ads.

Why would Google release a product that in some cases shuts off their own ads and revenue on sites that violate the Better Ads standard? The best way to explain this, is using an economic theory named "The Tragedy of the Commons", which was first proposed in an 1833 essay by Victorian economist William Forster Lloyd, entitled "Two lectures on the checks to population". In his essay, Lloyd described the effects of unregulated grazing on public lands colloquially called "the commons" in the British Isles. The tragedy, according to Lloyd, is that farmers can't self-regulate their grazing, resulting in overgrazing the land such that this public asset is depleted to the point where everyone loses. This is tragic because it seems preventable, if only... If only what?

The digital advertising and publishing world could not regulate itself, leading to some publishers "overgrazing" the public commons of our world wide web attention. More specifically, they over grazed users' available attention with distracting ads. In the real world when these kinds of things happen, for example when overfishing leads to depleted fish stocks, an authoritative agency needs to step in to establish penalties for those who deplete the shared resource.

Google is stepping in to establish penalties for websites that show the kinds of ads that motivate users to use ad blockers. In this case, the penalty that Google just established for over-fishing the sea of attention on the web is that all your ads will get blocked by the most popular browser on the planet. This helps preserve our shared resource (attention on the web) for all, without having a few bad actors ruin it for everyone else. This is good for everyone, most especially Google. They're doing this to reduce the adoption of ad blockers, which is seriously cutting into their revenue. They hope that the small amount of revenue they may lose by blocking their own ads should be more than made up by reducing the number of people adopting ad blockers. Or will it?

We at Adtoniq fully support Google's efforts to improve the quality of our online experiences, and when Chrome's ad filter blocks a site, our technology will not bypass Chrome's ad filer. However, we think it's important to point out that this isn't a replacement for a real ad blocker. If this were a real ad blocker, Google would let you disable all ads on a site, and they would also give you the option of blocking tracking products like Google Analytics, among other things. Because of these notable omissions, we expect that the trend of increased adoption of ad blockers will continue.