Context adjacency research

Agenda

01

Background
context and
executive
summary

Advertisers want to ensure that consumers do not associate their brand with content that is not suitable to their brand identity.

Trusted ad experience

Ads will not appear alongside content that does not follow our Community Standards and Community Guidelines, so there is a safe environment on our technologies[1].
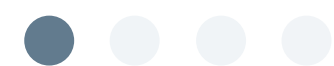
Advertisers have additional tools and controls to manage their brand suitability preferences.

Consumer insight

Research provides an additional tool to help advertisers understand consumers' association of an ad (and brand) with adjacent content, so advertisers have the insights to build safe, effective brand identities.

[1] For instance, 97.2% of content displaying adult nudity and sexual activity on Facebook was removed before a user reported. Source: Community Standards Enforcement Report Q2 2022
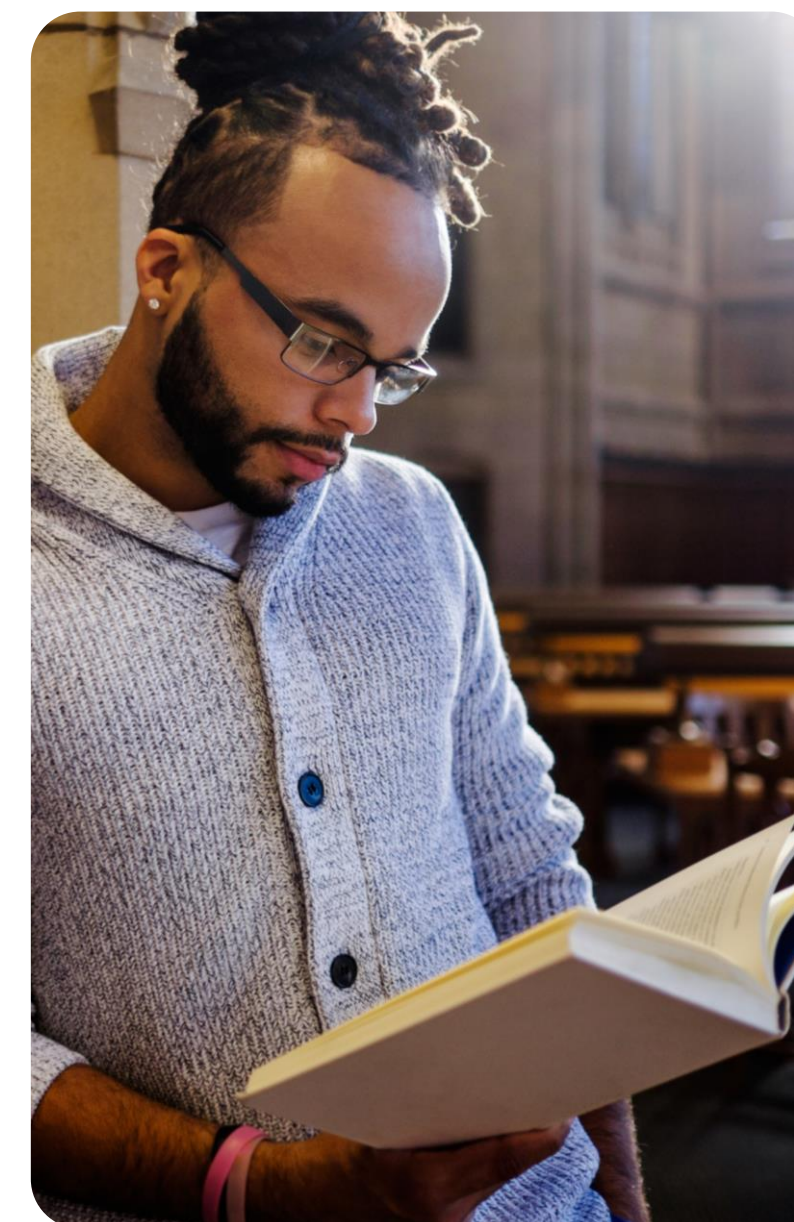
Adjacency research was designed to understand the impact of unsuitable content in Feed environments.
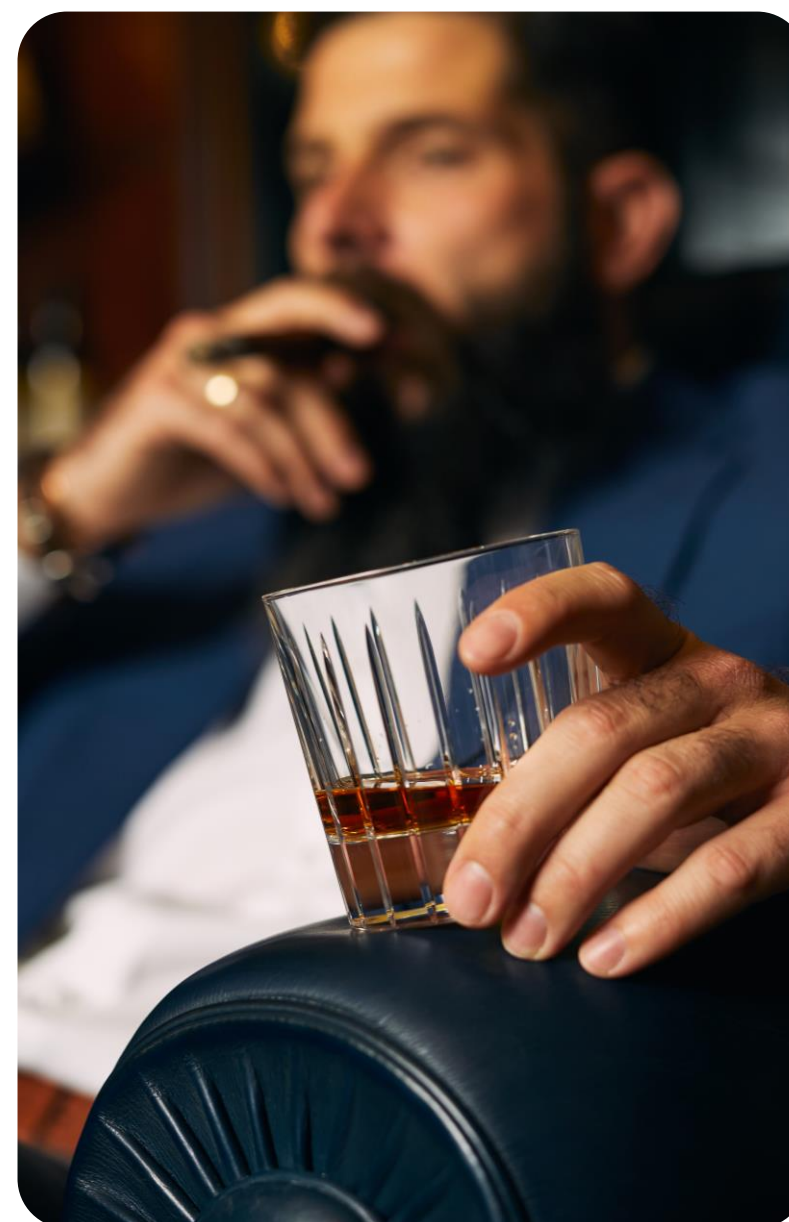
Brands have concern regarding the risk of their ads placed next to unsuitable content in Feed environments.
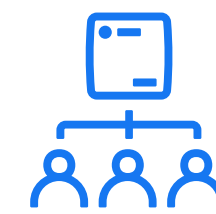
Past research does not align with what is now industry standard around the suitability framework.

Meta wanted a comprehensive understanding of the issue supported by data-driven methodology.

Executive summary

Meta designed a data-driven approach to address industry concerns raised around the risk of ad-adjacent content, keeping these key elements in mind:

→ Utilizing both **implicit and explicit measures** gives a holistic understanding of context adjacency.

→ It's **aligned to industry standards** (e.g., GARM suitability framework), so that we're utilizing common terms/definitions.

→ The focus is on **brand suitability risk** (vs. brand unsafe risk) on **social media feed** platforms, as they were the priority environments to understand adjacency risk.
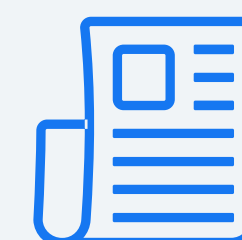
THE RESEARCH CONCLUDED THE FOLLOWING OUTCOMES:

→ There's **minimal-to-no association** for content adjacent to ads regardless of content risk severity across the GARM suitability framework categories

→ Ad adjacency to risky content **does not impact brand value.**

02

What are we doing here?
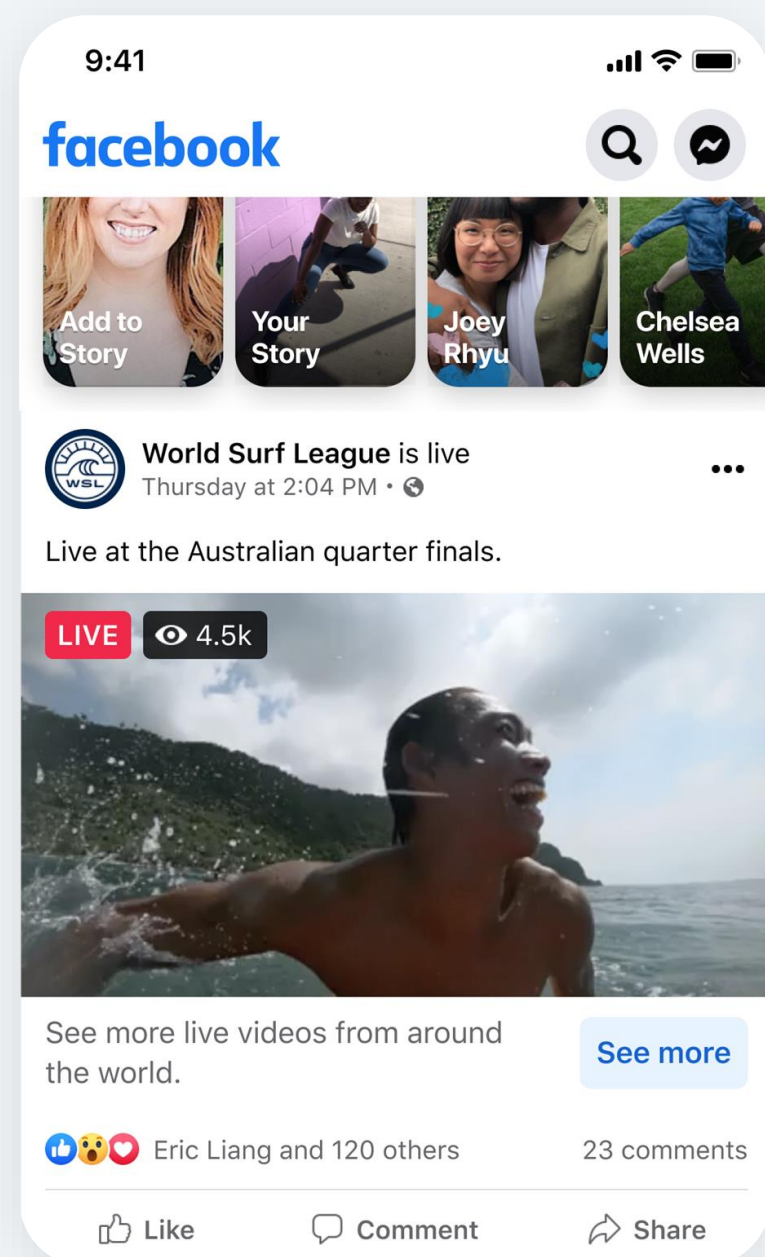
Research goals and parameters

Meta partnered with a global CPG brand and Neurons Inc to develop data-driven definitions and measurement tools for context adjacency. Our goals are:

Can we create a data-driven **understanding of adjacency?**

Can we understand the **actual impact on brands?**

SOCIAL MEDIA FEED PLATFORMS

HIGH-EQUITY CPG BRAND ADS

RISKY AND NEUTRAL CONTENT

Organic contents are defined by GARM Suitability Framework as neutral, low, medium and high risk. We tested low/neutral, medium and high-risk contents in two of the 11 problem areas defined by GARM.

BEHAVIORAL MEASURES

We are using implicit methods to understand the user associations of context adjacency, and both explicit and implicit methods to measure brand impact.

03

How are we doing this?

Research methodology

# Conscious and unconscious measurements together provide full insight.

Consumer thought and behavior like association are driven by both conscious and unconscious processes —so we measured both.

EXPLICIT MEASUREMENT

Explicitly stated **associations** typically only represent those associations that are most salient, easiest to share and sometimes the least problematic.

Explicit measurement tools like surveys, interviews and focus groups provide valuable insight into consumer behavior.
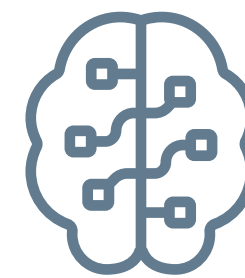
IMPLICIT MEASUREMENT

Implicit associations can measure smaller changes and nuances that otherwise do not register at the conscious level

Implicit measurements offer additional insights for more holistic and sensitive understanding.

Sources: (1) Pessiglione, M., Petrovic, P., Daunizeau, J., Palminteri, S., Dolan, R. J., & Frith, C. D. (2008). Subliminal Instrumental Conditioning Demonstrated in the Human Brain. Neuron, 59(4), 561–567. (2) Santos, J. P., Seixas, D., Brandão, S., & Moutinho, L. (2011). Investigating the Role of the Ventromedial Prefrontal Cortex in the Assessment of Brands. Frontiers in Neuroscience, 5(June), 8. (3) De Houwer, Jan. "What Are Implicit Measure and Why Are We Using Them?" Handbook of Implicit Cognition and Addiction, edited by Reinout W. Wiers and Alan W. Stacy, Sage, 2006, 11-28.
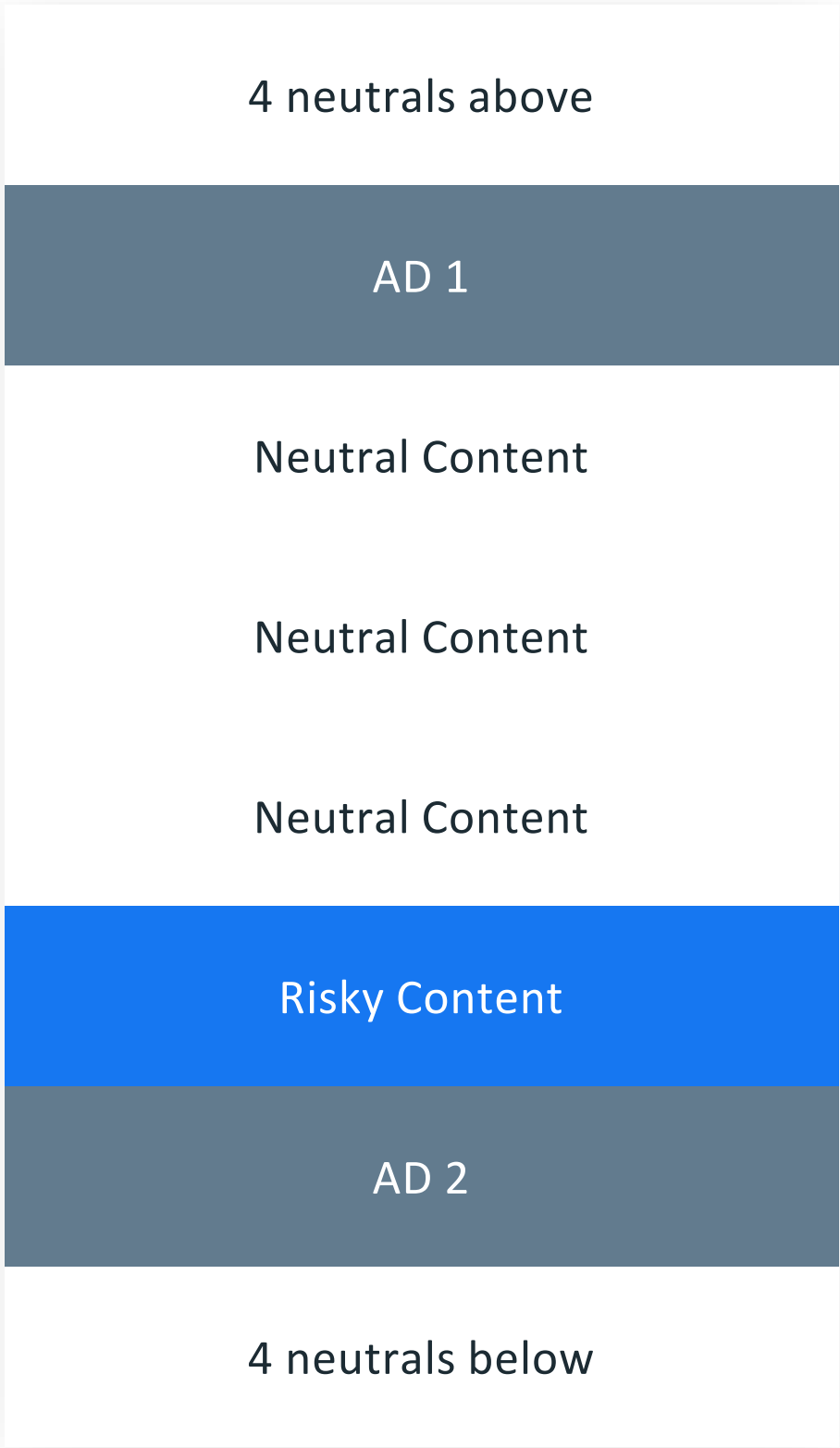
Implicit Association Test (IAT) research overview:

Selection and labeling of risky content

Don't miss this year's swimsuit competition!

Eric Liang and 120 others   23 comments

Like   Comment   Share

Note: These visuals are for representation only and they differ from the actual visuals used in the research.

Exposure to neutral and risky content on Feed

4 neutrals above

AD 1

Neutral Content

Neutral Content

Neutral Content

Risky Content

AD 2

4 neutrals below

Measure user reaction time

Great!

During the next task, you will see a word appear before the brand task.

You don't have to do anything while the word is there, just focus on answering as quickly as possible when the brand appears.

Press continue to start the task

Continue
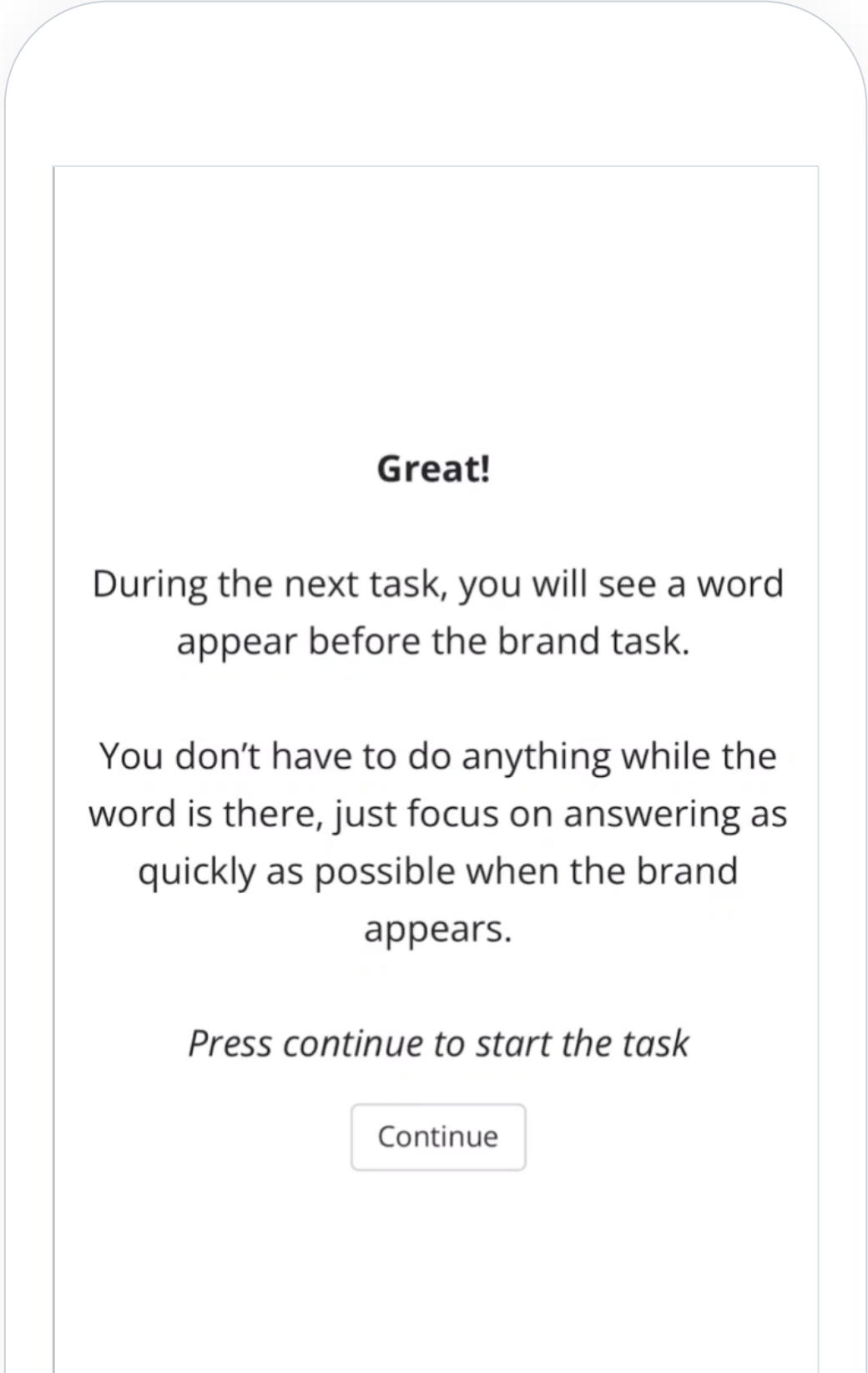
IAT research design: Pre-work

Association keywords

For each of the neutral and risky organic content selected for the tests, we asked a separate group for the word most associated with the content seen.

Sexually suggestive content keywords:

"Sex" and "Competition"

Socially sensitive content keywords:

"Officer" and "Wall"

Neutral content keywords:

"Animal," "Wave" and "Popcorn"

Neutral content

→ "Animal"

Medium risk content

→ "Competition"

STEP 1

Stimuli exposure

Each participant in the US went through simulated mobile digital media experiences—one for each risk level.

In a neutral simulation, there's no exposure to risky content.

In a risky simulation, risky content was inserted either directly above/below the test ads or four placements above/below.

Neutral Content	Neutral Content
Neutral Content	Neutral Content
Neutral Content	Neutral Content
Neutral Content	Neutral Content
AD 1	AD 1
Neutral Content	Neutral Content
Neutral Content	Neutral Content
Neutral Content	Neutral Content
Neutral Content	Risky Content
AD 2	AD 2
Neutral Content	Neutral Content
Neutral Content	Neutral Content
Neutral Content	Neutral Content
Neutral Content	Neutral Content

Neutral   **Risky**

Example of a high-risk Feed

Neutral Content

Neutral Content

Neutral Content

Neutral Content

AD 1

Neutral Content

Neutral Content

Neutral Content

Risky Placement

AD 2

Neutral Content

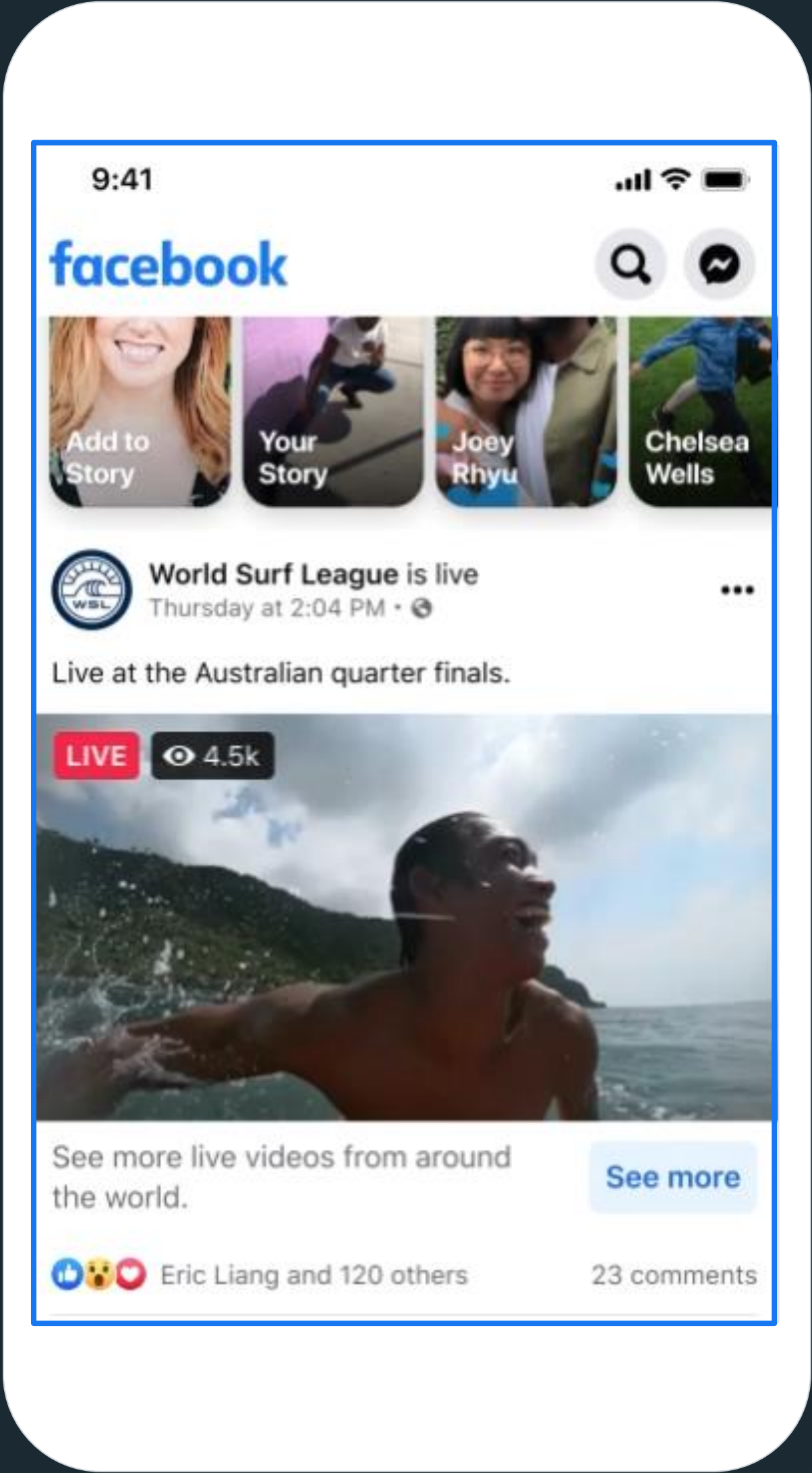Neutral Content

Neutral Content

Neutral Content

STEP 2

Brand categorization

A pre-identified keyword flashes on participant's screen for <1 sec... followed by a brand categorization question.

Participants are asked to select
the box that corresponds to the shown brand
logo.

Measure reaction time in milliseconds.
A faster reaction time signals higher association.

Example of an IAT test
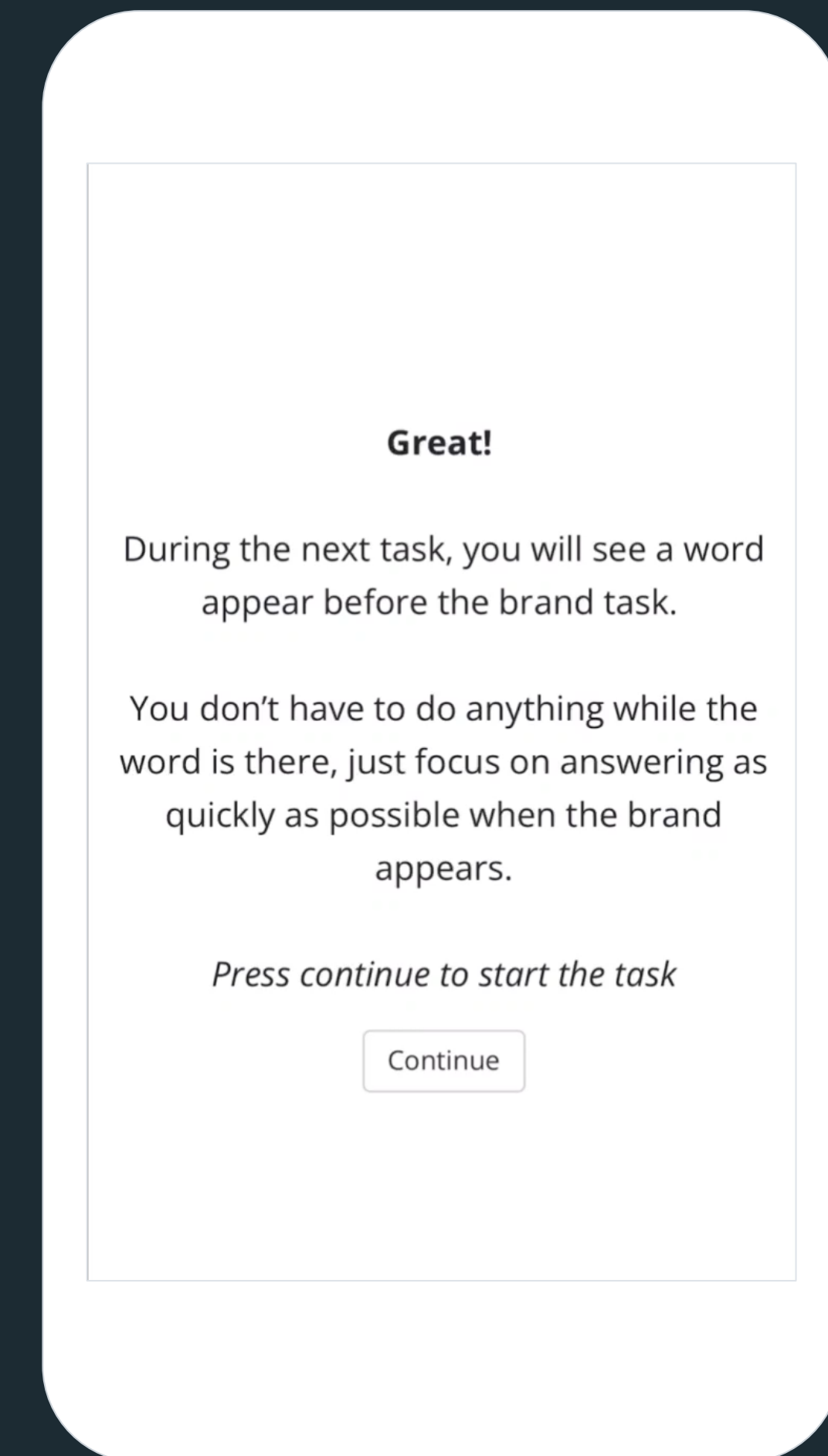
If there is high association between the content and the ad, the presented keyword will trigger both content and ad in the user's mind, resulting in faster logo recognition and a faster survey reaction time.

If there was low or no association, the content recalled by the keyword would not connect and call the brand's ad to mind. As a result, users will need a few milliseconds longer to complete the task.

Great!

During the next task, you will see a word appear before the brand task.

You don't have to do anything while the word is there, just focus on answering as quickly as possible when the brand appears.

Press continue to start the task
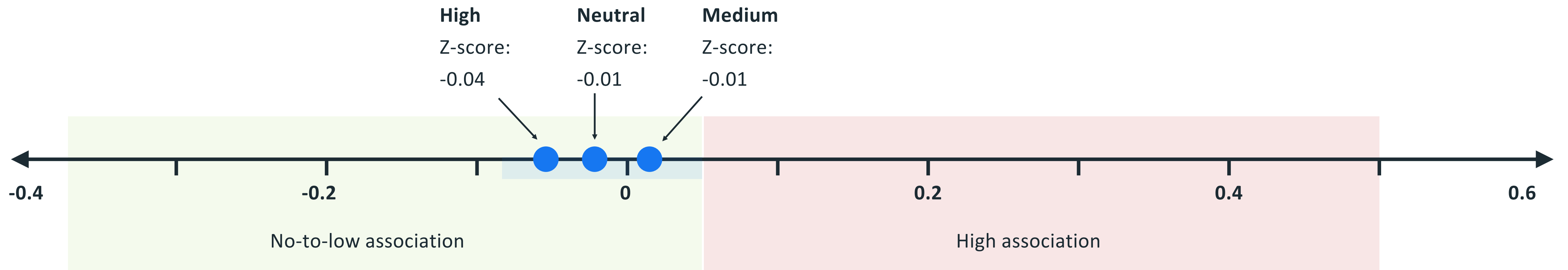
Continue

04

What did
we find?

Research findings

Key takeaways

1 Associations on tested feed platforms are on the lower end of the spectrum.

2 Content risk severity does not increase user association.

High
Z-score:
-0.04

Neutral
Z-score:
-0.01

Medium
Z-score:
-0.01

-0.4   -0.2   0   0.2   0.4   0.6

No-to-low association   High association

Other notable mentions from the data:

- Both directly adjacent (+1/-1) and nearby (+4/-4) contents showed low association levels.

- Time spent on organic content was not a significant factor in driving association in feed platforms tested.

Explicit/implicit measurements show that proximity of risky Feed content had no

brand impact.

Both implicit and explicit measures show no significant change in level of association or values across risk severity levels, regardless of proximity.

Implicit brand dimensions

IAT Brand Trust and Quality: Association between "Trust"/"Quality" and risk levels.

Explicit brand dimensions

Brand Trust: How would you rate the brand in terms of trustworthiness?

Brand Memory: Do you remember seeing an ad from the brand during the social media session today?

Purchase Intent: Please rate how likely you are to purchase or use the products from the brand?

Brand Awareness: Have you heard of the brand?

Brand Favorability: What's your opinion of the brand?

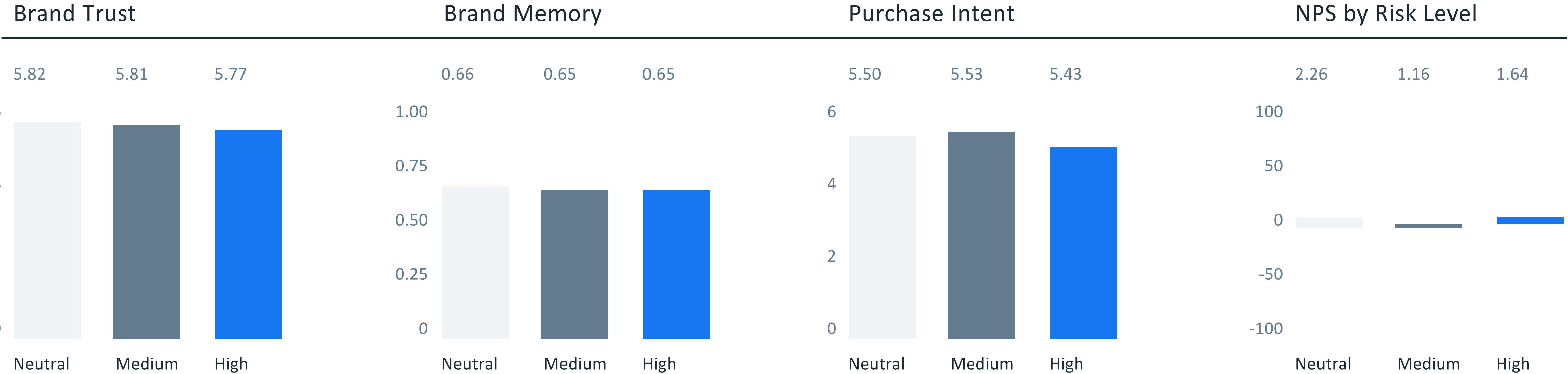**Net Promoter Score:** Would you recommend this brand to a friend or family?

Source: Meta-commissioned online study of 1915 U.S. participants (Age 18-55) in December 2021.

Example brand survey results

Brand Trust

5.82	5.81	5.77

Neutral · Medium · High

Brand Memory

0.66	0.65	0.65

Neutral · Medium · High

Purchase Intent

5.50	5.53	5.43

Neutral · Medium · High

NPS by Risk Level

2.26	1.16	1.64

Neutral · Medium · High

Takeaway 1

There's **minimal-to-no association** for content adjacent to ads regardless of risk severity.

Takeaway 2

Adjacency/proximity to risky Feed content **does not impact brand value.**

Takeaway 3

Implicit measures provide **additional insight** into understanding the impact of content/ad adjacency.