

## Ad Placement Strategy

### Intro

Ad placement strategy deals with ad location & timing as well as look & feel. An effective ad placement strategy will increase the click through rate (CTR) of the ads and since the vast majority of the campaigns are PPC (Pay Per Click), doing so will have a direct effect on the developer's revenue. Since each app and game provides its own ad opportunities, it is impossible to provide a "one size fits all" strategy. Thus, the purpose of this document is to provide some tried and tested general guidelines, which can be used when designing an ad placement strategy for a specific app.

**The main goal of the ad placement strategy should be to find a balance between getting the user's attention, increasing the willingness to click, and avoiding hindering the user-experience**

The following are two aspects that must be taken into account when working on an ad placement strategy:

- **Attention** – The user must notice the ad in order to be able to click on it.
- **User Experience** – Ads should not annoy the user. Therefore, they should only appear in a few strategic places and times.

### Text Ads vs. Banners

Text ads are supported by all our SDKs and API, while banners are currently supported by our server-to-server API and SDKs with the exception of the J2ME SDK. Both types of ads could generate a high CTR if effectively integrated. However, based on our experience, text ads should always appear in their own dedicated screen and not within the app's UI, since otherwise they will not be noticed by the user.

### Visibility

The first rule of effective ad placement strategy is that the ad should get the user's attention. Therefore a banner, which appears in the upper or lower part of the app's screen, like the one in the screenshot below, will not be effective because the user's

attention will be focused on the middle of the screen, where all the app's information appears.

Before ad placement strategy implementation.

A banner at the bottom of the board.



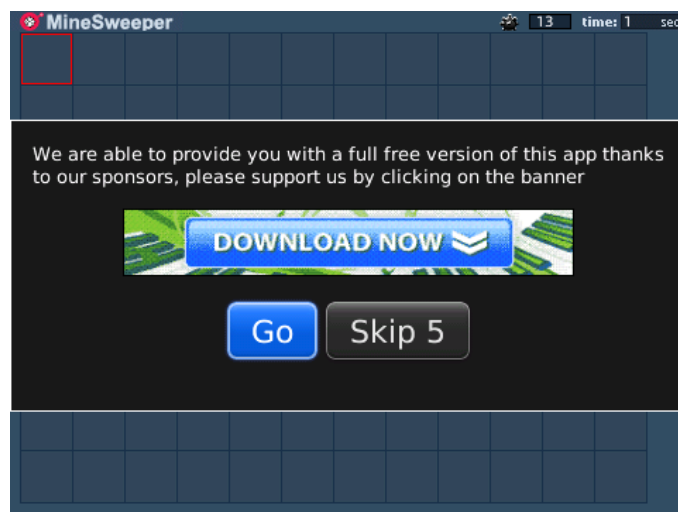
After ad placement strategy implementation

A special ad screen (the developer integrated an ad screen instead of placing a banner).



This rule is especially relevant for games. Displaying a banner during gameplay will not only take valuable screen pixels, but could also hinder gameplay, since clicking on the banner (purposely or accidentally) will stop the game and launch a web browser.

In order to catch the user's eye, we highly recommend creating a special ad screen or dialog box, which contains only the ad and a "Skip" button (for non touch devices, a "Go" button should be added as well). As you can see in the screenshot below, the ad appears in the middle of the screen, thus capturing the player's full attention.



Please note that this type of ad placement has another advantage as it provides the user as much time as he/she needs in order to acknowledge the ad and click on it. This is different than in-game ads, which change once in a certain amount of time, or which disappear when the level is over or when the user has left the screen.

## The following are three tips to enhance your ad placement strategy

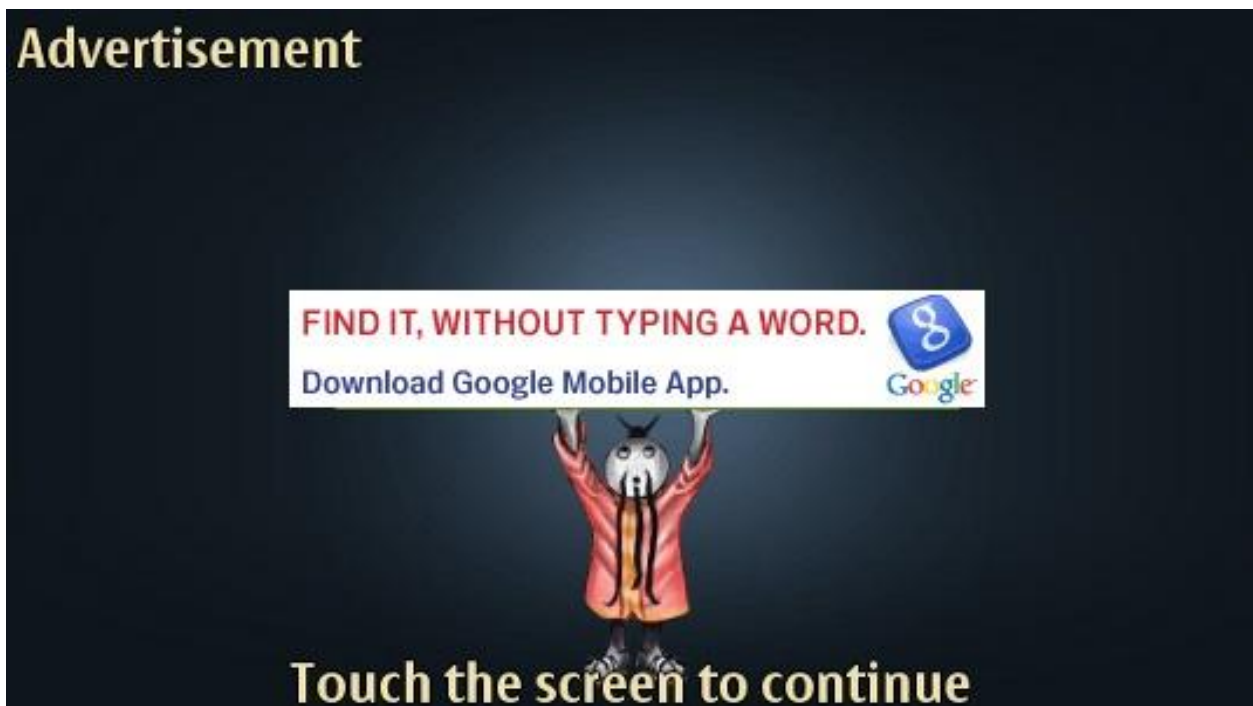
**Tip 1** – In order to increase the CTR you should display a grayed "Skip" button for 1-3 seconds. This will prevent the user from skipping the ads automatically and provide him/her with extra time to acknowledge the ad's contents.

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**Tip 2** – Provide a short message similar to the following: *"We are able to provide you with a full free version of this game/app thanks to our sponsors. Please support us by clicking on the banner"* and place it above the banner. This should reduce the player's objections to seeing ads in their game, or app, by creating a positive linkage between the ads and the fact that the app is free. It gives the users the feeling that we are all in the same boat of developing and using free apps.

**Tip 3** – The ad screen should have the look and feel of the app (same colors, same fonts etc.). This way, the ad looks like an integral part of the app and this could increase the chance that the user will click on it.



## Placement

We recommend placing the ads only after the user has had the opportunity to experience the app. As recommended earlier, ads should not appear inside the main app UI, the best place for ads would be in transition points. For example:

### Games

- Between the levels of the game but not before the first level as we would like the user to enjoy the game before he/she sees the ads. The only exception is

with games that don't contain any levels in which the game play is very long (For example: Chess).

- After the game is over.
- When leaving to the main menu.

## Apps

- When moving between one screen to another (For example: in a Flickr like application ads should be displayed when going from one album to the other)
- After the user had preformed a certain function (For example: In a Twitter like application, the ad should appear after the user completed his tweet).

## Frequency

Ad placements should appear a sufficient amount of times per session in order to display a variety of ads, thus increasing the chance that the user will click at least on one of them. However, in order not to hinder the user experience, ads should not appear too frequently. In order to control the ad frequency, we recommend a timer, which will start counting when the user reaches the ad placement. Once the time is over, an ad should appear – not immediately but rather in the next transition point, as described in the previous section.

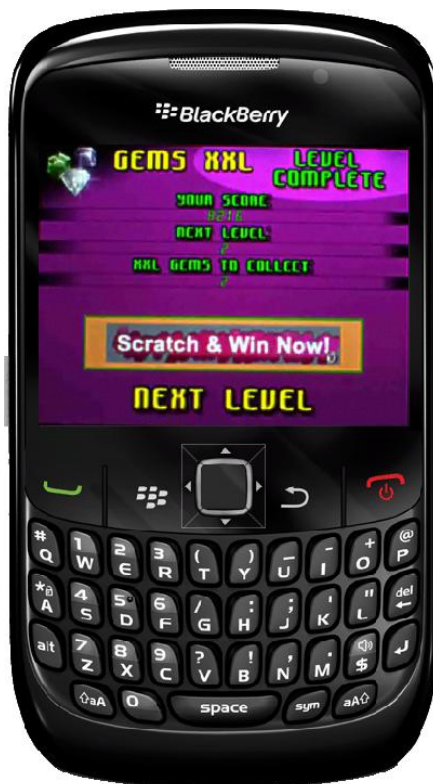
We recommend displaying an ad once in 2-5 minutes depending on the application's average session time. For example: The ad frequency for games like "Train Defender", which can be played for hours on each session should be once per 5 minutes, while ads in applications like "Cow Box" should appear once per 2 minutes since the session's length in such apps is quite short.

## Alternatives to the "Dialog Screen" Ad

Although ads, which appear in a specifically designed dialog screen tend to be more effective than banners, which appear in the game/app screen, we realize that

sometimes it is impossible to display these kinds of ads. Therefore, if you decide to display ads in one or more of the app's screens, please follow these guidelines:

- **Don't display ads during game play** – As mentioned before such ads are not very effective and could easily ruin the user experience since the player might accidentally click on them and launch a browser in the middle of game play. As an alternative to game screen ads we highly recommend placing the ad in screens, which are displayed before or after the actual game play. For example: "Game Over" screen, "High Score" screens, before going to the main menu, etc.



- **Add an animation to the banner** – providing an animation to the banner when it appears or is refreshed could grab the user's attention and increase the chance that the user clicks on it.
- **Don't refresh the banner too frequently** – Refreshing the banner too often will generate many unused impressions and will not provide the player with enough

time to examine the ad, thus decreasing the CTR. Therefore we recommend refreshing the ad once in 2-3 minutes.

- **Make sure that the banner is still displayed when scrolling down the screen**
- **Place a banner between 3-5 menu items in applications where the user usually scrolls up and down the menu (For example: sport statistics, Twitter apps, etc.)**

Lastly, we would like to emphasize that this document and the experience we have accumulated at inneractive is mostly due to the feedback and inputs provided by our developer partners. If you have an idea or an experience of how to maximize CTR, we're all ears. Feel free to contact us at [ideas@inner-active.com](mailto:ideas@inner-active.com).