7 Web Apps Advertisers are Using in Digital Ads

Display advertising, soon to enter its third decade of providing financial support to some of the most highly-trafficked websites in the world, continues to evolve. Perhaps the most important component of that evolution is the constant challenge to deliver novel approaches to encourage user engagement.

Why? Advertisers are in a neverending struggle against ad blindness. Web users consider ads a nuisance, something to ignore, if not block. After all, traditional display ads' raison d'etre is to encourage a click off the site, interrupting users' site content consumption.

Fortunately for both advertisers and web users, there is a growing effort to create ads that users will not want to ignore. Ads that deliver the sort of content - informative or entertaining, but always fresh and interesting - that users tend to enjoy on popular websites, is the fundamental idea behind Paid Media Publishing. Give users a genuine reason to interact with your ad, and they will. And even better, users can engage with Paid Media Publishing ads and enjoy their content without clicking off the site.

This quick reference guide highlights seven of the most popular web applications that appear in content-rich Paid Media Publishing ads these days. Leveraging powerful and extensible APIs on the backend, a simple ad tag has the ability to pull in tweets, articles, videos, maps, and more, making today's ads more than a simple teaser to click away.

TWITTER

Bite-sized updates that convey freshness and relevance

There's nothing quite like an auto-scrolling list of tweets to signal that your brand isn't afraid of today's social media. And brands that contribute to and foster conversations using the social network leverage the vitality that this represents by embedding a Twitter feed within their display ads.

There are a few common display possibilities: an advertiser's feed; a feed of tweets using a particular hashtag; a field to prompt a user tweet; and a follow button.

MAPS

Crucial functionality when promoting a physical location

Because Google, Bing and Yahoo make their map applications available via API, display ads, particularly mobile ones, can deliver considerable value by simply sticking a pin on a map, particularly when driving customers to a retail location. Users can understand a location within a broader geographical context and can request directions. Further integration with the Google Places API can also expose richer information such as phone numbers, hours and ratings.
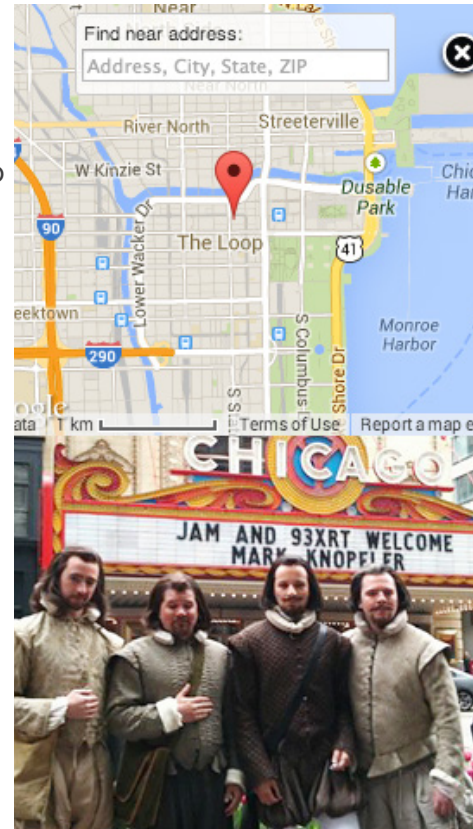
FACEBOOK

Rich updates and longer-form content with the freshness of social media

Like Twitter, but with thumbnail pics and without that pesky 140-character limit, Facebook Pages provide similar but richer updates, images, videos and links to articles or other web pages that a brand can promote.

RSS/ATOM FEEDS

**An extension of owned-media content into paid media**

Advertisers on the content marketing bandwagon and that regularly publish on their site or blog can syndicate that very same content into display ads. By generating an RSS or Atom feed, an advertiser can make available a stream of articles or posts that showcase the utility, informativeness or entertainment value of an advertiser's content. Alternatively, an advertiser could make available other sources of premium content available through publisher partnerships.

POLL

A low-touch first engagement step

Polls are popular, simple ways to prompt a user to share their opinion and see how it measures up against other users. Sometimes encouraging that first engagement step can grease the wheels towards further interaction, and a poll is an easy way to do just that.
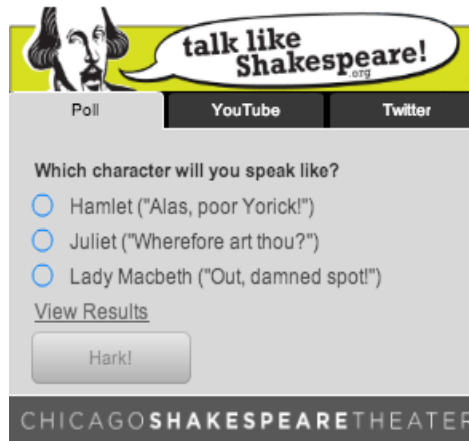
FORM

A gateway to information interchange between user and advertiser

Although forms enable ads to capture lead information, they can also be used for sweepstakes, newsletter/mailing list subscriptions, reservations, and much more. And because today's browsers simplify filling out forms with autofill, forms can be an efficient manner for encouraging the sharing of information between an engaged user and advertiser.

YOUTUBE/VIDEO

A rich sensory experience that draws attention

Widespread broadband access has enabled streaming video to enjoy near ubiquity on the web. Because video gets noticed, ads with autoplay video (with sound enabled by a click) tend to perform remarkably well.