

Every disapproved product is a **gap** *in your campaign coverage.*

The gaps don't show up until you count them.



▶ THE SCALE PROBLEM

1 *in* **5**

Shopping listings in a typical apparel catalog has at least one active disapproval.

Source: GoDataFeed audit data 2024–2025

Why the number stays high:

- Google updates Shopping policies continuously. Every update creates new disapproval conditions — without notifying sellers.
- Merchant Center surfaces disapprovals inside diagnostics. There's no push alert. Brands that don't check don't find out.
- Disapproved products are removed from campaigns silently. Impressions drop, but the cause doesn't show up in your ads data.



Google doesn't reject your ad. *It removes the product from it.*

1

You submit a feed

Products push to Google Merchant Center from your ecommerce platform via GoDataFeed or another tool.

2

Google validates attributes

Each product is checked against Shopping policy requirements. Missing fields, format errors, and policy violations are flagged per product.

3

Disapproved products go dark

Flagged products are removed from eligible campaigns. They don't serve ads. Your budget shifts to what's left — or just stops spending.

The policy check is per-product, per-attribute, per-channel. One wrong field takes down one listing, not the whole feed.



Five attributes account for most *apparel* disapprovals.

Missing size, color, gender, or age_group

Required for all apparel on Google. If your Shopify variants don't map cleanly to these fields, products get pulled.

Price mismatch

Feed price doesn't match the price on the landing page. Google crawls your site. Discrepancies flag immediately.

Image policy violations

Promotional overlays, watermarks, borders, or placeholder images. Google's image policy is stricter than most brands expect.

GTIN errors or missing GTINs

Required for branded products. Missing or invalid GTINs cause disapprovals and suppress buy-box eligibility.

Availability mismatch

Feed says 'in stock.' Landing page shows 'sold out.' Google flags this as misleading. Inventory-triggered suppression is the prevention.



A disapproval doesn't show up in your ad account. *It shows up in your ROAS.*

THE SCENARIO

You have 4,000 apparel SKUs. 800 are disapproved — most from missing gender or size attributes. Your Shopping campaigns are running on 80% of your catalog. Your budget is competing for impressions against brands showing 100%.

20%

fewer eligible products in your campaigns

CPCs

rise as budget concentrates on fewer SKUs

Gap

in coverage competitors are filling



Pull your Merchant Center diagnostics *right*

now.

These four numbers tell you most of what you need to know.

Disapproval count

[Products](#) > [Diagnostics](#) > [Item issues](#)

If this number is above 0 and you haven't looked at it this week, it's been growing.

Top disapproval reasons

[Products](#) > [Diagnostics](#) > [filter by 'Disapproved'](#)

The top reason is almost always a missing or malformed attribute. Name it.

Price mismatch rate

[Products](#) > [Diagnostics](#) > [Price \[Mismatch\]](#)

Any number above 0 means Google found a discrepancy between your feed and your site. Usually a sale price not updated in the feed.

Image disapprovals

[Products](#) > [Diagnostics](#) > [Image \[Invalid\]](#)

Image policy violations are increasing as Google tightens promotional overlay rules. Lifestyle images on white backgrounds pass. Overlaid promo text often doesn't.



The same product. *Two different feed states.*

● DISAPPROVED

| | |
|-----------|--------------------------------|
| title | Women's Linen Blazer |
| color | (missing) |
| size | (missing) |
| gender | (missing) |
| age_group | (missing) |
| price | \$128.00 → site shows \$114.00 |

● ACTIVE

| | |
|-----------|------------------------------------|
| title | Women's Linen Blazer — Natural — S |
| color | Natural |
| size | S |
| gender | female |
| age_group | adult |
| price | \$114.00 (matches site) |



▶ THE FIX

Catch errors *before they reach Google.*

Pre-submission validation checks every attribute against channel requirements on every feed sync — before anything submits.

- ✔ Missing required apparel attributes flagged per SKU — with the specific field named, not just a generic error
- ✔ Price mismatches detected before submission — not after Google crawls your site
- ✔ Image violations surfaced before they hit policy review — flag and swap before the campaign runs
- ✔ Affected SKU list exported so the fix is targeted, not a catalog-wide reupload



Google escalates. *One attribute issue becomes an account-level problem.*

01

Product disapproval

Individual SKUs disapproved for attribute or policy violations.
Resolved per-product.



02

Feed suspension

Repeated or high-volume violations trigger a feed-level suspension. All products in the feed stop serving.



03

Account suspension

Pattern of policy violations escalates to the Merchant Center account. All feeds and campaigns go dark.

Most brands never reach stage 3. Most brands also never check their diagnostics often enough to stay at stage 1.



Poor catalog management kills more campaigns than bad creative.

The Merchant Center diagnostic tab shows you the exact products, the exact fields, and the exact policy that triggered each disapproval. The information is free and it updates in real time. The cost is checking it.

Via Marpipe, 2025

Next: Get your free Feed Audit →

▶ FEED FORENSICS · ISSUE 03

Run a free *feed audit*.

See your disapproval count, the attributes causing them, and the specific SKUs affected — before they cost you another click.

[Book a Free Audit →](#)