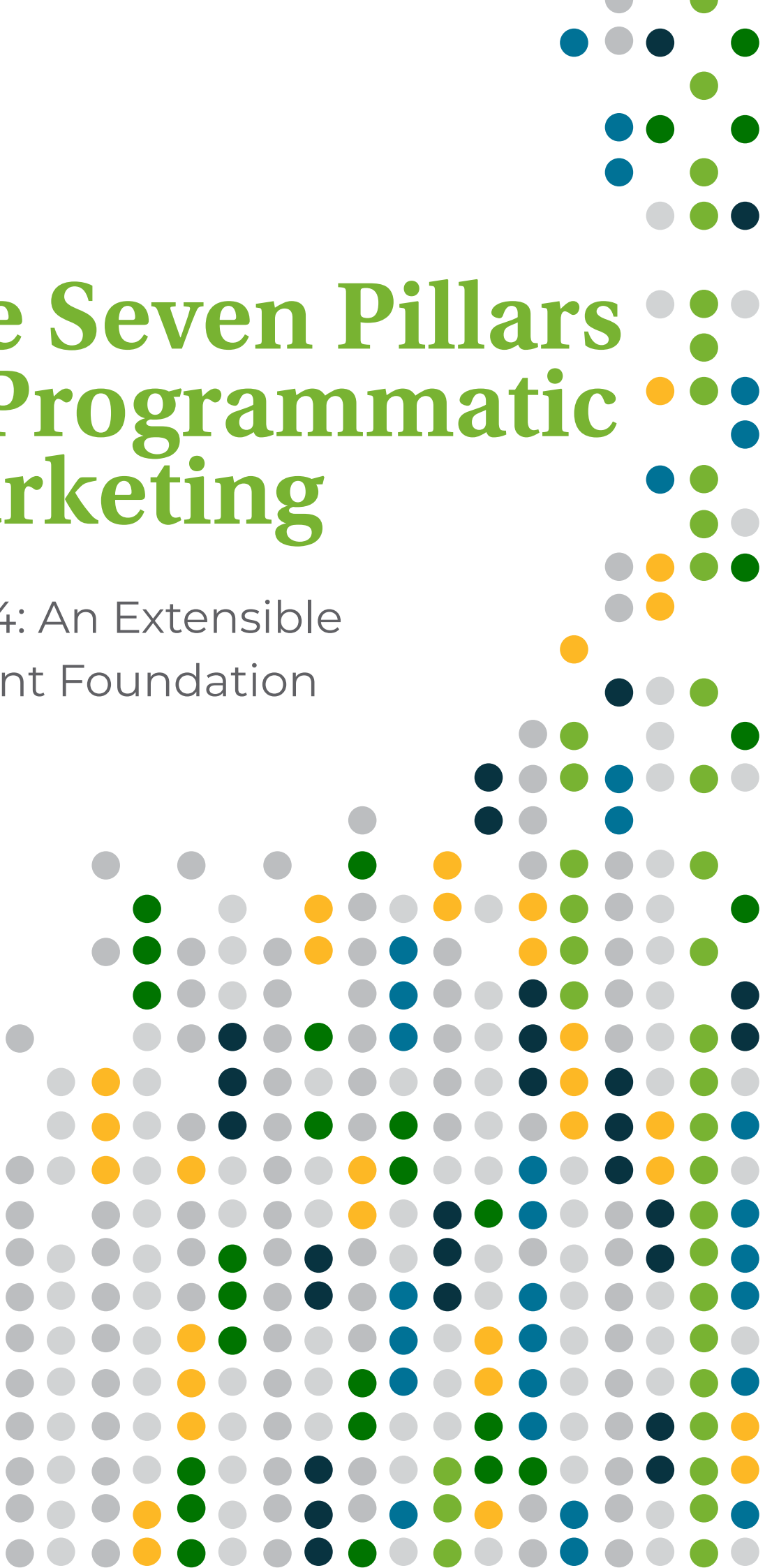




The Seven Pillars of Programmatic Marketing

Pillar 4: An Extensible Content Foundation



Engaging, insightful, captivating content is at the core of effective digital advertising. No matter how exceptional your client's product or service is, how stellar your landing page looks, or how analytical your team is, no one will click on your ad unless the creative is compelling. Think about these statistics for a moment:



It takes 50 milliseconds for website or ad users to assess a brand.



More than half of website visitors spend less than 15 seconds on the site.



Three-quarters of consumers say they judge a brand by its design.

Successful advertising content needs to create an experience that engages users quickly while providing them with the value they are seeking. But in our data-driven marketing landscape, creative assets are often an afterthought of the overall strategy. What if they were instead used to build the marketing strategy?

Developing an *extensible* content foundation enables marketers to extend advertising content across formats and channels. It sets up brand clients for creative success because it makes adding new capabilities and functionality to the media plan easy. This fourth pillar of our series explains how to develop an extensible content library and why it's so important to programmatic success.



Expanding proven content to new channels

Most programmatic strategies begin with winning display advertising creative. According to the Internet Advertising Bureau (IAB), digital display revenue totaled \$56.7 billion in 2021, a 29% year-over-year increase. Yet, display advertising creative came from humble beginnings. The first banner ad, AT&T's "You Will" campaign, was displayed on Wired Magazine in 1994. Thankfully, we've come a long way since then. Today, the art of creating an effective and eye-catching display ad can include a myriad of creative types, sizes, designs, calls to action, and campaign goals. The sidebar to the right includes several display advertising creative best practices.

But digital agencies must be ROI-driven and demonstrate agility by not becoming wedded too closely to any one channel, tactic, or approach. This is not to say advertising teams should constantly develop new swathes of creative concepts. Instead, your focus should be on building a library of assets and then tweaking and refining them based on the nuances of your targeting strategy. By generating a high volume of creative iterations, you can react more quickly to market changes, personalize messages for targeted audiences, and A/B test on every channel that you invest in to optimize ROI for your media budgets.

Display advertising best practices

- **Distinguish display ads from normal web page content:** If the ad has a white background, use a border to ensure it stands out on the page.
- **Keep it simple:** Any text included in a display ad should be easy to read.
- **Use eye-catching animation:** But avoid blinking, flashing, fast-moving, or brightly colored animations – they can be harmful to people with medical conditions.
- **Place rich media or interactive display ads above the fold:** You can increase clickthroughs by nearly one-quarter of a percent.
- **Choose easy-to-read fonts:** Sans serif fonts are more web friendly, but be sure to follow company and brand style guidelines.
- **Get creative with buttons:** Go beyond the typical "learn more" or "shop now" to encourage clicks.
- **Utilize a mix of common and uncommon creative sizes:** You'll win a wider variety of ad inventory.

To that end, once you've developed a proven display advertising creative approach, it can be expanded across devices. More consumers – and brands – have become “mobile first.” If your display strategy targets desktop users, it may make sense to add mobile to the media mix. Mobile display revenue totaled \$45 billion in 2021, according to the IAB, while desktop display generated \$11.8 billion.

When choosing mobile banner ad sizes, remember that each campaign is unique. The type and size of any specific creative may perform much better in one campaign than another, depending on the tactics you're using and the goals you've set. Your data will be the best judge of the best creatives for you.

Think about adding digital video or audio channels to your media mix. New advertising channels such as podcasts and connected TV (CTV) are growing exponentially. Best practices in digital video are emerging and show that shorter videos (5 or 15 seconds) lead to higher completion rates. In fact, completion rates can fall as much as 50 percent for a 90-second video versus a 15-second video.

Remember, no two buyer journeys are exactly alike, so it's critical to capture your audience's attention where it's most valuable. Then you can leverage those key moments where they're demonstrating purchase intent to drive revenue-based actions that really matter. In digital advertising, screen positioning, size, animation, color, headline, and relevant content relevance all impact clickthroughs.

“Your data will be the best judge of the best creatives for you.”



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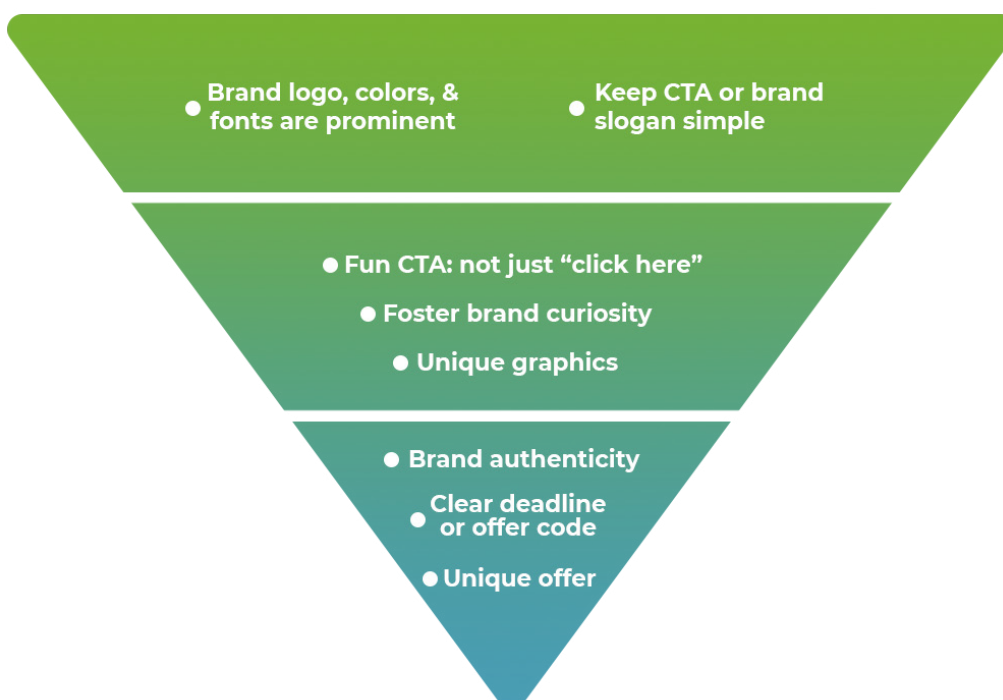
Use branding to drive full-funnel performance

In [Pillar 1 of our series](#), we explained how a full-funnel marketing approach is critical to digital advertising success. The most effective marketing strategies employ a clearly defined media mix, where each channel has a distinct but connected goal to drive customers further into the marketing funnel. Even when your goal is to drive more conversions or sales, the process still starts with brand awareness.

Full-funnel engagement with your target audiences calls for a mixed-media plan that incorporates a range of digital channels. At the top of the funnel, data targeting and site-keyword-category targeting work well across video and audio, such as CTV and podcasts. Geofencing and geoframing are effective mid-funnel through CRM onboarding, email newsletters, and private marketplaces. Lower in the funnel, display retargeting, cross-device targeting, and custom audiences enriched with third-party data can drive conversions.

To maximize your creative's impact on funnel performance, start by defining your campaign goal(s). Ask yourself, your client, and your team: Who do we want to reach? How do we want them to perceive the brand? What do we want them to do/the end result to be? Then, your creative assets can be perfected around those central ideas.

Campaign goals should be clear to all stakeholders. Marketing managers should sit down with agency designers very early in the process. Make it even more seamless by getting your creative assets for each stage of the campaign ready to go from the start. This approach will allow you to simply "plug and play" new creative into the campaign as prospects move deeper into the funnel. The funnel below illustrates how creative can change at each stage of the marketing funnel.



Create a seamless customer experience

One of the most important aspects of extensible advertising content is that every asset aligns with the brand's identity. It's essential to reinforce the client's brand – regardless of channel or funnel stage – to rise above the fray. Consistent use of the brand logo, images, and slogans will create brand awareness, recognition, and a seamless customer experience.

How do you get there? First, use the resources available to you. Choozle's creative services are available and can develop custom creative assets for your campaigns. If you don't have an in-house designer or don't feel the need to outsource your digital ad design, do it yourself. There are free tools like Canva and Bannersnack. Flexitive is a great paid tool for creating HTML5 ads. Here are three simple recommendations to guide creative development that will align brand messaging across the customer journey:

1 Be compelling

Ads should be eye-catching enough to attract attention. Use compelling graphics and clear text. The CTA should stand out.

2 Be concise

A prospect can see the ad at any given time for a moment – make your message stick.

3 Be clear

Don't clutter the ad with too much text – users can click to the landing page for more information.

Programmatic advertising has become a powerful tool to navigate today's multichannel media marketplace. And, there are many format options for using programmatic advertising creative throughout the funnel, including:

Audio: MP3 format; 15-, 30- and 60-second lengths (about 70 words).

Connected TV: MP4 format; hosted or third-party video (VAST); 6-, 15-, and 30-second lengths.

Display: GIF, JPEG/JPG, PNG, or HTML5 for desktop, mobile, and tablet.

Native: JPEG/JPG, PNG, image, logo, header, body, CTA; 1.91:1 aspect ratio.

When handling clients with different marketing levels, goals, and budgets, it helps to use a programmatic platform that is agile and scales with your media plans. Self-serve programmatic platforms use automation to streamline media buying and selling processes and increase transparency and user control. Programmatic display and in-market advertising allow you to precisely target audiences at the most valuable points in their customer journeys.