Google’s Responsive Display Ads go vertical for a better mobile experience

The popular automatic display ad type Responsive Display Ads (RDAs) will be undergoing a major transformation in the second half of this year. RDAs have been the default display option since 2018 and these new enhancements are geared toward a better mobile offering for advertisers.

Portrait images and videos now welcome. The versatility of RDAs has the ability to flex images to display on mobile devices, but Google will allow for portrait images and videos to be used.

RDA using a horizontal image (left) vs RDA with new portrait image (right)
Previous options required a landscape or a square image while using machine learning to fill in the gaps for mobile ads. This new upgrade should be a welcomed option as it gives advertisers more control over their mobile appearance.

Auto-generated vertical video. If you are an advertiser that doesn’t have vertical videos handy, Google will now be able to help create those assets for your RDAs. Google is leveraging machine learning to use existing assets to create vertical video for campaigns.

Google is using “machine learning to speed up the design and iteration process, you can deliver engaging display ads faster than ever.”

If you are an advertiser that has tight branding/brand standards, you may want to view automated vertical videos before testing, as some advertisers have been dissatisfied with auto-created videos within Performance Max campaigns.

Image uncropping, powered by machine learning. A unique addition coming to RDAs is the ability to “uncrop” images via machine learning. Google said this “automatic improvement lets your products shine by seamlessly expanding to fill the available space.”

RDA using different images in the current state (left) vs RDAs using the uncropping technology (right)
As you can see in the sample image, this does look to be a big improvement with big bold images and less white space. This shouldn’t be a problem if all ad sizes are uploaded, but it should help those advertisers who are missing sizes.

Creative inspiration. If you are an advertiser looking for inspiration with your assets, Google has a new home for you. Creative inspiration is a filterable tool that allows you to surface some of the best ad creative from around the globe.

The filtering includes a helpful “Ad Format” option to allow for browsing by ad type.

For more information on the improvements, see the full release and stay tuned for more after the May 24 Google Marketing Live event.

Why we care. Google said its advertisers see “2X more conversions, on average, when adding a responsive display ad to an ad group with a static display ad.” This additional image size and vertical video support should allow advertisers to deliver more specific messaging by device.

The filterable additional creative inspiration center is a nice touch for advertisers looking for new ideas. Additionally, the uncropping of images should help advertisers

with a hodgepodge of image sizes in their ad groups. These tools should be warmly welcomed by advertisers everywhere.

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