

# Mobile Ads Need an Update. Programmatic Native Could Be the Answer.

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Brands have done a good job adapting content experiences for mobile devices—but advertising hasn't kept up. Now, the industry is embracing programmatic native ads, enabling advertisers to build beautiful, effective ads that fit the form and function of the surrounding content, at scale.

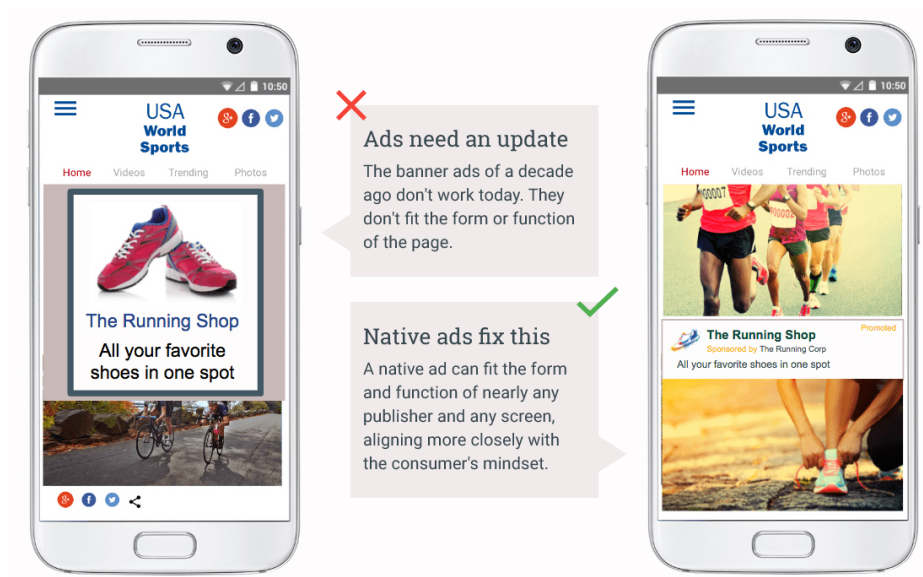
think with **Google**

The combination of native and programmatic is powerful, and there are new best practices to consider. Already, major publishers like The New York Times and Grupo Expansión are unlocking new mobile opportunities and helping advertisers provide better brand experiences for customers across screens. It's a critical shift, given how rapidly mobile devices have changed the role content plays in everyone's lives.

Each day, 68% of smartphone users check their phones within 15 minutes of waking up.<sup>1</sup> Whether people use their phones to catch up with friends and family, skim an article, or watch an entertaining video, mobile devices are at the center of our lives.

Savvy marketers are responding to today's mobile-first audience with smart, responsive websites and new apps tailored to organic movements like swiping and tapping. And that means the banner ads of yesteryear simply don't cut it anymore. While content has evolved for mobile, advertising hasn't.

The mismatch between the content experience and the ad experience on mobile prevents advertisers and publishers from capturing the massive opportunities presented by a multi-screen world. Programmatic native advertising provides a solution.



Native ads can fit the form and function of nearly any publisher's content on any screen. They provide people with positive user experiences, and they result in better performing ads for publishers and advertisers. '

For example, The New York Times recently launched a suite of native ad formats called "Flex Frames." These fully responsive ad units are tailored for content presented within the Times' apps and websites. The publisher is also able to adapt specific ad formats, based on what users are most likely to respond to, by layering in first-party data. The [strategy is paying off](#)—click-through rates increased 6X compared to equivalent banner ads, and viewable impressions jumped 4X.

Likewise, the Mexican publishing company Grupo Expansión [increased the viewability](#) of its advertising by 25% on mobile web and 36% on desktop by deploying native ads.

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The New York Times'  
approach to Native Ads



Programmatic buying allows advertisers to make native ads even more relevant. By leveraging machine learning and contextual signals, programmatic native ads can be tailored to both the user and the placement at scale, resulting in better performance for advertisers.

Here are some best practices for building out a successful campaign:

1. Provide **multiple assets**, such as images or headlines, for the same element to enable greater variability. This will ensure there are options to show for all different inventory styles and formats.
2. Combine native ads with **contextual targeting** to show ads that are relevant to the page's content. For example, an ad for a running shop could appear on a website or app about running marathons.
3. Measure native ad performance alongside other ads to **optimize** programmatic campaigns holistically. It's especially important to manage reach and frequency across campaigns to ensure that native fits seamlessly into your broader strategy.



Want to learn more about native? Visit the [Native Spotlight](#) to see examples of successful native ads from publishers and advertisers.

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## Sources

<sup>1</sup> Google Consumer Surveys, smartphone users, n=729, Aug. 2015.