

Digital Advertising Basics, What You Should Know



How to navigate the complex world of online advertising and get the most for your ad dollar

While preparing this post on digital advertising basics, I came to a sobering conclusion—the phrase ‘digital advertising basics’ is a contradiction. Digital advertising is mind bogglingly complex. So, understanding a few basic terms doesn’t get you very far.

For example, the broad categories of digital advertising like paid search advertising, display advertising, social media advertising and [email marketing and automation](#) are easy enough to understand. I get it so far.

But then, the many kinds of digital ads complicate the decision process. One website¹ lists 25 different types and formats of online ads, including: search ads, PPC ads, banner ads, display ads, retargeting ads, mobile ads, in-game ads, email ads and video ads, not to mention Facebook ads, Twitter ads, Pinterest ads, YouTube Ads, and well, you get the picture.

Before you get too far, the whole question of digital advertising vs. organic search, or [search engine marketing](#) (SEM), that includes [search engine optimization](#) (SEO), surfaces. Which is cheaper and which takes more of your time appear to be most relevant factors in deciding which way to go. Furthermore, huge ad networks, such as Google, Bing, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. compete zealously for your ad dollars, adding to the confusion.

Proceed Cautiously

All of this online advertising (about \$67 billion worth in the U.S. in 2016) is sold in a variety of ways. There's cost per click (CPC), also known as pay per click (PPC), cost per view (CPV), cost per install (CPI), cost per thousand impressions (CPM), and fixed cost, among others.² Results are also measured with assorted variables. You'll need to know about eCPM and rCPM, whatever those are.

Before you ever place an ad, you must consider if you are trying to build brand awareness, do prospecting or retargeting. Then, decide on global vs local distribution, desktop vs. mobile vs. roadside, or in-store digital display formats. To make sure the right people see your ad, content and behavioral targeting, geotargeting and contextual targeting come into play.¹

If that isn't enough, online advertisers must be careful. They need to worry about security and other pitfalls such as banner blindness, fraud, ad-blocking, regulation and privacy concerns.

Lest you despair, digital advertising experts specialize in different aspects of digital advertising to lend a helping hand. Eager websites offer to advertise your content, and marketing platforms promise to manage your lists, targeting, timing, funnels, nurture, follow-up, drip, slush and temperature. Ok, I made some of those up.

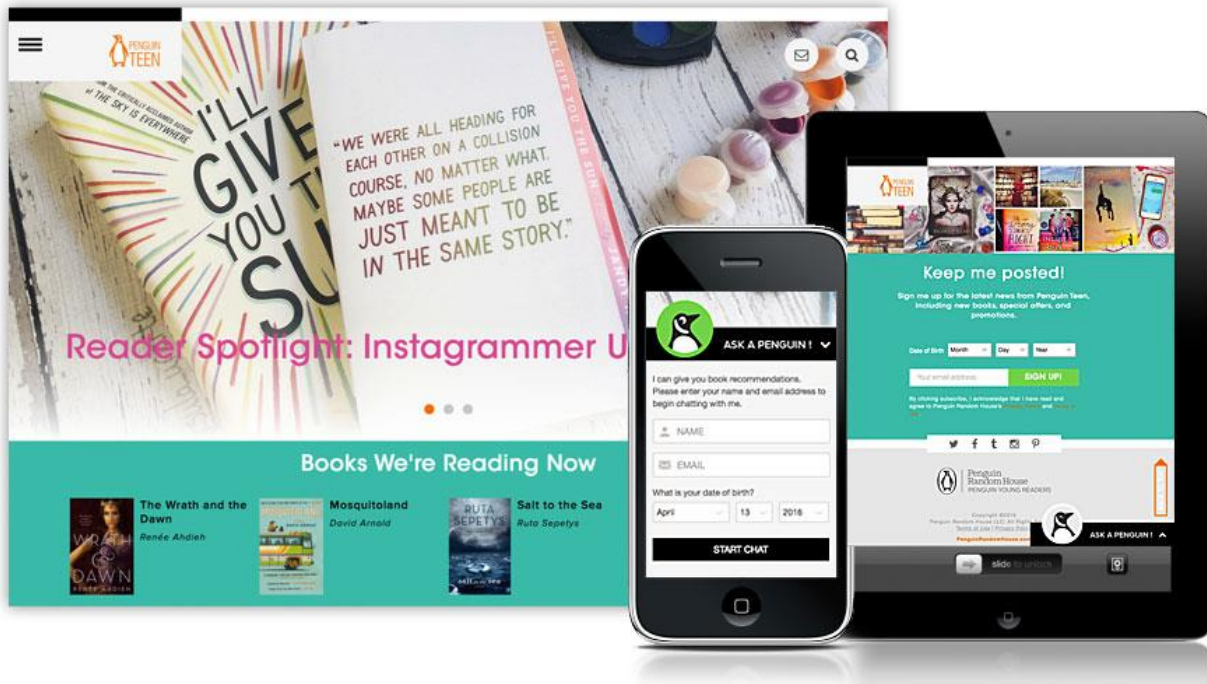
Finally, there's this whole discipline of programmatic advertising, an automated, technology-driven way to buy and sell digital advertising to help you define your RTB (robots talking back?) campaigns. Programmatic marketers operate in real-time mode using [real-time bidding](#) tactics (oh, that's it) on various ad networks. Slick.



Digital Advertising Basics You Can Use

The complexity of it all persuades me that I should find someone to help me sort it all out. Fortunately, [digital marketing](#) agencies have grown to fill this need.

Digital agencies can be a godsend to business owners and executives seeking to get their toes wet or improve their digital advertising ROI. They have the expertise and the tools to save you a lot of time and money over DIY approaches.



By partnering with agencies like [Liqui-Site](#), business owners and managers, can optimize their digital advertising spend with the right design, message, platforms, ad networks and tools, including RTB. Their seasoned experts will lead you through the digital advertising basics that you need to know.

The mind-boggling details are handled for you efficiently and professionally. All of it accomplished with a minimum of your time and hard-earned cash. And, those are the digital advertising basics that matter most.

¹Wordstream, Online Ads: A Guide to Online Ad Types and Formats [Article], retrieved from <http://www.wordstream.com/online-ads>

²Wikipedia, Online advertising, [Article], retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Online_advertising