

An Introduction to Banner Ads

Banner advertising has come a long way since its humble beginnings centuries ago. Yes, that's right... centuries. Flip through any old newspaper or publication from the American colonial era and you'll find rectangular banner ads pitching everything from beer to stockings, complete with a main image, carefully chosen brand colors, a motto or unique selling proposition, and even a call-to-action! Of course, we're not here to discuss old print banner ads for stylish powdered wigs or state-of-the-art wooden dentures

(although it is useful to remember how long the ancestors of today's digital banners have been around). In this 4 articles set we're going to discuss modern digital banner ads in all their glory. So, for starters, what are they?



What are banner Ads?

Basically, banner advertisements are actionable, clickable, tappable images that invite web visitors to buy, learn about, or receive something in exchange for a click-through. These ads can appear anywhere and are typically seen within and around the content of various websites such as the header area on a forum page, the sidebar of a blog or news site, or even squeezed in among the paragraphs of a news article. These banner ads come in all shapes and sizes (typically variations of the trusty old rectangle) and will either be static (.jpg, .png, or .gif) images or animated (.gif or Flash) banners. In more recent years, some businesses have been leveraging “Rich Media” banner ads that do all sorts of whacky stuff like send a car zooming across your screen in front of the article you were reading. And these ads aren’t going anywhere soon. Banner ads still make up around 34% of all online ad spending, second only to Search Engine Marketing (SEM).

So, since they’ve been around for hundreds of years and businesses are spending a ton on them every year, clearly they work. The question is, should you be using them in your business?

