



IAB NEW AD PORTFOLIO
Frequently Asked Questions
(FAQ)

1) What is the IAB New Ad Portfolio, and why is it important?

The IAB New Ad Portfolio is a set of guidelines for ad units, formats, and ad functionality recommended by the industry working group on ad formats. It defines new ad units that are aspect-ratio based and follows the [LEAN guidance](#) (of Light, Encrypted, AdChoices supported, and Non-invasive ads) to create a better user experience for new media consumption trends, especially on mobile devices.

2) How often do the ad portfolio standards and guidelines change?

Ad portfolio and ad units' guidelines change every two to three years. Changes can be minor or major. The last change was made in September 2015 to help the industry transition from Flash ads to HTML5 and JavaScript ads. The IAB New Ad Portfolio takes effect as of July 2017.

3) What is so special about this 2017 IAB New Ad Portfolio?

This 2017 IAB New Ad Portfolio marks a major change in ad unit specifications. It recognizes the current consumers' media consumption patterns on diverse devices, especially mobile phones with touch screen interface. The ad unit specifications have changed from fixed pixel sizes to aspect-ratio based flexible ads and have adopted the [LEAN guidance](#) for better user experience as defined in this release. The new ad portfolio also includes some new ad types, beyond display ads (e.g. native ad formats and emerging ads like 360-degree image and video ads as well as augmented reality and virtual reality ads).

4) What is an aspect ratio?

Aspect ratio is the ratio of width to height of the ad creative. E.g. 1:1 aspect ratio means that the ad unit always has equal width and height.

5) What does it mean for an ad to be 'flexible'?

In the IAB New Ad Portfolio, for an ad to be 'flexible' means that the ad can have different sizes within its defined size range, but the ad must always maintain its aspect ratio. E.g. a 6:1 ad may be bigger on an iPhone 6 Plus and smaller on an iPhone 5, but its width and height will always remain in the ratio of 6:1.

6) What is the format of those new flexible ad units so that they can be responsive across screens?

The new flexible ad units in the IAB New Ad Portfolio can either be served in HTML5 format or as a static ad unit (JPEG or PNG) or animated GIF. Please refer to the flexible size ad specification section of the IAB New Ad Portfolio for the sizes of aspect ratio.

7) Does this update only affect display advertising units, or do these changes impact video advertising unit guidelines, too?

This update is for display advertising units across all platforms (desktop/laptop, mobile, and tablets). For video advertising, the new ad portfolio defines the standards for video creative to be used in banner as well as out-stream ad formats, which have video as the primary creative. In addition to video there is also detailed guidance on the use of audio in ads. It does not impact or change video advertising guidelines for in-stream ads.

8) What's happening to the current IAB ad units with fixed pixel sizes (e.g. the 300x250 medium rectangle or the 728x90 leaderboard)? Will they be part of the new ad portfolio?

We are moving away from fixed pixel ad sizes to responsive sizes based on aspect ratio and a responsive range of minimum and maximum size. The minimum and maximum size of the ad unit will define the new specs. The new ad units are within a range – for instance for the 1:1 aspect ratio, it can be from 300x300 to 450x450.

Most of the previous fixed size ad units have proportions close to the new standard ad units and will be easily transitioned – for instance the 300x250 is close to the 1:1 aspect ratio and the 728x90 is close to the 8:1 ratio so they are included within those ranges. But with the new standard ad units, you need to think in terms of proportional width and height within a defined size range rather than fixed pixel size.

9) I work for a publisher. What does my company / team need to do to ensure our inventory conforms to these new guidelines?

All publishers need to do two things: 1) change their specifications to meet the new LEAN guidelines for light weight and non-disruptive ads and 2) implement flexible size ad containers for the new ad units they chose for their websites. Since most new ad units are close to existing fixed size units defined as the transition fixed size ad units, it is recommended to transition to those ad units first. E.g. for 728x90, transition to 8:1. This will allow publishers to accept 8:1 as well as 728x90 ad units during a transition period. Please see the transition guide and the demo page at www.iab.com/newadportfolio for more details.

10) I work for an ad tech company. What does my company need to change about its product to support these updated guidelines?

As an ad tech company, you will need to modify your products to support aspect-ratio-based flexible sizing and to incorporate the new LEAN guidance for ad creative specifications and details. Please see the transition guide for more details.

11) I work for a creative shop. What do I need to do to ensure that the ads I build conform to these new guidelines?

Creative shops must adapt to build creative to the new specifications. New creative should understand the size of the container they are in and be able to render the full width and height of the container to maintain the aspect ratio of the ad unit. Also, creative shops must change the creative build to comply with the new light-weight definitions of initial load, subload, number of files requested, and limits on use of shared libraries. In addition, they need to ensure that the ad units comply with the non-disruptive guidance for ad functionality and behavior like animation, video, audio, expansion, interstitial, etc.

12) I work for a media agency. What does my company / team need to do to ensure that our ad buys conform to these new guidelines?

Media agencies need to incorporate new size definitions in their buying process and systems. They must also test their creative for compliance with the LEAN guidance and for flexible sizing.

13) I work at a trading desk. What does this update mean for buying automation (or “programmatically buying”)?

For buying automation, OpenRTB (Real-Time Bidding) 2.5 introduces the banner object definition in terms of aspect ratio. Please look at OpenRTB 2.5 and higher implementations and work with the exchanges to determine next steps on bidding for flexible sized ads.

14) How do you measure the initial load and validate the ads?

Initial load is the total weight of all files requested before the load event is dispatched by the publisher page window object. In absence of access to publisher page window object, the window object of the ad iframe can be used. To validate, the ad can register to listen to the load event of the window object and manage the file weight.

15) What do you mean by the Rising Stars (e.g. Pushdown, Billboard, etc.) are in transition?

The Rising Stars are in transition: We have set a time limit of six months to stop using the rising stars ad formats. Publishers should replace them with one of the new aspect ratio based ad units from the IAB New Ad Portfolio.

16) What do you define as an interstitial in the IAB New Ad Portfolio? And what is the difference between interstitial and pop-up?

- Interstitial is an ad placed in between user's content navigation from one page to another. It must not overlay existing content and must not be placed after the user starts engaging with content
- Pop-ups are ads that overlay content before or after the user has started engaging with the content

17) What are the new innovative formats?

New innovative formats are emerging rich ad experiences created using new technology or new media consumption experiences or patterns. Some examples are:

- Augmented Reality (AR) adding digital content over user's immediate surroundings
- Virtual Reality (VR) immersive 3Dimensional environments typically experienced using headsets and controllers
- 360-degree image and videos are image and video ads captured in 360 degrees that allow the user to engage with the ad by moving in different directions and exploring different sections of the ad unit

18) LEAN Guidance and LEAN Scoring

LEAN stands for Light, Encrypted, AdChoices supported, Non-invasive ads. These are principles that will help guide the next phases of advertising technical standards for the global digital advertising supply chain. Every ad should be a LEAN ad. You can use any functionality (e.g. animation, expansion, video) as long as you comply with the LEAN guidance on file weight and non-invasive functionality of the ad.

19) Transition guidance, process & timing

The new ad portfolio was finalized in July 2017. The expectation for transition is that the LEAN guidance, which determines the file weights, number of files, and ad functionality recommendations should be implemented immediately. Flexible ad sizing is something that will take some time to transition to. The expectation is for publishers and SSPs to start implementing flexible sized ad slots and for advertisers to start building flexible and responsive ad units. Six months to one year should be commercially reasonable to implement flexible size containers. More on transition can be found in the Transition Guide.

20) Are there different ad units or ad sizes for mobile?

The ad units are defined based on size range. Based on the size range, some ad units can be used for mobile and some cannot.

21) How will this apply to OpenRTB?

Open RTB 2.5 has the ability to define a flexible ad requested by defining the aspect ratio in the banner object. Further changes on the next OpenRTB 3.0 will be made to incorporate the IAB New Ad Portfolio.

22) Do these guidelines impact mobile application environments? Can we use auto-play in mobile apps?

Yes, the IAB New Ad Portfolio guidelines apply to mobile apps, including for auto-play.

23) Can you provide some best practices for the placement of these new ad units?

Ad placement is up to each publisher to decide based on their website design. In the new ad portfolio, we have provided mapping of aspect ratio ad units to transition from fixed size units. The best and easiest way would be to replace a given fixed size unit with the corresponding aspect ratio based unit as defined in the size specification details. E.g. The 300x250 medium rectangle should be replaced with a 1:1 flexible ad size.

24) Adoption and enforcement questions – How will those new ad standard units be adopted and enforced at the industry level?

IAB can provide recommendations but does not enforce. Please refer to the Transition Guide for more details on how the new standards can be easily adopted.