Desktop Web Experiences

Pop-up Ads

Pop-up ads are a type of interstitial ad that do exactly what they say — pop up and block the main content of the page. They appear after content on the page begins to load and are among the most commonly cited annoyances for visitors to a website. Pop-up ads come in many varieties – they can take up part of the screen, or the entire screen.

Included ad experiences tested: Pop-up ad with countdown, pop-up ad without countdown

Auto-playing Video Ads with Sound

Auto-playing video ads play sound without any user interaction.

These experiences are especially disruptive to users, as they catch the readers off guard, and often compel them to quickly close the window or tab in order to stop the sound. Ads that require a click to activate sound did not fall beneath the initial Better Ads Standard.

The Better Ads Methodology has not yet tested video ads that appear before ("pre-roll") or during ("mid-roll") video content that is relevant to the content of the page itself.

Included ad experiences tested: Auto-playing in-line video with sound

Prestitial Ads with Countdown

Prestitial "countdown" ads appear before the content of the page has loaded, forcing the user to wait a number of seconds before they can dismiss the ad, or the ad closes on its own.

These ads can disrupt users in a way that dissuades them from waiting for the countdown to finish and continuing onto their content.

In desktop environments, prestitial ads that can be dismissed immediately did not fall beneath the initial Better Ads Standard for desktop.

Large Sticky Ads

Large sticky ads stick to the edge of a page, regardless of a user's efforts to scroll. As the user browses the page, this static, immobile sticky ad takes up more than 30% of the screen's real estate.

A large sticky ad has an impeding effect by continuing to obstruct a portion of the page view regardless of where the user moves on the page.

Included ad experiences tested: Sticky 970x250 ad on the bottom, sticky 580x400 ad on the bottom

Mobile Web Experiences
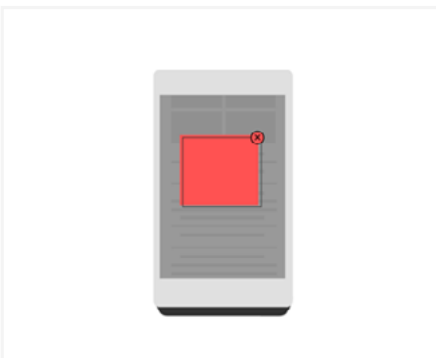
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Pop-up ads come in many varieties – they can take up part of the screen, or the entire screen.

Included ad experiences tested: Pop-up ad with countdown, pop-up ad without countdown (tested with 2 variations in design)

Prestitial Ads

Mobile prestitial ads appear on a mobile page before content has loaded, blocking the user from continuing on to the content they have sought out. These pop-ups vary in size from full-screen to part of the screen. They may also appear as a standalone page that prevents users from getting to the main content.

Included ad experiences tested: Prestitial ad with countdown, prestitial ad without countdown

Ad Density Higher Than 30%

When ads on a mobile page take up more than 30% of the vertical height of the main content portion of the page, the result is a disruptive ad experience, regardless of whether these ads are text, video, or static images. This includes "sticky" ads and in-line ads. This kind of density makes it very difficult to focus on text content on a mobile device, and can lead to frustrated users.

Included ad experiences tested: 50% single-column ad density, 35% single-column ad density, 30% single-column ad density

Flashing Animated Ads

Ads that animate and "flash" with rapidly changing background and colors are highly aggravating for consumers, and serve to create a severe distraction for them as they attempt to read the content on a given page.

Animations that do not "flash" did not fall beneath the initial Better Ads Standard.
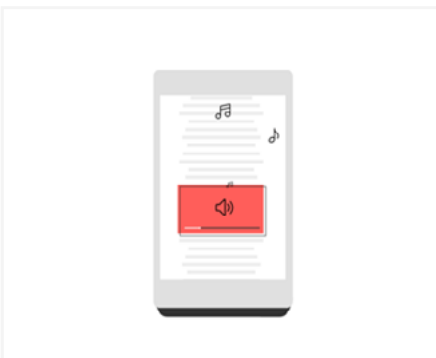
Auto-playing Video Ads with Sound

Auto-playing video ads with sound automatically play with sound, without any user interaction.

This ad experience is especially disruptive because it catches the reader off guard and often compels them to quickly close the window or tab in order to stop the sound — especially if they are on their mobile device and in a public place, where such noise can be a public nuisance and personal embarrassment.

Ads that require a click to activate sound did not fall beneath the initial Better Ads Standard.

The Better Ads Methodology has not yet tested video ads that appear before ("pre-roll") or during ("mid-roll") video content that is relevant to the content of the page itself.

Included ad experiences tested: Auto-playing in-line video with sound

Postitial Ads with Countdown

Postitial ads with countdown timers appear after the user follows a link. These ads force the user to wait a number of seconds before they can dismiss the ad, or for the ad to close or redirect them to another page.

These ads frustrate users by breaking the flow of content in a manner that can prove distracting — if a user is trying to navigate from one page to another, only to be delayed by this ad, they might abandon the page entirely.

Postitial ads with countdowns that can be dismissed immediately did not fall beneath the initial Better Ads Standard.

Full-screen Scrollover Ads

Full-screen scrollover ads force a user to scroll through an ad that appears on top of content. These ads take up more than 30% of the page and float on top of the page's main content, obstructing it from view. The result can be disorienting for users, as it obscures the content a consumer is attempting to browse. These are are different from similar ads that scroll in-line with the content and more smoothly scroll out of sight.

Large Sticky Ads

Large sticky ads stick to a side of a mobile page, regardless of a user's efforts to scroll. As the user browses the page, this static, immobile sticky ad takes up more than 30% of the screen's real estate.

A large sticky ad has an impeding effect by continuing to obstruct a portion of the mobile page view regardless of where the user moves on the page. A large sticky ad's positioning disrupts and obscures a page's main content — unavoidably leading to a negative user experience.

Included ad experiences tested: Large sticky ad on the bottom