



BUSINESS SOLUTIONS ASSOCIATION

Banner Ad Guidelines BSA Guideline 08-13

Proposed Effective Date: January 1, 2014

Table of Contents

- **Purpose**
- **Goals and Objectives**
- **Proposed Guidelines**
- **Technical Specifications**
- **Implementation**

A. Purpose:

The purpose of the document is to establish a set of guidelines applying to Banner Ads used by participants in the industry, resulting in consistency and improving time to market. This document is further intended to clearly define a set of best practices as it relates to “attributes” of effective and usable banner ads (web banner formats, resolution and rotation frequency, etc.), and identify a comprehensive set of considerations when designing not only the banner ad itself, but also the behavior of the ad and the impact of the banner ad to the overall experience of the site visitor. This document identifies a common set of metrics to track and measure the success of the banner ads placed on a site.

B. Goals and Objectives:

Banner Ads can be an effective way to attract traffic to a website or linking a visitor to a focused area of the site. Over the past several years, the use of banner ads has become ubiquitous with online advertising. Regardless of where the banner is positioned, it must be effective in terms of its design and style.

The guidelines included in this document are intended to communicate areas of consideration when designing banner ads to assure behavior and experience on the site meets visitors’ expectations. The areas included in the Technical Specifications are

intended to provide industry wide best practices as they pertain to banner ads to enable the manufacturer to focus their efforts on the messages and measurements of their banner ads to achieve their marketing goals.

C. Proposed Guidelines:

The proposed guidelines are applicable to 18 standard banner sizes and shapes as defined by the IAB (Interactive Advertisement Bureau), 10 of the most commonly used are outlined below:

Name	Width by pixel	Height by pixel
Rectangle	180	150
Medium rectangle	300	250
Small square	200	200
Small button	120	60
Button	120	90
Micro bar	88	31
Skyscraper	120	600
Wide skyscraper	160	600
Half Page	300	600
Leaderboard	728	90

D. Technical Specifications:

1. General Specifications										
Focused Banner Types for this Guideline	Main page Category page Branded page Manufacturer's page Detail page									
Common Banner Shapes	Horizontal Vertical Square Skyscraper Leader Board									
Web Banner Format	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Format</th> <th>Typical Compression Ratios</th> <th>Description</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>GIF</td> <td>4:1 - 10:1</td> <td>Lossless for images</td> </tr> <tr> <td>JFIF (JPEG)</td> <td>10:1 - 20:1</td> <td>High quality - has little or no loss in image quality with continuous tone originals. Worse results for flat color, sharp-edge art, and bi-level images.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Format	Typical Compression Ratios	Description	GIF	4:1 - 10:1	Lossless for images	JFIF (JPEG)	10:1 - 20:1	High quality - has little or no loss in image quality with continuous tone originals. Worse results for flat color, sharp-edge art, and bi-level images.
Format	Typical Compression Ratios	Description								
GIF	4:1 - 10:1	Lossless for images								
JFIF (JPEG)	10:1 - 20:1	High quality - has little or no loss in image quality with continuous tone originals. Worse results for flat color, sharp-edge art, and bi-level images.								
Graphics formats	Recommended upper limits: 665x318 54KB 240x400 29KB 468x60 12KB 160x600 24KB 120x295 10KB 200x200 14KB									
Aspect Ratio	1:4 Aspect Ratio [ratio of width to height of a graphic] Recommended Product Images = 1:1 Logos = 1:2.65 To scale a graphic down or scale up, you need to preserve the aspect ratio to avoid the result to looking flattened or elongated. You can achieve this by scaling by the same proportion/percentage in both the horizontal and vertical directions.									
Resolution	Hi Res for editing, Web for direct placement									

2. Shapes & Landing Pages	
Recommendation of how to "stretch" the Common Banner Shapes	As Responsive Web Design gains popularity and application, it will become the default for web production. This approach will allow automatic formatting of web sites to fit to whatever device is used to view the content, requiring that the designer of the banners consider how the

	visual image will scale on multiple devices
Landing Page sizes	Standards will not be defined due to wide variety of potential placements on the page

3. Best Practices and Elements of Consideration	
Naming Convention Recommendations for Web Banners	<p>Include pixel dimensions in title, also brand, creative version and/or campaign if space is available</p> <p>Examples: 300x250_Quartet_Whiteboard 728x90_Shredder_Shred and Done 160x600_Five Star_Built Strong to Last Long</p>
"Published" guideline document Recommended	Yes
How often should the banner ad be rotated?	<p>Promotion Banners: Aligned to life of the promotion, then remove</p> <p>Program Banners: Align to rules of the program [Facebook, email – tie frequency to those programs]</p> <p>New Product Launch Banners: Determine how long the product can be deemed "new". Who is the product "new" to?</p> <p>Seasonal Ad Banners: Remove after the season is over</p> <p>Banners become stale and perform worse over time if run with too great a frequency or for too long a time without a creative refresh. Rotate creative messages and test results whenever possible.</p>
When linking outside the primary site	<p>Objective: To maintain experience within the dealer's product pages. "Linked to" site (eg. manufacturer's microsite) must be a closed site. Links to dealer's Where-To-Buy are permitted. Links back to manufacturer's webpage are not permitted. Links back to a manufacturer's microsite is permitted if the microsite is a closed site.</p> <p>Product links on the microsite are limited to products sold by dealer</p>
Call to action vs. informational banner	<p>"Call to Action" banners should be clearly stated and land on a page delivering information the user expects.</p> <p>(eg. "Learn more", "Click Here")</p> <p>Informational banners should not include "Call to Action".</p>
Designing banners for Tablet vs. Smartphone	<p>Consider the device when designing banners. Flash will not work well on tablets. Banner design should be done with consideration that it may live within a responsive designed page.</p> <p>Recommendation: Designing with Responsive Web Design using HTML5 with Inquiry's calling animation.</p>
Considerations for Links to products appearing on a Banner	Assure that all products, on the pdf or microsite are carried by the wholesaler

4. Metrics and Measurement

<p>Recommendations for Metrics to track/monitor success on banners</p>	<p>Manufacturers may request that the site owner (dealer, 3rd party provider) hosting the banner will have the ability to provide timely metrics on banner performance including:</p> <p>Banner Performance: Impressions Clicks (click at the time of viewing the ad) Click through rate (only one measurement of interest in banner ad message) View through rate (measurement of latency, not all viewers of an ad click and take action immediately but they may at a later date, typically 14-30 days after viewing the ad, and the action or sale can be attributed to the banner ad if measured as such) Conversion from Clicks (sales or actions resulting from clicks) Conversion from View Through (sales or action resulting from views that bought later) ROI or ROAS (a positive return on investment or return on the ad spend ensures the campaign delivered value)</p> <p>Visit Performance: Page views Page views per visit Time on site Conversion Bounce rate Conversion rate</p>
<p>Alt Tagging</p>	<p>Target for SEO & Screen readers</p> <p>Alt Tagging is optional</p> <p>Be cautious of over-optimizing Alt Tags</p> <p>Include the main keyword in an ALT once when Addressing a page</p> <p>Use ALT tags (ALT Attributes) for descriptive text that helps visitors – and keep them unique where possible</p> <p>Optimize your ALT tags for humans, for accessibility and usability rather than for GOOGLE</p> <p>At a minimum use a blank ALT (or NULL value) so people with screen readers can enjoy the banner</p>

E. Implementation

Implementation of the Banner Ad Guidelines will commence on January 1, 2014, or sooner, with any new banner ads being introduced to the marketplace with all users becoming fully versed and engaged in the implications and technical specifications of the new standard.

The Banner Ads Guidelines will be unveiled at the 2013 BSA Forum in October 2013.