

Six new consumer-friendly formats in response to the rise of ad blocking

Our CMO, Martin Stockfleth Larsen, [published an article in The Drum](#) calling for the industry to do its part in stemming ad-blocking downloads by creating a better advertising experience for consumers. How do we do that? By offering ads that are memorable but not annoying, relevant but not creepy. Consumers are clearly bothered by overbearing ads and targeting practices, and they are responding by eliminating all ads on their screens.

We're pleased to announce that we have put our money where our mouth is and have introduced a suite of six consumer-friendly ad formats. These formats are built on a single principle: Do right by the advertiser and publisher by showing their consumers the utmost respect.



Best Practices for Consumer-Friendly Formats

The first step in creating consumer-friendly ad formats is to understand what consumers like and dislike about digital ads. Through our interactions with advertisers, publishers, and consumers, we discovered that ads should follow the following best practices:

- **Subtle movement:** While movement definitely gains attention, it's all too easy to go overboard. Movements synced to a scroll or a cursor rollover work well because these approaches are subtle, and they won't detract from editorial content.
- **Click-to-initiate:** Expansions and full-page overlays are still great, but you should let the consumer decide if and when he or she sees it. Click-to-initiate respects the consumer's time and content journey. If an advertiser insists on showing ads, at least include a three-second countdown or place the unit in an area that won't crowd out the content the consumer wants to view.
- **Sound:** Auto-initiating sound definitely has a huge effect on the brand experience, so carefully consider when to use it (if at all). Make sure these ads are okay with the publisher; many don't allow them.
- **Mirror your content:** If your ad has rich content, try to mirror the consumer

journey within the editorial (i.e., make sure your ads work seamlessly with the content).

- **Close button:** Don't hide your close button! Place it prominently in the corner of the creative whenever an ad unit expands or overlays editorial content.
- **Responsible retargeting:** Carefully plan creative execution and frequency capping for ads that leverage behavioral targeting. You don't want to come across as Big Brother! Retargeting may be helpful to consumers, but it's terribly bothersome when overdone.
- **Full transparency:** Native ads should complement content and not look like it was written by the editorial team. Consumers are okay with sponsored content as long as you're honest about it via accreditation, badging, or labelling.
- **Weight adjustment:** Fully assess creative file demands and page loads for every environment in which your ad will appear before launching your campaign. Consumers hate when the content they want to view is delayed by advertising. Furthermore, publishers lose revenue when consumers lose patience and click away from a page rather than wait for an ad.

With the above in mind, we are introducing these Six Consumer-Friendly Formats:

#1: Chatterbox

Sometimes you just have a lot of things you want to tell the consumer. Rather than create confusing, text-heavy ads, consider using a format that provides ample room to provide multiple messages in a clean, intuitive way.

With the Chatterbox, consumers are free to get more information by dragging the ad unit to the center of their screens, which immediately presents a micro-site of sorts. This content hub can include video, imagery, editorial, and native elements; click-to-buys; white papers, APIs; social feeds; and more.

The Chatterbox was designed for tablets, but it works just as well on desktops.

See it in action!

#2: Native Box

True to our principle, this ad format does right by the publisher by fitting seamlessly with the editorial layout and never interfering with content. It does right by the advertiser by resizing the ad and keeping it in view as the consumer manipulates the page. Finally, it does right by the consumer by always displaying the brand accreditation and giving him or her the option to access the content (or not).

See it in action!

#3: Contextual Match

This ad unit pulls contextual imagery and messages contained in the editorial content and inserts it directly into one or more ad units on the page. In this example (see link below), the consumer reads a duck confit recipe that includes a photo of the finished dish; the leaderboard and accompanying MPU incorporate both the article photo and headline. Of course, the brand logo is prominently featured, so the consumer understands that the ad is sponsored. There are many ways to implement this ad.

See it in action!

#4: Parallax Scroll

The core dilemma of advertising is that advertisers want their ads to stand out and consumers want fewer distractions. The parallax format solves that paradox in an innovative way: the unit synchronizes with the consumer's cognition, making itself known with subtlety and elegance. Specifically, it turns flat images into 3D images! Consumers can't help but double take when they see these ads. Advertisers can also sync the parallax with the consumer's mouse to enhance the effect, which boosts engagement rates.

See it in action!

#5: Cinemagraph

The cinemagraph is a canvas that allows brands to connect to consumers by using a variety of different creative techniques, including perfectly looped GIFs or videos, to create the idea of perpetual movement. The resulting cinemagraph is both aesthetically alluring and mesmerizing, engaging the consumer within a publisher environment in which the power of image and video is paramount to a fulfilling content experience. As a standalone unit, it garners higher CTR, while as a precursor to a video, it bypasses the annoyance of auto-playing video and its accompanying sound.

See it in action!

#6: Great Wall

Similar to the Chatterbox, the Great Wall ad format invites the consumer to access long-form content by clicking, touching, or rolling over the unit to reveal a content hub. The hub can present virtually any type of long-form content, including streamed videos, editorial, click-to-book widgets, and galleries.

This ad format, which overlays the editorial page, stays true to the best practice of mirroring the customer journey by keeping the experience tied to the editorial flow. Consumers have no trouble navigating back to the original content.

See it in action!

We don't like ad blocking any more than you do. However, we recognize that those downloads are consumers' way of asking the industry to improve how we collectively advertise. We believe these six formats are a solid start to giving consumers the respect they deserve while delivering the advertising benefits on which publishers and brands absolutely depend.