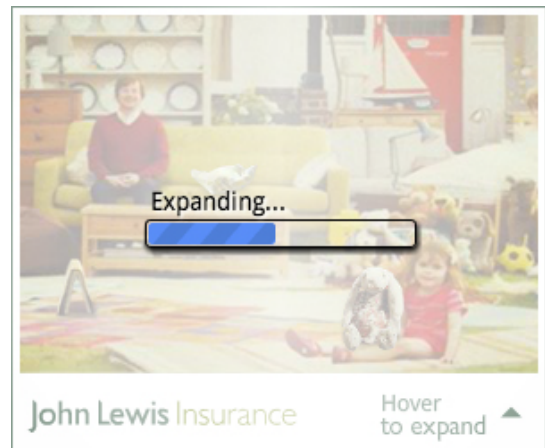


Designing display ads is often trickier than it seems, your ads need to not only catch a user's eye but actually encourage a user to engage with them too. So how exactly do you do this? How do you create an eye catching memorable ad that gets your message across while still encouraging a user to engage with your brand?

Well this is hopefully why we're here! We've put together this guide and filled it with creative best practices and tips, to make sure that your ads are helping you to reach your campaign goals and objectives.

What is an Engagement Ad?

Engagement Ads strengthen brand-to-audience relationships by making a rich creative canvas come alive as consumers stream videos, play games, and more. Advertisers only pay when audiences engage - ensuring that your message is resonating with people that are interested in your brand. Engagement Ads can be built in DoubleClick Studio or in Adwords Ready Ad Gallery and are served on the Google Display Network.

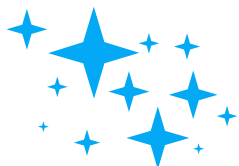


Engagement Ads Tips



1. Cast a Wide Net

Create your ad in every IAB standard size in order to ensure that your campaign reaches all of the highest performing corners of the Google Display Network. A full suite of standard ad sizes will improve your ad's chances of appearing everywhere so we recommend always using at least the three most common ad sizes: 300x250 (MPU), 728x90 (Leaderboard), 160x600 (Skyscraper).



2. Make your invitation state as engaging as possible

Consumers engage with your ad by hovering over its invitation state, prompting it to expand. Make sure that the invitation state is as eye catching and enticing as possible to help get you that high engagement rate.

3. Think about your Call to Action (CTA)

Hover to Expand

Engagement Ads are all about having a user “engage” with your ad, and the easiest way to encourage this is to make sure that the user knows exactly what they need to do. Having a clear Call to Action that lets a user know what they should be doing sounds obvious, but its surprising how often this tip is forgotten. Try to maintain a visible Call to Action and key message throughout the entire animation. The expansion can only happen when the CTA is visible, so make sure you give a user as much opportunity as possible to engage with your ad. Engagement Ads only expand on ‘mouse over’ for desktop creatives or ‘tap’ for mobile creatives, so make sure your CTA clearly states what you need a user to do. (i.e. ‘Hover to expand” or ‘Tap to expand”).

4. Have a visible border



Having a visible border for your Engagement Ad helps it stand out from page content and helps to draw a users attention. However make sure that its neither black nor white as these are the most common website background colours and might mean your border just ends up blending into the background.

5. Set your video to autoplay in the expanded state



A user has already had to actively interact with your creative just to get to the expanded panel of your Engagement Ad, so don’t make them jump through anymore hurdles in order to start viewing your brands message. If you’re going to include a video have it set to autoplay so that a user can start watching immediately and this will dramatically increase the performance of your ad. What’s more, if you’re using a YouTube Video Player, incremental views of the video within your ad, will count towards your YouTube video views (as long as a user has watched for 10 seconds)

6. Stick to the rules!



As much of a drag as they can often be, the specifications and rules for building an Engagement Ad to run across the GDN are there to make sure that your ad gets as much exposure as possible. So make sure you read through all of them before you start designing your Engagement Ad. As a quick tip the most common rule breaker and reason for creative changes relates to the length of animation. All non user initiated animations within the invitation state must stop at 30 seconds so don’t waste time by having it go on any longer than this and just make sure your animation stops before then. The full specifications can be found here

Design Tips

We sat down and looked through our best performing Engagement Ads and came up with the following six design tips. Again and again these design tips cropped up in the most engaging and highest performing ads so give your creatives the best possible head start by making sure you consider all of them before you start building your ad.

1. Display your Logo as much as possible



- Keep your brand or product logo in front of users in all frames or at least as many as you can.
- Brands who kept a logo visible constantly created greater brand awareness, recognition and recorded higher than average Click through rates.
- At the very least make sure to include your logo in the final frame of your ad so as to ensure your brand shows after all animation has ended.

Creative Example: [JL](#)



2. Coordinate Colors & Images

- Customize the color scheme of your ad to match your image or logo, and use easy-to-view colors for backgrounds and fonts.
- Extremely bright colors, although eye catching, can be unpleasant and difficult to read.
- Using transparent PNG-format images can greatly improve aesthetics within your ad.

Creative Example: [Burberry](#)



3. Balance Text & Images

- Take advantage of both text and images to convey your message.
- Text and images are processed by different parts of the brain. Integrating both into your ad – harmoniously – can help you influence viewers cognitively and emotionally.
- Complementary text and images may help viewers remember your ad long after they have seen it.
- Keep it simple.



4. Create a Clear Value Proposition

- Include a clear, compelling message highlighting the benefit of your product or service.
- If your ad is animated, consider presenting a value proposition in each frame. Users should feel as though they are missing out on something by not engaging.

Creative Example: [Chrome](#)



5. Instil a Sense of Urgency

- Create a sense of urgency in your ad.
- Referring to deadlines or limits in quantity and availability can persuade users to give your message consideration right away.

Creative Example: [Discover America](#)



6. Make sure any landing pages are relevant

- If your aim is to drive users to a website then make sure you direct them to a relevant one.
 - If your brand is a specific product then make sure to direct users to a page where the product or service is described in detail.
 - The message on the landing page should match the message or promotion in your ad. This can have a dramatically positive impact on your users, conversion rate, and quality score.
 - Remember to match the look and feel of your ad to the landing page.
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