Guardian digital advertising

Technical specifications for digital advertising on The Guardian
Ad specifications

Here you will find the guidelines and technical specifications for digital ads on The Guardian.

We present all our users with an ad experience that complies to the Better Ads Standards, as such our creative guidelines below follow these principles and all creative to be served on our site must meet the criteria which can be found here.

**Delivery methods**

We accept: .gif, .jpg, 3rd party tags, HTML5. If you would like to deliver HTML5, please notify your account manager at time of booking or as soon as you know this format is being delivered, as our Digital Ad Production team will need to process it ahead of being trafficked.

If you provide 3rd party creative tags, we cannot accept them if the initial load of the creative is more than 200kb. Creatives must be supplied in a secure format or they will not be accepted.

**Flash:** Please note that Flash files (.swf) will not be accepted.

**Further notes**

**Backup creatives:** In certain scenarios when a rich media creative has been delivered, we may require a backup creative to run on app or mobile web, to conform to the following guidelines:

- Format: .gif or .jpg
- File size: 40kb max

**In-banner video (with an embedded video player with video controls):** If the video is autoplay, it must start muted.

- Max autoplay length is 30 seconds for billboard, or 15 seconds for all other formats.
- There is no max length for click-to-initiate video.

**VAST XML base format.**

- Additional VPAID elements can be accepted, but given its variability, testing must happen prior to going live.
- Available for direct campaigns only.

**In-banner video on iOS App:** Video tags constructed in either HTML or JavaScript must specify the playsinline attribute:

```xml
<video>
<video playsinline muted></video>
```

For the videos to play without a user action, the video tag needs to also specify the **muted** attribute: `<video playsinline muted>`

**Expandable creatives:** We serve ads through an iFrame so require you to provide code to allow the ad to expand. We fully support expandable creative from various third parties, subject to testing.

- Expandable creatives must be click-to-expand (with the exception of 3-2-1 hover to initiate expansion creatives).
- Close button should be located at top right.
- Expandable creatives to be served on The Guardian homepage may be subject to Ad Governance Group approval.

**Contact**

Initial sales enquiries

- investment.team@theguardian.com

Operations

- guardian.adops@theguardian.com
- programmatic.ops@theguardian.com

Creative production

- digital.ad.production@theguardian.com
Ad specifications (continued)

**Ad Choices logo:** The Guardian along with many other publishers has committed to comply with the IAB’s Self-Regulatory Framework in relation to OBA Advertising. In order to comply we will require all 3rd party hosted adverts to include the Adchoices Ad Marker as per the IAB’s technical guidelines.

**White creative:** All white and light-coloured creative must have a dark one-pixel border.

**Readability:** Type should be at least 20px for black print against white background. Fine print should be at least 15px. For light print against a dark background, consider larger type or boldface.

**Click into new window:** All ads must click into a new browser window.

**Browser compliance:** We will target to all modern browsers unless otherwise instructed. More information on browsers can be found here.

**Lead time:** If supplying .gifs, .jpegs, or 3rd party tags, we must receive these at least 3 working days before campaign start date. If supplying HTML5, we must receive this 5 working days before campaign start date. If our Digital Ad Production (DAP) team are building creatives, assets must be received as specified on the DAP format guide. Late creatives/assets may result in delays to the campaign live date.

**Sound:** All sound must be user click activated.

**Misleading ads:** We will not carry any form of advertising that is deemed to be of poor quality, inappropriate, misleading or confusing to our users. If unsure, please contact your Guardian Account Manager.

**CPU:** We may reject or remove ads that drive the CPU too high.

**Third-party tracking:** We accept third-party click tracking for all formats and third-party impression tracking for all formats except Interstitials. Please note that if you have supplied third-party tracking, there may be a discrepancy between our ad server stats and your data. IAB’s discrepancy tolerance is +/-10%.

**Please note:** We do not accept any Brand Safety Blocking Tags for page takeovers on The Guardian site. For CPM Brand Safety Blocking tags, we require the tags and the full list of blocks being applied within them 48 hours before go live date.

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**Guidelines on photosensitive effects**
(affecting people with conditions such as epilepsy and migraine)

**General flashing threshold:** A sequence of flashes or rapidly changing image sequences where both the following occur:

1. The combined area of flashes occurring concurrently (but not necessarily contiguously) occupies more than one quarter of any 335 x 268 pixel rectangle anywhere on the displayed screen area when the content is viewed at 1024 x 768 pixels and...

2. There are more than three flashes within any one-second period.

**Note:** For the general flashing threshold, a flash is defined as a pair of opposing changes in brightness of 10% or more of full scale white brightness, where brightness is calculated as .2126*R + .7152*G + .0722*B using linearised R, G, and B values. Linearised-X = (X/FS)^2.2 where FS is full scale (usually 255 today). An “opposing change” is an increase followed by a decrease, or a decrease followed by an increase.

**Red flashing threshold:** A transition to or from a saturated red where the following occurs: The combined area of flashes occurring concurrently occupies more than one quarter of any 335 x 268 pixel rectangle anywhere on the displayed screen area when the content is viewed at 1024 x 768 pixels and there are more than three flashes within any one-second period.
# Formats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Dimensions (W × H px)</th>
<th>Delivery formats</th>
<th>Available for</th>
<th>Desktop web</th>
<th>Tablet web</th>
<th>Mobile web</th>
<th>Tablet app</th>
<th>Mobile app</th>
<th>Max auto animation length</th>
<th>Initial size</th>
<th>Subsequent max load</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leaderboard</td>
<td>728 × 90 (max expansion left/down: 728 x 900)</td>
<td>.gif .jpg 3rd party tag HTML5</td>
<td>Direct display Programmatic</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>15 seconds</td>
<td>150kb (40kb if Guardian hosted)</td>
<td>2.2mb (1.5mb if Guardian hosted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPU</td>
<td>300 × 250 (max expansion left/down: 900 x 500)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>15 seconds</td>
<td>150kb (40kb if Guardian hosted)</td>
<td>2.2mb (1.5mb if Guardian hosted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billboard</td>
<td>970 × 250 (max expansion left/down: 970 x 500)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Landscape Landscape</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>30 seconds</td>
<td>150kb (60kb if Guardian hosted)</td>
<td>2.2mb (1.5mb if Guardian hosted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superheader</td>
<td>900 × 250 (max expansion left/down: 900 x 500)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Landscape Landscape</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>30 seconds</td>
<td>150kb (60kb if Guardian hosted)</td>
<td>2.2mb (1.5mb if Guardian hosted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMPU</td>
<td>300 × 600 (max expansion left/down: 900 x 600)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>15 seconds</td>
<td>150kb (60kb if Guardian hosted)</td>
<td>2.2mb (1.5mb if Guardian hosted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skyscraper</td>
<td>160 × 600</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>15 seconds</td>
<td>150kb (60kb if Guardian hosted)</td>
<td>2.2mb (1.5mb if Guardian hosted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabric</td>
<td>100% × 250</td>
<td></td>
<td>Must be built in-house by DAP</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30 seconds</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile revealer</td>
<td>300 × 250</td>
<td></td>
<td>Direct display</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td>15 seconds</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parallax MPU</td>
<td>300 × 250</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page skin</td>
<td>1600 × 1200</td>
<td>.gif .jpg</td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Formats (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Dimensions (W × H px)</th>
<th>Delivery formats</th>
<th>Available for</th>
<th>Desktop web</th>
<th>Tablet web</th>
<th>Mobile web</th>
<th>Tablet app</th>
<th>Mobile app</th>
<th>Max auto animation length</th>
<th>Initial size</th>
<th>Subsequent max load</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cascade</td>
<td>940 × 230 expands to 940 × 690</td>
<td>HTML5 3rd party tag</td>
<td>Built in-house by DAP</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15 seconds</td>
<td>150kb (40kb if Guardian hosted)</td>
<td>2.2mb (1.5mb if Guardian hosted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filmstrip</td>
<td>300 × 600</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● ●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15 seconds</td>
<td>150kb (40kb if Guardian hosted)</td>
<td>2.2mb (1.5mb if Guardian hosted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overlay</td>
<td>Max 900 × 500</td>
<td>HTML5 3rd party tag</td>
<td></td>
<td>● ●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15 seconds</td>
<td>150kb (40kb if Guardian hosted)</td>
<td>2.2mb (1.5mb if Guardian hosted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotating billboard</td>
<td>930 × 188</td>
<td>3rd party tag</td>
<td></td>
<td>● ●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15 seconds</td>
<td>150kb (40kb if Guardian hosted)</td>
<td>2.2mb (1.5mb if Guardian hosted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidslider</td>
<td>300 × 600 expands to 900 × 600</td>
<td></td>
<td>Built in-house by DAP</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15 seconds</td>
<td>150kb (60kb if Guardian hosted)</td>
<td>2.2mb (1.5mb if Guardian hosted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidewinder</td>
<td>300 × 600 expands to 900 × 600</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15 seconds</td>
<td>150kb (60kb if Guardian hosted)</td>
<td>2.2mb (1.5mb if Guardian hosted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sliding doors</td>
<td>Launching from 970 × 250</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30 seconds</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outstream</td>
<td>Video frame size: 620 × 340</td>
<td>flv mp4 XML: VAST</td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30 seconds</td>
<td>200kb</td>
<td>2.2mb (1.5mb if Guardian hosted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viewably Display: In Read Carousel</td>
<td>540 x 540</td>
<td>3rd party URL</td>
<td>Built in-house by DAP</td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30 seconds</td>
<td>200kb</td>
<td>2.2mb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interscroller</td>
<td>300 x250</td>
<td>Built in-house by DAP/3rd party tag</td>
<td>Direct display/PG</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30 seconds</td>
<td>200kb</td>
<td>2.2mb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoppable</td>
<td>300 x250</td>
<td>3rd party tag (Flashtalking, Appetite)</td>
<td>Direct display</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30 seconds</td>
<td>150kb</td>
<td>2.2mb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Display</td>
<td>300 x250</td>
<td>3rd party tag</td>
<td>Direct display/PG</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30 seconds</td>
<td>150kb</td>
<td>2.2mb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chatbot</td>
<td>300 x600</td>
<td>3rd party tag</td>
<td>Direct display</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30 seconds</td>
<td>150kb</td>
<td>2.2mb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Video specs

### Pre-roll formats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-skippable video</th>
<th>Non-skippable bumper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Max ad duration: 20 seconds (EMEA), 15 seconds US</td>
<td>• Max ad duration: 6 seconds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skippable video</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Min ad duration: 12 sec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Max ad duration: 6 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Third-party served (VAST compliant) specs

- **Format**: H.264 (MP4) video file type must be included for each video creative (other formats such as WebM can be included but may not be used).
- **Aspect ratio and bitrate**: 720p or below is required, the optional inclusion of 1080p is recommended. Either 16:9 or 4:3 aspect ratios are acceptable. (Examples of each are 16:9 – 854 × 480; 1280 × 720; 1920 × 1080 and 4:3 – 480 × 360; 720 × 540; 960 × 720)
- Must contain at least one mediafile under 1000kbps
- **Audio format**: MP3 or AAC preferred
- **Frames per second**: Up to 30fps
- **Maximum file size**: 10 MB

**Requirements**: Must comply with YouTube’s [XML summary for VAST ad server response](https://developers.google.com/ad-supported/)

- Must be SSL-compliant
- Only VAST 3.0 tags are allowed for skippable video ads. VAST 2.0 will not be accepted.
- Must be served via a linear VAST tag (pre-fetch tag) by a [YouTube-approved vendor](https://support.google.com/admanager/answer/1018114).

**Must NOT** have geo, browser or any other targeting on the third party end. VPAID is not allowed.

Guardian also accept RAW assets. [Supported file formats here](https://www.guardian.com/advertising-technical/2023/03/28/video-asset-formats).

If supplying pre-roll in the form of YouTube link, please ensure video is public or unlisted and allows embedding.
In light of GDPR there are some changes YouTube (PFP) have taken regarding 3rd party ad-technologies (pixels) that can be associated to campaigns Serving to Users in the EEA. Only the following 8 technologies can be included:

1. Google (including DoubleClick)
2. IAS
3. DoubleVerify
4. MOAT
5. ComScore
6. Nielsen
7. Kantar
8. Research Now

Campaigns Serving to Users Outside the EEA we can use other ad-technologies:

1. ComScore
2. DoubleVerify
3. IAS
4. MOAT
5. Nielsen
6. Kantar
7. Research Now
8. Sizmek
9. Innovid
10. Flashtalking
11. Extreme Reach
12. C3 Metrics
13. Adform
14. Weborama
15. Adocean
Format notes

Page skin

- No click to remove
- No animation of skins allowed
- Must be supplied as a .gif or .jpg - 1600 × 1200 creative - middle (980 pixels) must be blank
- Skins will only show on desktop screens bigger than 1300 pixels wide
- Any white on white creative must have a 1px black border (as per normal guidelines)
- Only available as part of a takeover
- Please keep all messaging inside the dark grey area as per the diagram, so as to ensure it is viewable on all screen sizes

If your skin is showing with a 900 × 250/970 × 250 please build the skin as per the diagram here.

If your skin is showing with a 728 × 90 please build the skin as per the diagram here.
Appendix
LEAVE THIS AREA WHITE

980px x 1200px (width x height)