



## General Guide for DQ&A Digital Ad Formats

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## General specifications & restrictions

Welcome! On this page, you will find the general specifications for DQ&A digital ad formats. This includes all standard and expandable ad formats and all new ad formats along with delivery information and contact details. Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact our Ad Operations team at: [advertisers@dqna.com](mailto:advertisers@dqna.com) or [mediabuying@dqna.com](mailto:mediabuying@dqna.com)

Please take some time to read the following guidelines for different creative applications for use. We are constantly working with networks & publishers and will keep you informed of developments and extensions to these guidelines.

### Important: Flash no longer supported

Please note that flash creatives from September 2015, will no longer be supported by Chrome. You must supply a default image. If the browser doesn't support the Flash version used for your creative, the default image will be served. Check out our HTML 5 creative Guidelines for DoubleClick Campaign Manager at the bottom of this page.

## Overall guidelines

- Creatives must render properly 3 times regardless of targeting by user-geo, browsing history, or any other restriction that might prevent the creative from displaying correctly.
- Creatives must contain distinctive borders on all sides.
- Creatives and landing page both contain visible branding.
- Creatives and landing page language are matching.
- Creatives are not from or do not make a call to an unapproved ad server.
- Creatives do not contain banned content, such as weapons, pharmaceuticals, etc.
- Creatives do not contain flashing and strobing effects.
- Creatives do not contain auto-audio and is not expandable (unless agreed upon up front)
- Creatives need to be entirely SSL compliant.
- Creatives should not display offers from various advertisers, especially in the case of 3rd party tags.
- Creatives must open in new tab or new window only.
- Landing Pages should not have a false close button or display a warning if the landing page is exited.

## Display Creatives: Size & Format Related Specifications

Below are the most common requirements for standard “display” creatives to serve on various exchanges.

### Technical requirements

- Supported creative asset file types are: HTML, JS, CSS, JPEG, GIF or PNG.
- Duration of animated ads must be 30 seconds or less.
- Ads must open in new tab or new window only.

### Standard (IAB) formats

Type	Size (width/height)
Skyscraper	120*600
Wide Skyscraper	160*600
Medium Rectangle	300*250
Large Rectangle	336*280
Leaderboard	728*90



## Restrictions

- **Autoplay:** Ads that autoplay audio are prohibited. (Ads that autoplay video are OK, as long as the audio is muted.)
- **Pop ups:** Ads that spawn popups or surveys are prohibited.
- **Size:** Image creatives hosted by Bid Manager can be up to 250 KB. There's no file size limit for HTML5 .zip files, but if you have a linked DCM account, uploaded .zips can't exceed the maximum image size set in the DCM account's settings.
- **Download size:** The total file size of all creative files downloaded by a person's browser when an ad serves is limited to a maximum of 5 MB.
- **Cookies:** A maximum of 25 cookies can be set per creative.
- **HTTP calls:** A maximum of 100 HTTP calls are allowed per creative.

## Technical requirements for mobile interstitials

- **Dimensions:** Any MRAID, image, or HTML5 creative with proper dimensions should be eligible for targeting to interstitials if they meet specific exchange requirements of size and creative type. However, the most prevalent interstitial sizes are 320×480, 768×1024, and 300×250.

On DoubleClick Ad Exchange, creative sizes can fit within a range based on screen dimensions and a set percentage threshold. Bid Manager will select the largest eligible creative where possible.

- **Formats:** Image and HTML5 creative file formats are supported. Studio users can also use "mobile 0×0 flex creatives" (which are MRAID creatives that stretch to full screen) for interstitial ad slots.

Please note, 0×0 flex sized creatives served by third-party ad servers are not currently supported for mobile app interstitial inventory.

## Content requirements

Ads must be distinguishable from a publisher's content. Ads can't appear as if they are actually content or links on a publisher's site.

## Prohibited content

The following content in ads is prohibited:

- Tobacco, weapons, nudity, defamatory/hate content, illegal activities, profanities, or spyware.
  - Offers of free gifts, links to quizzes and surveys, misleading claims, and references to sex or sexuality.
- For more information, see [Restricted products and services](#).

## Native creatives

1. Submit all possible assets for the largest reach (logo, rectangular image, square image, and all text length variations).
2. Include an advertiser name (or confirm that the pre-filled name is correct).
3. Use high-resolution images, as large as possible (1200 x 627 for rectangular images and 627x627 for square images).
4. Animations are not supported. Use still images only.
5. Minimal text is allowed within images. Avoid using too much text or your creative may be rejected.
6. Write titles that read like content and/or sentences instead of offers or pure product names.
7. Write descriptions that generate interest and encourage users to click through to read more.

## Video creatives

### Technical requirements

- **Format:** Bid Manager accepts video creatives in the following formats:
  - File types: .avi, .mov, .mp4, .m4v, .mpeg, .mpg, .oga, .ogg, .ogv, .webm, .wmv
- **VAST:** Bid Manager supports the [VAST 2.0](#), [VAST 3.0](#), and [VAST 4.0](#) specifications. You can also use VAST wrappers, but we recommend limiting to only 2 wrappers to avoid issues with serving on exchanges.
- **VPAID:** Bid Manager supports HTML5 VPAID using the [VPAID 2.0](#) specification. Bid Manager does not support direct upload of VPAID creatives. VPAID creatives must be uploaded in DoubleClick Studio and synced through [DoubleClick Campaign Manager](#). For third-party VPAID creatives, follow the instructions in the "Third-party VAST tags" section below.



- **Size:** Video creatives hosted by Bid Manager can be up to 1 GB. Always upload a source file with the highest possible specifications you have available so that Bid Manager can transcode the asset into as many serving files as possible. However, individual exchanges may have different maximum file sizes, so plan accordingly.
- **Duration:** Video inventory supports a variety of durations, such as:
  - Less than 15 seconds
  - 15 seconds
  - 20 seconds
  - 30 seconds
  - 60 seconds
  - At least 90 seconds

### More details about duration

- **Aspect ratio:** Bid Manager accepts video creatives with the following aspect ratios:
  - Landscape/horizontal videos must have an aspect ratio of 16:9 (for example, 640 × 360) or 4:3 (for example, 640 × 480).
  - Portrait/vertical videos must have an aspect ratio of 9:16 (for example, 360 × 640) or 3:4 (for example, 480 × 640)
- **Click through URL:** Make sure the creative has a click through URL specified. Note that the click through URL will be opened in a new window.
- **Third-party VAST tags:** Bid Manager accepts third-party VAST tags containing VAST and VPAID creatives. Bid Manager wraps the tags according to the VAST 2.0, VAST 3.0, or VAST 4.0 specification based on the requirements of each individual exchange. This might result in some metrics specific to each version of VAST, such as skips offset for VAST 3.0 and VAST 4.0, not being available for a creative.
- **VPAID adapter:** Bid Manager uses an HTML5 VPAID adapter for [Active View](#) measurements for video ads.

### Companion creatives for video

**Bid Manager-hosted videos:** Advertisers that host video creatives in Bid Manager can assign display creatives (supports image and HTML5 assets) as companions.

**DCM-hosted videos:** Advertisers that use DoubleClick Campaign Manager can add companion creatives to their in-stream video creatives. The companion will sync to Bid Manager along with the creative.

**Third-party VAST tags:** You can include companion creatives by reference within the video creative's XML file. Bid Manager will not count impressions for companion creatives separately. Contact your third-party ad server for details on how it tracks metrics for video ads with companions.

Most exchanges sell video companions as a “complementary” ad unit which may not be guaranteed to serve.

Rotating companion creatives are supported for third-party VAST tags. Any rotation that changes the assets used inside the VAST tag, however, will cause your creative to be re-reviewed by Bid Manager.

## Best practices

### Video

- File format: .mov or .mp4
- Dimensions:
  - Landscape/horizontal: 1280 × 720, 1920 × 1080, or 1440 × 1080
  - Portrait/vertical: 720 × 1280, 1080 × 1920, or 1080 × 1440
- Aspect ratio:
  - Landscape/horizontal: 16:9 or 4:3
  - Portrait/vertical: 9:16 or 3:4
- Codec: H.264
- Frame Rate: 23.98 or 29.97
- Bitrate: At least 20 Mbps
- Length: 15 or 30 seconds
- File size: Up to 1GB (per the DCM file size limit)
- Black bars: No black bars
- Letterboxing: No letterboxing



## Audio

- Codec: PCM (preferred) or AAC
- Bitrate: At least 192 Kbps
- Bit: 16 or 24 bit only
- Sample rate: 48 kHz
- Audio settings: Required

## Companion creatives

- Companion banner size 20K.
- Companion can be an image or HTML5.
- Companion banner animation time should be 15 seconds.
- Companion banner 18-24 FPS.
- Include 300 × 250, 728 × 90, and 300 × 60 companion banner options.

## Companion creatives

Most video inventory has the same content requirements as standard creatives. For more info, see [General guidelines for creatives](#).

## In-banner video creatives

In-banner video ads are video ads triggered within a standard display banner ad on a web page, generally surrounded by content. Occasionally in-banner video ads expand outside the dimensions of the banner. All standard display impressions are able to run in-banner video campaigns.

## Formats of in-banner video

The following in-banner video formats are available:

- Click to play: Creative initially displays as a static image, then the video plays once a user clicks on the creative.
- Autoplay with no sound: Video automatically plays without sound until a user clicks on the creative.
- Hover to play: Video plays after a user hovers over the creative.

## Creative requirements

HTML5 creatives for in-banner video ads can be hosted directly in Bid Manager provided they comply with generic display requirements.

## Requirements for specific formats

The following requirements are for impressions served through DoubleClick Ad Exchange.

## General requirements

- Creative must include a user-initiatable “replay” button.
- Total playing time must be 4 minutes or less.

## Click to play

- Technical requirements:
  - Image GIF/JPG: 40 KB initial load, 2.2 MB total load with video.
  - Video dimensions: 300×250 (inline rectangle) and 336×280 (Large rectangle).
  - Aspect ratio: 4:3 aspect ratio recommended; other aspects will be accepted but may be letter boxed.
  - Border: 1×1 contrasting border is suggested.
  - Frame rate: Minimum 14 frames-per-second (30 FPS recommended).
  - Audio: Must be encoded at a volume less than or equal to -12 dB.
  - Animation: 30 seconds maximum. Opening image can't be animated.
- Interaction requirements:
  - For hover-over initiated ads, we require 2 seconds of hovering before audio is initiated.
  - When the user is no longer hovering, the audio must stop.
  - The video (animation) can start at any time (without initiation) as long as the animation is less than 30 seconds and the audio requirements are met.



## TrueView video formats

### Looking for info on YouTube?

See the guide to [TrueView campaigns](#).

## Expandable creatives

Creatives, which dimensions expand when a user interacts with them, are known as **expandable creatives**. Expandable creatives can be assigned to regular display line items, but will only serve on inventory that supports expandable ad units.

Since Bid Manager can't host expandable creatives, you must serve expandable creatives from a [supported third-party ad server](#).

Expandable creatives require manual review, which typically takes about 24 business hours.

In order to serve, you must [set an expanding direction when](#) you upload third-party tags. For creatives built with DoubleClick Studio, the expanding direction is automatically detected.

## Technical requirements

- **Size:** 50 KB to 2.2 MB
- **Expandable directions:** The inventory may accept only specific expansion directions. Common directions that offer larger inventory are: down, left, or down and left.
- **User-initiated expand:** Creatives may expand on click or on hover, never automatically.
- **Creative closure:** Creatives must close on click or mouse off. Must contain a prominent close "X" in 16 point font or larger, in the corner of the creative.
- **Download size:** The total file size of all creative files downloaded by a person's browser when an ad serves is limited to a maximum of 5 MB.
- **Cookies:** A maximum of 25 cookies can be set per creative.
- **HTTP calls:** A maximum of 100 HTTP calls are allowed per creative.

## Common expanded dimensions and directions

Bid Manager doesn't restrict the dimensions of expandable creatives. This table lists only the most common dimensions, but other dimensions (and expansion directions) are supported based on inventory. To check the dimensions of all available expandable inventory that matches your targeting, use an [Inventory Availability report](#).

Base dimensions	Expanded dimensions	Direction
468×60	468×210	Down
728×90	728×300	Down
300×250	600×300	Down and left
160×600	400×600	Left
120×600	420×600	Left

## Mobile dimensions and directions

Base dimensions	Expanded dimensions	Direction
320×50	320×480 or full screen	Up or down
300×50	320×480 or full screen	Up or down



### SSL compliance

Currently, Bid Manager does not answer to non-SSL bid requests if the eligible creative is an expandable creative. This is because there is a high risk that a secure expandable creative will not expand correctly on a non-secure landing page.

When negotiating private deals for expandable creatives, ask the publisher or exchange to send only SSL bid requests with secure landing pages. [Learn more about SSL compliant creatives.](#)

### Mobile creatives

#### Technical requirements

- **Animation duration:** Ads can only animate for 30 seconds or less.
- **Autoplay:** Ads that autoplay audio are prohibited. (Ads that autoplay video are OK, as long as the audio is muted.)
- **Pop ups:** Ads that spawn popups or surveys are prohibited.
- **File types:** PNG, JPG, GIF, or HTML5.
- **Size:** Creatives must be 150 KB or less on their initial load. Additional load must be “polite” and can’t exceed 2.2 MB.
- **Technology:** Make sure that “Requires MRAID” is selected in the technology type of your creative on its individual details page if the creative is built specifically for mobile devices (requires tapping, swiping, or other mobile-specific interactions). Bid Manager supports all MRAID creative types, including MRAID 3D Cube rich media creatives.

### General inventory availability by environment

#### Mobile display

Environment	Recommended creative type	Inventory
Mobile web	HTML5 or static image	All
Mobile app	HTML5, static image, or MRAID	AppNexus, DoubleClick Ad Exchange, MoPub, Nexage
Mobile app interstitial	HTML5, static image, or MRAID	Adap.tv, DoubleClick Ad Exchange, MoPub, Nexage, Rubicon

#### Mobile display

Environment	Recommended creative type	Inventory
Mobile web	VAST (or VPAID)	All
Mobile app	VAST (or VPAID)	Adap.tv, BidSwitch, Brightroll, DoubleClick Ad Exchange, Improve Digital, MoPub, Nexage, SpotXchange
Mobile app interstitial	VAST (or MRAID)	Adap.tv, DoubleClick Ad Exchange, MoPub, Nexage

### Common creative dimensions

	Mobile web	App
Smartphone	300×250	320 × 50 (most common)
	320×50	320 × 480 / 320 × 480*
	250×250	300 × 250



	Mobile web	App
Tablets	300×250	728 × 90
	728×90	320 × 50
	160×600	300 × 250
	728×90	768 × 1024 / 768 × 1024*

\* Most common interstitial dimensions  
Standard IAB ad sizes (for example, 728 × 90) can occasionally show on mobile devices.

### Mobile video requirements

- **Format and file types:** Learn more about our guidelines for video creatives.
- **Inventory:** For information on which exchanges provide mobile video inventory, see the list of supported exchanges. Specific requirements may vary per exchange, so always consult each exchange’s documentation to confirm that your creatives will be eligible to serve.

### Mobile interstitial requirements

- **Dimensions:** The most common interstitial dimensions are 320×480 for smartphones and 768×1024 for tablets. Be sure to traffic both portrait- and landscape-oriented creatives in the same line item to ensure your line item will be eligible to bid on all interstitial bid requests.
- **File types:** Images and HTML5 creative assets are supported. Please note, 0×0 flex creatives served by third-party ad servers are not currently supported.
- **Inventory:** Currently, Adap.tv, DoubleClick Ad Exchange, MoPub, Nexage, and Rubicon support mobile interstitial inventory, however this list is likely to change over time.

### Best practices for getting creatives approved

Follow these guidelines to help ensure your creatives are approved.

- Upload creatives and make sure they’re marked “**active.**” Assign creatives to active (or pre-flight) line items as early as possible, and make sure to target each exchange you intend to buy inventory from.
- When using DCM or another third-party ad server, **include backup ads** behind each placement. Make sure the backup ads are always active for the full duration of your line items’ flights.
- Turn on the “[Creative Approval Failure](#)” alert to be notified if your creatives are rejected. Make sure the **dimensions** of the creative asset you upload are the same as the dimensions of the actual creative (excluding “high-impact formats”, such as skinned pages).
- Make sure the creative can be **viewed in all geographic locations** and on google.com sites, so that it can be reviewed by the Bid Manager creative review team. Also ensure it can be viewed on exchange specific sites (AppNexus, BrightRoll Exchange) that have audit requirements. Unviewable creatives will be banned. Make sure each creative only advertises a **single advertiser or brand**. Creatives for e-commerce sites can rotate various products, but the e-commerce site’s own brand must be visible in the creative.
- If your advertiser contains sensitive content (alcohol, gambling, or pharmaceutical-related content) request the “**Require manual review for this advertiser’s creatives**” setting is enabled for the advertiser. Failure to check this box will result in the loss of access to certain exchange inventory.
- Make sure your creatives abide by [AdWords’ policies](#). Failure to do so will lead to creative rejections. Be sure that your creative (and any third-party assets) will function properly on all operating systems (for example: OS X, Windows 10, Chrome OS) and browsers (for example: Internet Explorer, Chrome, Firefox).

### Review your landing page

Many creatives are rejected due to issues with the landing page the creative opens, rather than the creative itself. Follow these guidelines to avoid landing page rejections.

- Set an appropriate **default URL** (that corresponds to a real page) in your advertiser’s basic details. This URL is used as a fallback if Bid Manager can’t detect a landing page in your creative.
- Make sure your creative clicks through to the page that **matches the product or service** you’re advertising.
- For HTML5 creatives, make sure the creative’s click tag is set to the actual landing page, not google.com or some placeholder URL.





## Landing pages must

- Allow crawling by both [Googlebot and Google Adstbot](#). This allows Google to monitor quality of the page.
- Include text on the page. Pages without any text may not be crawlable.
- Be free of errors. Landing pages should not have 404 errors, “session expired” or include a search engine that returns no results.
- Be **viewable in any country** (despite any location targeting used in the creative).
- Comply with [Google advertising policies](#) (based on AdWords policies)
- If your landing page advertises **pharmaceuticals or gambling**, [make sure your advertiser is certified](#) and the ad complies with our guidelines.
- If your landing page advertises **alcohol**, make sure the ad complies with our [guidelines](#).
- Landing pages **cannot require sign-in** and **cannot be behind a firewall or router**.

## Creative Approval: Best Practice

1. Set up **Creative Approval Failure emails alerts** in DBM.
2. Upload creatives **minimum 48 hours** before launch to give time for review and revision
3. Once you upload creatives, **assign them to an active line** item to enter the review process
4. Ensure with your webmaster that your landing pages are **crawlable**
5. Make sure the creatives can be viewed in **all geographic locations**
6. Creatives must contain clear **brand logo** or information
7. Ensure the actual **landing page matches the declared click-through URL** of the DBM account
- 8. Creative animations must be no longer than 30s**, and must not loop after 30sec
9. Make sure you have a branded **backup creative** that can always serve
10. If you see **fourth party call**, ensure you are using **approved vendors**
11. **Re-submit your creatives for approval** from within DBM after fixing disapproved creative
12. Contact DBM Support via live chat in UI if you can't resolve the issue using **resolution info**