

DMG CREATIVE BEST PRACTICES GUIDE



Be Compelling, Concise, and Clear.

Often, brands will just make image ads without thinking about the strategy behind them. What are your plans for them, and do you need to create different sets for different strategies?

If you're using a designer, it can be costly to create different ad sets, but it's important to note that even a slight variation in text can make all the difference in the world.

Decide if you're looking for direct response or if the aim is to raise brand awareness. Once you've decided whom you want to target and with which message, prepare a brief outline of the criteria you'd like for your ads to ensure you get the right message across.

Keep It Simple

We've seen thousands of creatives over the years at DMG, some more successful than others. Banner ads that have a lot of design elements and text result in lesser clicks and lower brand recall.

Less Is Really More

The mantra "less is more" definitely applies to text on banner ads. To make your ads as effective as possible, use larger fonts and fewer words. Make sure if you are using images that they are proportionate to the amount of space available.

What am I Doing Here?

All advertising is trying to convince the consumer to do something. The most effective creatives are clear in telling the user exactly what that something is, whether it's "Learn More." or "Shop Now." The call to action, or CTA as it's commonly known, doesn't have to be a button, but many advertisers choose to include one.

A Picture Really Is Worth a Thousand Words

What's more appealing to look at, just text or text and an image? This shouldn't even be a question. Try to include a meaningful picture in your ad, whether it's a product, place or person. If your service is more abstract, jazz up your creative with an abstract design element.

Make The Ads Look On Brand

Make sure that your ad branding is consistent with your website landing page and all other collateral. Your ad should have your brand colors, brand fonts, and other elements so consumers know that ad is from you.

Contrast In Color

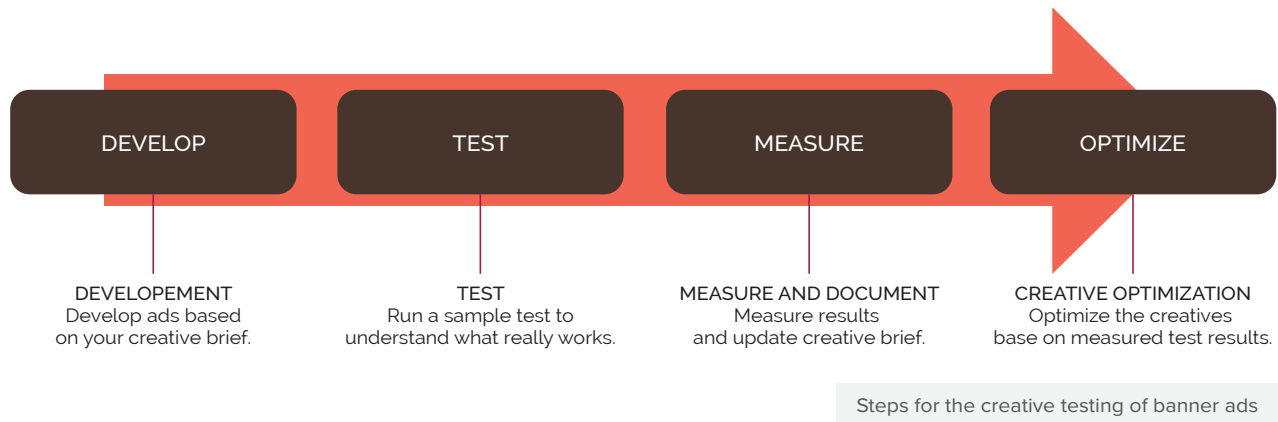
This one isn't strictly necessary, but we highly recommend using a background in a color other than white. Most websites have a white background, and you want your ad to stand out from the rest of the website content.

How Often Should I Refresh My Creative?

It depends. Some brands can use the same creative for six months and see great results, and others will see creative burnout after a quarter. Our general rule of thumb is to let your data guide you.

If the ad creative fails, go back to the drawing board. Without testing, creative quality turns into a subjective—or even a philosophical—debate. Data can streamline this dialogue. Since creative testing isolates creative quality, it's possible to extrapolate which tactics work.

Strengthening the creative quality requires some work and a small investment, but good creative and proper testing can yield fantastic results.



Should I Try A/B Testing?

Yes! Every advertiser can benefit from testing out different creative treatments. Here are some things to consider:

- You don't need two drastically different sets of creative. The test can be as simple as a different call to action or placing the logo in a different spot.
- Collect at least four weeks' worth of data before deciding on which is performing better.
- Try testing out a different message for a retargeting audience versus your prospecting audience.

Welcome to the Mobile Millennium

These days mobile usage out places desktop, which means mobile is a necessary component in your digital strategy. In general, mobile ads can be treated like display, but the best practices are slightly different for the smaller ad sizes – 300x50 and 320x50.

- Don't include images. Your logo and the call to action will be the only elements that fit.
- Use bright colors to catch attention. Nothing garish, but you're trying to draw attention from whatever app or site your audience is engrossed in.

Sight, Sound, and Motion

Advertisers love video ads because they combine all three of these elements. However, this means the creative considerations are different from display.

- Shorter videos tend to get better completion rates, so consider using a :15 video over a :30.
- The last screen of your video should include your logo, to associate your brand with the ad.
- Try to engage viewers within the first five seconds of the video. If viewers aren't interested, they will click the skip button if they can.